Social Interest in The Polish Doctrine of Monument Preservation

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Abstract. The paper discusses a controversy surrounding the latest amendment to the text of the Polish Parliament Act Conservation and the Care of Monuments (2015). It is a common dictum that any edifice cannot exist without good foundations. In this particular case of the mentioned above Act, definition of monument appears to be such a basis. A social interest is one of the constituent elements of the definition mentioned above. In the first part of the paper the notion of the social interest expression has been discussed, particularly from national and international points of view. The second part of the paper comprises some examples from the Polish monument preservation experience with the use of comparison method supported by case study. Only three big Polish cities: Warsaw, Wroclaw and Szczecin are involved in the presented case study but it must be emphasized that many other places on Polish territory experienced the same. Basing on the faith of these cities, the results and discussion chapter proves fundamental discrepancy in social interest notion between national and international scopes using some analytical methods. Finally, in the discussion chapter some proposals for the future amendment of monument definition in the Act of Conservation and the Care of Monuments have been provided.

1. Introduction
Post war experience of Polish monument status appraisement shows that a so called social interest – apparently logical and understandable by principle - is doubtful in the practical application as it might be subjected to considerable political or economic manipulations that lead to pure disintegration of many real monuments. In the meantime, the same social interest might lead to preserve objects that are not worth to be called monuments. It appears in fact that the expression social interest is still interpreted unusually freely and – what is more not only by laypeople but also by specialists. The purpose of the paper is to prove that the expression social interest in monument definition of polish actual Act about the Conservation and the Care of Monuments is not enough to secure historical, artistic or scientific values of really transcendent architecture monuments.

2. What is the meaning of monument in Poland and what it should be
The meaning of the word monument in architectural objects context is described quite simply but properly by Jukka Jokilehto in his On definitions of Cultural Heritage. He points out that the origin of the noun monument comes from the verb moneo (monere) and means to remind, to admonish, to carry a message. Accordingly, he explains the reference of this meaning to architecture as follows, cit.: “The Latin word monumenta was referred to memorials or buildings, which carried inscriptions or were otherwise associated with a message from the past. (...) The Renaissance also contributed to the
enjoyment of beauty as a special quality, leading to the notion of work of art and to the new appreciation of aesthetic qualities in objects or buildings” [1].

Understanding of each meaning is implicated by society’s experience that is impacted by past history, geographical location creating obstacles and opportunities as well as people’s ambitions about their future. These are the factors to create the attitudes, ways of thinking and hierarchy of values. Probably the essential area of the considerations, involving the mentioned above issue lies in different comprehension of monument expression and depends on the specific of points of view. Here are some indications and hints that might reveal the objective differences and help us to find conclusions.

2.1. Mentions on international understanding of “monument” expression
It is not a surprise that international understanding of any notion bound with protection and preservation of monuments and - in wider scope - cultural heritage has got global, transnational character due to the fact that there might be involved issues from different parts of the world. The point is that all the international doctrines should take into account all divergent national legislations coming from different countries, collate them and ultimately find the way of compromise between them. According to Jukka Jokilehto, some direction of the international kind of thinking about historic buildings and urban sites was shown in the most famous pre-war conferences i.e. Congrès Internationaux d’Architecture Moderne (CIAM) carried out in Athens in 1933. It recommended legal protection for extracted historic buildings and urban quarters if cit.: “(…) they are the expression of a former culture and if they respond to a general interest” [1]. It should be emphasized here the context of the word interest – it is preceded by the word general which is not convergent to the words particular or national. Since the middle of 20th century international cooperation in this area took a form of periodically held meetings, conferences, conventions etc. under auspices of such intergovernmental organizations (IGO) as Council of Europe or UNESCO as well as non-governmental organizations (NGO) like ICOMOS. The IGO organizations determine principles addressed to Member States whilst NGO ones determine principles addressed to individual professionals or associations. In the case of NGO organizations, the results of the settings use to be summed in form of Charters establishing guidelines that might be subjected to different connotations. But the settings established by IGO organizations in form of recommendations, declarations or proclamations should be ratified by the Member States in order to receive legal force [1]. All of these documents contain principles of the closest activity in the sphere of protection and preservation of the world cultural heritage. These documents are agreed and recognized as universals by prevailing part of participant parties and are issued as kind of guidelines for these ones that still show discrepancy with the main stream. Of course, not all of the participants do agree at once with the principles established in these international documents and this is exactly the case of Polish State.

