

Summary

Katyń anniversaries in years 1990-2010. The place and function of political ritual in Polish culture of memory.

The main aim of the research conducted for this thesis was to present the functional dimension of political rituals connected to commemorations of the Katyń crime's anniversaries in years 1990-2010.

The structure of the thesis reflects the above mentioned research problem. The thesis starts with articulation of research questions and hypotheses, specifying the time frame and description of source materials. Moreover, the theoretical part discusses the state of research on key issues related to the topic and presents research methodology.

The research part is devoted to verification of stated research hypotheses. The research conducted with the politilinguistic method identified ten toposes organizing the discourse on Katyń anniversaries. They include: innocent victim topos, infringement of justice topos, compensation, just Russians, Muscovite friends, and leadership topos, as well as the toposes of: common memory field, reconciliation (from enemies to friends), mutual forgiveness, anniversary as a special occasion and the topos of inhumane soil.

The content analysis of Katyń commemorations' media coverage together with the semantic-pragmatic analysis of anniversary rhetoric allowed to identify a number of functions of the Katyń ritual in the Polish culture of memory from 1990 till 2010. The writing on functions has been organized in the following way. It starts with the most important and most extensively analyzed emotional function and goes through such functions as: normative, legitimizing, integrating, educational and performative. Among the emotional function's elements such phenomena as the compulsion of repetition, angst reduction or compensation have been identified. The cultural trauma theory has been used to present the founding myth connected with the lie and truth about the Katyń crime, which was named by politicians in anniversary speeches. Through participation in Katyń commemorations, the collective subject ritually repeated its attachment to truth, revelation of actual events and fight against falsifying history. Assuming that every traumatic experience reactivates previous traumas which have not been worked through, the compulsion of repetition has been related to the trauma caused by *damnatio memoriae* connected with the beginnings of Christianity. The properties of such constructed myth in the Polish historical context allow for its exploitation in the discourse as a way of authority's legitimation through a call to fight the falsification of history. Additionally, as part of reflection on the performative function, the author has presented the phenomenon called "the second Katyń" which became present in the anniversary discourse after the crash of presidential aircraft on its way for the commemoration of the crime's 70th anniversary. The narrative about the Katyń crime, constructed in the aforementioned way, could have been used as a template to build the Smoleńsk narrative.

The dissertation ends with evoking the research problem stated at the beginning and an attempt to answer the adopted research questions as well as to verify the research hypotheses. The author also presents her conclusions stemming from the analysis of the research matter named in the introduction.

Keywords: political ritual, anniversary rhetoric, politilinguistics, Katyn crime anniversary