2.2. Short chronology of monument understanding in Poland
For the first time in Polish bibliography the word monument appears in The Lexicon of Polish language elaborated by Samuel Bogumił Linde in 1807. It related particularly to public architectural structures like military fortresses, palaces, monasteries, churches, schools etc. [2] Etymology of the word was explained by Alexander Brückner - historian of Polish culture - as cit.: "an entity that remained from the past” and shows very properly the Polish scope of monument understanding [3].

- The first legal record of the monument expression (but yet without providing the monument definition) can be found in the Decree of the Regent Council about the Care of Art and Culture Monuments established in 1918. The legal protection of the monuments on the territory of Polish State is expressed in its Article No 1, as follows cit.: “Every culture and art monument located on the territory of the Polish State listed onto the culture and art monuments inventory are under legal care.” But the most interesting statement about monument qualification is the Article No 11, claiming cit.: “Every movable and immovable masterpiece providing the evidence about the art and culture of the previous era, existing longer than 50 years is a subject of legal care until shall be listed onto the culture and art monuments inventory (…)” [4]. As we can see, no arbitrary was involved in the assessment of the monument qualification. The only criterion appeared to be the evidence about the art and culture of the previous era as well as longer than 50 years long existence independently of the monument’s provenance.
The first legal definition of the monument was provided by the Polish President Regulation about the Care of Monuments dating on 6th of March 1928 which repealed the previous Decree of the Regent Council, mentioned above. According to its Article No 1, the monument is cit.: “(...) every movable and immovable object, characteristic to some era, having artistic, cultural, historical, archaeological or paleontological values confirmed by the State power” [5]. Here, we can see that the element of the arbitrary was already put in the definition, as the confirmation of the monument status by State power without clear and objective criteria always was – and still appears to be – under very subjective estimation especially of artistic and historic values. The artistic sphere of the monument’s value is bound with the perception of aesthetics and beauty which is rather an individual emotional feature and appears to be a very subjective factor [6]. The same could be told about the second of the mentioned above values as some cultural and emotional factors might be involved with the historic criterion of the monument. One could estimate the object in terms of his personal associations with historical events and these might be perceived positively or negatively depending on individual experience [7]. Additional subjective element arises in connection with the expression cit.: “characteristic to some era” basing on the notion and the knowledge level of one generation which might change in time [8]. Comparing these two Acts in the context of monument legal notion, the professionals point up the step back of the Polish President Regulation about the Care of Monuments for subjective arbitrary of the State power introduction allowance. On the other hand, they emphasize that such a structure based on artistic, historical and scientific values are still present in nowadays legislation system concerning monument protection [9].

The sequent substantial legal document creating monument understanding in Poland was the Parliament Act from 15th of February 1962 about the Protection of Cultural Properties and Museums. Facing the post-war negligence about the protection of cultural heritage on the Polish territory - especially on its western parts – such an Act was extremely vital. The monuments were defined somehow indirectly in its Article No as 4 cit.: “cultural properties, called in the Act monuments:
1) enlisted in monuments registry, 2) contained by museums, libraries and public archives, 3) others if their character as a monument is obvious.” [10]. It is essential to put this Act under a critical analysis for its deep transformation of the previous monument understanding.

First of all, an indirect definition of the monument must be pointed up. As Monika Jankowska – Sabat from Wrocław University aptly argues that due to the Act cit.: “every monument was a cultural property in the same time implicating its legal protection, but not every cultural property was a monument, which constituted the existence of cultural properties beyond legal protection.”[11]. We have got here an effect of implication of simple conjunction contradiction rule, known in mathematics as: The first law of de Morgan which says: “Contradiction of p or q occurrences existence implicates negation of occurrences p and q conjunction.” Mathematically it can be put out as follows: \( \sim (p \lor q) \rightarrow (\sim p \land \sim q) \). Unfortunately, the history shows much evidence of the legislators’ conscious exclusion of some elements they intend to deprive the legal protection using exactly The first law of de Morgan, mentioned above. Having on mind the well known facts of the planned, systematic devastation of the post war culture artefacts remained on the western parts of the Polish territory, in this particular case it could not be perceived as used accidentally. Indirect defining of the monument through the cultural property expression was apparently induced by Haag Convention from 1954 but it had considerably different meaning due to the obligatory implication of both constituents of conventional cultural property definition. Hot discussion arose around this expression, as to many it resembled similar one from the Goebbels propaganda period used for the first time in 1933 as Kulturgut [12].

The most doubtful criterion of monument assessment deriving from the discussed Act about the Protection of Cultural Properties and Museums appeared to be the third one of these contained in its Article No 4 i.e. cit.: “if their character as a monument is obvious.” It is really difficult to find a more subjective expression for a monument status implication. It shows that Polish administration still intended to reserve for itself the right of any object to be under legal protection. Practical application of such a criterion might lead to considerable political or economic manipulations depending on taste, experience, desires and reluctance of individuals or groups of political and economic power. The
direction of these manipulations was uncritically revealed in its Article No 3 where the targets of the **cultural properties protection** were determined to be cit.: “(…) stable element of national culture development as well as active element of contemporary socialist society life.” [10] It meant that objects without national (Polish) origin or those not activating socialist kind of life could not be subjects of legal protection.

- The amendment from 19th of July 1990 called the Act about the changes to Protection of Cultural Properties and Museums Act showed some reflection about the national direction of Polish administration thinking. If Article No 1 of the above discussed Act about the "Protection of Cultural Properties and Museums" defined **cultural properties expression** as objects representing “the intellectual and work effort of generations” [10], its amendment from 19th of July 1990 determined **cultural properties** in Article No 1.1. as cit.: “a national wealth that should be protected by all citizens” [13]. Due to political changes, national and socialist mentions were eliminated from the Article No 3 of the Act amendment but the criterion for **monuments** contained in its Article No 4 i.e. cit.: “if their character as a monument is obvious.” was still unchanged leaving the arbitrary of **monument qualification** [13].

- The professional researchers perceive that the greatest progress in unification of Polish attitudes to international standards about **monument expression** understanding was made in the Act of Polish Parliament from 23rd of July 2003 about the Care and Protection of Monuments that received a legal force on 17th of November 2003 [14]. New legal regulations were made due to substantial transformation of economy and political transformation after the fall of communism in Poland but the decisive factor were international requirements concerning the Polish entry to the European Union structures - that ultimately took place on 1st of May 2004 [15]. The new Act defines the **monument expression** quite precisely in its Art.3p.1 as cit.: “a real estate or a chattel, its part or units, appearing to be an effect of human work as well as associated with human activity and constituting the evidence of a bygone era or past events which preservation is in the social interest according to its historical, artistic or scientific values.” [14]. As we can see, the criteria of: “historical, artistic or scientific values” are permanently present in Polish legislation since Polish President Regulation about the Care of Monuments announcement in 1928. These criteria are widespread accepted in international law (although “artistic and historical values” should be still discussed – as mentioned above). But still there is a serious element of a very subjective factor consistent in the definition of **monument** - namely cit.: the social interest – which might be subject of considerable economic and political manipulations. Unfortunately, this factor still exists in the definition of the **monument** in the latest Amendment to the Polish Parliament Act from 23rd of July 2003 about the Conservation and the Care of Monuments [16].

In the case study – that follows in the course of this paper – we shall try to prove that the **social interest** expression should be changed into synonym of **international interest**.

### 2.3. Remarks on practical understanding of social interest understanding in Poland

Even a rough analysis of the available historical material concerning the question of **social interest** in Poland shows a considerable arbitrariness when discussing monuments after the restoration of the State in 1918. **Social interest** is always strictly bound with the social and political systems that any country is constructed on. In Poland, both the social and political systems have been subjected to several dramatic changes since 1918. Within the last hundred years, Polish policy fluctuated between different forms of capitalism to extreme communism coloured by more or less intensive nationalism. We also must not forget that Polish territory has been subjected to vast transformations in this period concerning more than one/third part of the country area. Some eastern parts of the Polish territory have been lost to neighbouring countries like Belorussia or Ukraine (former Soviet Union) and some parts on the West and North have been connected with the mainland forming so called Recovered Lands. These were intensively settled by entirely extraneous population with its alien culture, habits, fashion or even national and historic heroes. The objects situated on the territories to meet such a dynamic people’s migration were subjects of serious transformations due to the modified kind of their usage which often took the form of devastation. It could be more or less conscious: sometimes, the objects were technically so sophisticated that the new migrant population could not even understand the right way of their
exploitation which led to their permanent disintegration and annihilation. This happened for example to numerous tenement houses or residences, villas formed by Prussian Junker families before 1939 as well as technical objects like mills, bridges, plants, crafts and factories or cultural and recreational ones like theatres, operas, swimming pools, cinemas etc. For newcomers, the function of these objects was so far away from their knowledge how to be exploited, that they were transformed to entirely new purposes which caused their severe damages or were not exploited at all for their unknown form of living, incoherent with the newcomers’ habits. Half a poverty if the damages of the objects were caused by unconscious exploitation, but what about the ones which were consequentially defragmented for their improper political, national or historical connotations like memorialis, cemeteries, lookout towers, military objects (citadels, bunkers etc.), noble palaces or castles owned before by the former war, national or political enemies? Such objects were consciously disintegrated or at least left to the mercy of fate. It concerns the properties acquired from the former enemy countries as well as the properties taken from inner class enemies. Ultimately, it should be concluded that depending on the historical period we might put under analysis, the so called social interest was always a kind of a value variable in time depending on the current social and political trends. Big amount of architectural objects and properties possessed real and transcendent cit.: “historical, artistic or scientific values” mentioned in the monument definition provided by the discussed Act about the Conservation and the Care of Monuments but this fact did not save them from devastation or pure liquidation for temporarily or falsely understood social interest.

This short characteristic of social interest concerning monuments - as it has been understood in Poland - is accompanied also in the structure and nomenclature of the institutions that are responsible for the care of monuments. The name of the main government body to be essentially active at this area actually appears to be the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. It was created on 5th of December 1918 just few days after the restitution of the Polish State and it was given name the Ministry of Art and Culture but on 14th of February 1922 it was liquidated. In its further existence during the 20th century history till nowadays it was called accordingly: Ministry of Culture and Art, Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, simply “Ministry of Culture till the 31st of October 2005 [17]. As we see - basing on this short review - that the names have fluctuated around the fields of culture, art and heritage but not even once has the international relationship been mentioned. On the contrary, there have been some periods – like today – that in the name of the Ministry, the word National has been given to emphasize the area of the Ministry’s activity and interest. Unfortunately, history of monuments located in the Polish territory – especially those of other origin - experienced more or less influence of such an attitude.

3. Case study with examples of “social interest” understanding in Poland

As follows, the paper presents some examples of architectonical objects containing undeniable “historical, artistic or scientific values” but in spite of that experienced partial or total liquidation. The examples taken into considerations were selected from the cities that suffered greatest damages during the two most devastating war conflicts of the 20th century that rolled up through Polish soil. These are cities of Warsaw, Wrocław and Szczecin in which were situated some objects that suffered from the falsely understood social interest.

3.1. Demolition of considerable part of so called “Warsaw Citadel” – today recognized as an example of the most outstanding military complex - worldwide famous. The complex was built by project of a Russian gen. major Ivan Ivanovych Dehn basing on plans of the Antwerp Citadel. The building process started on 31.05.1832 just after the fall of the so called Polish November Uprising (one of the most fateful historic events in Poland). “Warsaw Citadel” was erected by Russians to protect themselves from possible military attacks in the future carried on by inner (Polish liberation movement). In fact, Warsaw Citadel played an exceptionally tragic role in the Polish history, as it was a place where many national heroes were kept in prison, brutally interrogated and eventually send to Siberia or executed in situ. In Polish awareness, it was a national execution place and the name of Warsaw Citadel raised nothing but the reflex of horror. It could be compared to such horrid and hated places in other nations’
history as Tower Bridge for Englishmen, Bastille Castle for Frenchmen, Lubianka for Russians or Auschwitz for all Nazi victims. In spite of its infamous historic role, Warsaw Citadel endured warfare. After the restoration of Polish State in 1918 it was preserved in very good state, thoroughly completed from military, architectonical and urban points of view [18]. It must be underlined that in terms of the discussed Act about the Conservation and the Care of Monuments, the full complex met the conditions of cit.: “preservation in the social interest according to its historical, artistic or scientific values”. Especially it was in full social interest to preserve this place sanctified by death of so many best Polish National Heroes. All of these features met the conditions in terms of actual monument definition provided by the Act. But ultimately, this fact did not save the complex from people’s anger and hate to Russian invaders who built the objects. Three of seven Citadel Forts were demolished and - it should be emphasized - with full public crowd delight as well as with silent acquiescence of the officials. (Figures 1a-b). The disintegration process lasted for several years in the twenties of the 20th century as in the place of the demolished military structure a modernistic housing estate of Żoliborz district begun to be realized. Incidentally some other famous urban structure of the so called Brukalscy Housing Estate was built there between 1927 - 1929 (but without any reasonable connection with the older structure like many modernistic plans) [19]. The devastation of the valuable historical structure still grows objections especially from the wide historic and scientific perspective.

Figure 1a-b. Warsaw Citadel; General plan from before 1st WW and the Citadel in Ruins after siege in 1939

This example shows that social interest is not an obstacle to ruin a monument of real “historical, artistic or scientific values”. Or maybe other hasty and extemporary interest like revenge caused by crowd anger and officially camouflaged by the need of the housing played main role in this case.

3.2. Post-war demolition of the considerable part of the Wroclaw City architectural monuments

Wrocław is a wonderful city in the southern part of Poland and it appears to be a capital of a region called Lower Silesia. Although it was settled under the reign of the Polish Kingdom approximately in 1000 [20] it experienced a very dramatic history that led to the German reign till the 1945. In 1335 it went under control of the Czech Kingdom and after the death of the King Ludwik Jagiellończyk the 2nd in the 1526 it was possessed by the Habsburg Monarchy altogether with the whole Czech Kingdom. In 1741, it was captured by Prussian King Friedrich the 2nd and went under German control which lasted till the end of the 2nd WW (Second World War). The City of Wroclaw experienced severe damages in this period as due to its extended military structures Nazis transformed it to so called Festung Breslau, which led the City to be one of the last fighting fortresses of the Third Reich during the 2nd WW. In effect, Wroclaw was ruined approximately in 65% [21].

Anyway, Wroclaw returned under the Polish State control and it is still so. However, this fact did not save it from being consciously and continuously robbed, demolished and defragmented by hasty interest of the new Polish communist authorities in favour of the Polish capital – Warsaw. The last was permanently and consequently devastated by Nazis during the whole 2nd WW and finally totally ruined in 1965 - 95% (depending on the structure) by Nazi occupants [22] as a revenge for the Warsaw Uprising in 1944. Although Wroclaw was severely ruined, still there appeared enough - almost untouched – building structure. Between 1946 - 1954 it was consequently demolished. Obtained building materials
(especially bricks) were strictly segregated, packed and transported to Warsaw. This part of the infamous Polish post-war history even had its code name: *The whole Country rebuilds its Capital*. Lots of Wroclaw monuments became victims of this action like: medieval City defensive walls, defensive tower located on the east side of the *Nowy Targ* square, numerous valuable residences on Wroclaw suburbs, *Vlast Gate* near *Solny* square or the edifice of *Central Post* (Figure 2a). Further details are described by sir Norman Davis and Roger Moorhouse in their book *Microkosmos* [23].

According to the curator of the *Architecture Museum of Wroclaw* – Maria Zwierz – such buildings as *Korn Family Palace* appearing to be former headquarters of *Schlesische Zeitung* and *Publishing House or General Komendantur* (demolished in 1948), both located at *Świdnicka Street* in Wroclaw became the victims of the demolition process. Despite their good technical state, they were demolished for their associations with the Prussian presence in the *Lower Silesia* [24]. The same hatred Polish authorities manifested to most of the German memorials in Wroclaw, against evident *social interest*. The most spectacular were these of General Boguslaus Tauntzen, Kaiser Wilhelm the 1st and Kaiser Friedrich Wilhelm the 3rd (Figure 2b). All of them survived the *Festung Breslau* siege in 1945. There were even some plans to return them back to German Museums (at appropriate gratification), but ultimately the *social interest* of the institutional revenge to Germans won and all of them (like many others) were melt between 1945 and 1948 [25]. Romuald Nowak from the *National Museum* in Wroclaw says, cit.: “These exhibits were to be annihilated because of their associations with the enemies and torturers.” [26]. Today, these could be valuable exhibits in every museum, does not matter if in a Polish or in foreign one.

The same fate concerns other *Lower Silesian* cities that experienced the same devastation evidently recommended by the Polish administration against the pragmatic *social interest*. In the City of Świdnica some 300 buildings were demolished, in the City of Nowogrodziec - 250 objects, in the City of Brzeg - 88 objects, in the City of Legnica – 50 objects [27]. Perversely understood *social interest* of this action was revealed by Jan Muszyński in following cit.: „Monuments were often devastated with the sense of retaliation for all Polish ruined cities, for Warsaw, for the Royal Castle and finally for crematoria, for the mass murder made on the Nation. Additionally, monuments of numerous courts and castles were witnesses of class oppression and thus designated to be annihilated in the frames of the revolution” [28]. Such testimony of the communist authorities’ intentions is given in numerous relations and publications [29-33].

3.3. **Post-war demolition of a considerable part of the Szczecein City architectural monuments**

Szczecein (former *Stettin*) is an amazing city situated in the North – Western part of Poland and appears now to be a capital of the so called *West Pomeranian Region*. The city has a rich but very dramatic history purely bound to its bordering location marked by strong Polish, Swedish and German influence. Polish control over the city derives from 967 when Prince Mieszko the 1st - supposed to be the creator of the Polish statehood – took it under Polish control. Till the end of the XV th Century Szczecein was alternately under German or Polish reign. In 1474 Pomeranian Prince Boguslaw the 10th integrated the
whole *West Pomeranian* lands and established their capital in the City of Szczecin. In 1630 Szczecin was captured by Swedish Kingdom, whose reign lasted till 1713, when it was joined to Prussia. The period of German control over the city lasted till the end of the 2nd WW, during which Szczecin was heavily damaged due to severe bombardments by the RAF [34]. The damages of the central part of the city were estimated at 67.5% [35].

Probably the most spectacular case is bound with the largest cultural arena: *City Theatre* (germ. *Stadttheater*), located at Konigplatz 13 (actually Plac Żołnierza Square) (Figure 3a). In spite of the carpet RAF bombardments in 1944 its technical conditions were quite a liveable if compared to the surrounding debris of ruins. There are a few references that the *City Theatre* was predisposed to full reconstruction due to slight damages, but some temporary political interests caused its bad luck. The building lost its roof in fire but the facades were almost untouched. There were serious plans to rebuild the *Stadttheater* in August 1948. According to the professional expertise, the City Council even designated 20 million zlotys for the reconstruction. But two months later it started a rough propaganda to annihilate the *Stadttheater* persuading that at the same costs New City Theatre with modern facilities and bigger audience hall for more than previous 400 spectators could be achieved. The attitude of Piotr Zaremba – then President of Szczecin – left no doubt that the sentence to death of the theatre’s existence had already been formed. Ultimately the object was entirely demolished in 1954 but the President’s announcement to build a new one on the same place, was never fulfilled. On the theatre’s place a ship superstructure crowned with the flagstaff of M/S *Kapitan Maciejewicz* was placed instead. Further events showed that it was made to reserve the land for more ambitious investment – "a new highway entrance (…) to the centre of the city of – the so called *Trasa Zamkowa im. Piotra Zaremby* built between 1978 - 87 which nowadays generates (…) gigantic traffic jams instead of being planned for the role of a City detour”[36].

The second cultural arena of Szczecin - so called *Konzerthauz* - was demolished because of an entirely different cause - and once again – with falsely understood public interest (Figure 3b). Like the *City Theatre* it also survived all carpet RAF bombardments in 1944. Professional expertizes predisposed the building to full reconstruction. "Konzerthauz also lost its roof in fire but the facades were almost untouched (Figure 2b). In June1948 the press revealed that Polish Ministry of Culture designated 5 million zlotys for preliminary reconstruction works. The reconstruction had to be carried under the auspices of the *West Pomeranian Singers Union*, but the promised financing never became a reality. To the public society surprise the object was ultimately demolished between spring and autumn of the 1962. In this particular case, the destructive reason of the object’s death appeared to be its lethal location at Augustastrasse (actually Małopolska Street). It may not be the case that in direct neighbourhood were located (and still are) Regional Police Headquarters and formerly it was Gestapo Headquarters. To be honest, in more democratic times - e.i. in the last decade - this neighbourhood was no obstacle to create a new *Concert House* by architects Barozzi and Veiga and won all possible prizes for nowadays architecture design [37].

Many wonder, what social interest led to the destruction of another wonderful place in Szczecin: a City bath complex located at Koński Kierat 14/15 – former *Rossmarktsstrasse*. It consisted of two swimming
pools: 23x10 m and one for children 12x12 m as well as full wellness and SPA facilities like showers, steam rooms, changing rooms etc. The complex was untouched during the war and served the local society for very long time appearing to be known and popular place of recreation for many generations of Stettiners: both German and Polish ones. But due to the lack of exploitation profits – as the official statement announced – the complex was demolished in 1985. It is difficult to find a more unreasonable excuse for a destruction of such a wonderful and unforgettable object that had served for many generations. It certainly had “historic, scientific and artistic values” as well its existence was truly in social interest. However, it never obtained a monument status which shows that definition of monument in form of an administration Act based in term of public interest is simply an empty word [38].

4. Results and Discussion
Juxtaposition of Polish and international monument understanding described in p.2 shows considerable differences. International attitude appears to be a cosmopolitan and transboundary way of thinking emphasizing the idea that each monument belongs to the whole mankind heritage and its protection is essential to global social interest. Polish attitude in this sphere was for a long time just the opposite taking rather regional and national course. Carried out in p.3 case study of the Polish experience with the treatment of the objects worth to receive monument status, proves high arbitrariness. In many cases post war debris helped to persuade the annihilation of great amount of slightly damaged valuable objects that could be brought to a proper state. Unfortunately, these objects had improper connotations as resembled former both - class and political - enemies, occupants and culprits of Polish war tragedy. For its geostrategic location, Poland was often victim of the invaders’ brutal extermination, aimed especially at the most educated segment of the Polish society which was uncompromisingly decimated. These, who survived the lethal struggle for life very often did not show much compassion for their former knackers. Alas the evidence put forward in the examples of the case study show that the human hatred was aimed at valuable architectonical and historical substance. It is kind of rule that the reluctance to the property left by the enemy expires within the life frames of the generation that has experienced the worst evil. Analysis of the monument understanding evolution in Polish legislation described in p.2 shows the same rule. With time passing, it becomes more and more convergent with the international monument understanding. The time measure of 27 years that took Polish legislation to adapt and accept the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe is equal to the time of one generation to grow up.

5. Conclusions
Social interest has been always present in different forms in all the analysed definitions of monument. It is a feature that directly refers the monument to an actual way of social existence. With its evolution, also the perception of social interest is subjected to changes. The case study described in p.3 shows different forms of social interest to influence the fate of the monuments taken into consideration. With the help of technological globalization enabling fast and vast spread of information, the attitudes towards social interest become more and more convergent. This trend is very noticeable basing on the analysis of the available documents and facts put forward in this paper.

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