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A Centenary of Polish-Danish Relations

EDITED BY
WŁADYSŁAW BUŁHAK AND
THOMAS WEGENER FRIIS

Geschichte

SGEI – SHEI – EHIE

Franz Steiner Verlag



Studien zur Geschichte der Europäischen Integration (SGEI)
Études sur l'Histoire de l'Intégration Européenne (EHIE)
Studies on the History of European Integration (SHEI)

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Band / Volume 37

A CENTENARY OF POLISH- DANISH RELATIONS

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Władysław Bułhak and Thomas Wegener Friis

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Gedruckt mit freundlicher Unterstützung von:
Knud Højgaard Foundation, Danish Cultural Institute & Royal Danish Embassy in Warsaw

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Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek:
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen
Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über
dnb.d-nb.de abrufbar.

© Władysław Bulhak und Thomas Friis 2023
Veröffentlicht im Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart
www.steiner-verlag.de
Druck: Beltz Grafische Betriebe, Bad Langensalza
Gedruckt auf säurefreiem, alterungsbeständigem Papier.
Printed in Germany.
ISBN 978-3-515-13335-7 (Print)
ISBN 978-3-515-13468-2 (E-Book)
<https://doi.org/10.25162/9783515134682>

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INTRODUCTION

From Re-establishment to Cooperation

On 27 September 2022, the Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen and her Polish colleague Mateusz Morawiecki along with President Andrzej Duda attended the opening of the “Baltic Pipe Project” which transfers gas from the Norwegian North Sea across Danish territory and the Baltic Sea to Niechorze on the Pomeranian coast. In her statement on the Nordic-Polish venture, Frederiksen stressed European cooperation and the ways the pipeline would facilitate energy independence from Poland’s difficult neighbour, Russia.¹ The project mirrors key traits which have characterized the bi-lateral relationship between the two Baltic Sea neighbours. First, the pipeline has both economic and strategic significance. In this respect, the project is similar to large joint ventures in the interwar period, most notably the construction of the port of Gdynia. Second, the project showed how small and middle-sized states might use their manoeuvring space in the face of larger hostile neighbouring power. And finally, the security dimension aspect of the project underlined the close political cooperation within NATO and the EU that has evolved after the division of the Baltic Sea area during the Cold War.

Throughout the dramatic 20th century, the maritime border in the Baltic Sea determined the relations between the two countries. Danish seafaring knowledge was valuable to the young republic after the re-establishment of Polish independence; Denmark assisted in the problematic international handling of the Free City of Gdańsk/Danzig question and the establishment of the alternative international port of Gdynia; Polish military intelligence agents worked against Nazi Germany around the Baltic straights during the Second World and later against the NATO in the Cold War; for more than a generation, both countries prepared on separate sides for the nuclear battle for control of the landing beaches of Zealand; in 1999 the former adversaries joined forces at the newly established Headquarters of NATO’s Multinational Corps Northeast in Szczecin; and, in 2018, the outstanding question of the common maritime border was peacefully negotiated. Thus, maritime connections played a significant role in the two conferences “Just Across the Sea: 100 Years of Polish-Danish relations” and “Neighbours Across the Baltic Sea – One Century in Polish-Danish Relations”, which took place in Warsaw (25–26 November) and Odense (22 February), respectively. At those conferences, academics from both countries commemorated the centenary of bilateral relations dating back to 30 May 1919. They were supported by the embassies of both countries and the conferences were even attended by the Danish Crown HRH Prince Frederik and HRH Crown Princess Mary during their state visit to Poland. Both royals were able to

1 <https://www.stm.dk/presse/pressemeddelelser/statsminister-mette-frederiksen-deltager-i-aabningen-af-baltic-pipe-i-stettin/> (accessed 12 October 2022)

participate in the conference opening in the Grand Hall of the Institute of History of the University of Warsaw.

In the following years, academic relations were troubled by COVID-19 epidemic and travelling restrictions. However, the cooperation continued digitally, as the articles of this anthology took form and developed based on papers delivered at the two conferences. The subject of bilateral relation is not altogether new. Polish scholars in particular, including Bolesław Hajduk, Eugeniusz Kruszewski, and Jan Szymański have contributed previous important work on the subject.² On the Danish side, very little attention has been previously devoted to relations with Poland. One reason for this is that modern Polish history has only rarely been taught and researched at Danish universities. A notable exception to this rule has been the doyen of historical studies on 20th century Poland, Kay Lundgreen-Nielsen from the University of Southern Denmark, whose study of the international aspects of Poland's regaining independence has already achieved the status of a classic work in Polish, Danish and world historiography.³

In the past few years, a new generation of researchers has emerged with a keen interest not only in the history of bilateral relations but also with ambitions of developing academic contacts. A young researcher who early on became a communicator between the two research environments was Henry Andreasen. In the early 2000's, he was the first Dane to use the possibilities granted by the so-called "Archival Revolution" to research the Polish-Danish relationship during the Cold War.⁴ Though he himself left academia, his work inspired other Danish researchers to continue his work. A product of these new contacts was, for instance, the annual conference series "Need to Know". This series was started in 2011 by Polish and Danish researchers from Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) in Warsaw and University of Southern Denmark (SDU) in Odense with the aim of bringing European historians and political scientists together on the subject of intelligence history.⁵

In 2018, the first major Danish project on the bilateral relations was initiated, to be carried out by the Langelands Museum, the Danish National Archive (Rigsarkivet), and the Cold War Studies Centre of the SDU. This project has essentially made this anthology possible by supporting academic exchange. It focuses on the Cold War era. However, beyond that scope, it seeks to make Polish sources, in particular from the IPN archive, available to a broader group of Danish researchers. Accessibility also means the creation of translations, since the ability to read and write Polish is still regrettably rare in Denmark, whereas Danish and Scandinavian studies have a much broader interest at several Polish universities, for instance in Gdańsk, Poznań, Toruń, and Warsaw.

The articles of this anthology cover a wide range of aspects in the bilateral relations during the past hundred years. As they reflect the specific research interest in

2 See for instance Jan Szymański (ed.), *Polska-Dania w ciągu wieków*, Gdańsk 2004.

3 Kay Lundgreen Nielsen, *The Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference. A Study of the Policies of the Great Powers and the Poles, 1918–1919*. Odense 1970.

4 Henry Andreasen, *Polske arkiver og Danmark*, in: *Arbejderhistorie*, 1, 2006, 48–51.

5 Władysław Bułhak, Thomas Wegener Friis, *Shaping the European school of Intelligence Studies*, in: *The International Journal of Intelligence, Security, and Public Affairs*, Issue 3, 2020, 139–158.

the two countries, there is a specific emphasis on the interwar period and on the Cold War. However, the book starts out with a historiographic analysis as well as an article which looks beyond the aforementioned hundred years. The Danish-Belarussian historian Lizaveta Dubinka-Hushcha from Copenhagen Business School utilizes the methodological tool of chronotypes to establish a grand overview of the long *durée* of the 20th century. By using this methodology, the Polish academic interest in its Baltic neighbour becomes evident. Michalina Petelska from the University of Gdańsk demonstrates how this interest pre-dates Poland's re-established statehood. The renowned Danish intellectual George Brandes, often referred as the "travelling literature critic", visited the Polish lands under partition several times in the late 19th century and became an early advocate for Poland on the international stage, though he was also critical of antisemitism in Poland during the First World War. In her study, Petelska compares Brandes' travels to Polish lands and to Hungary.

Both Paweł Jaworski from the University of Wrocław and Steen Andersen from the Danish National Archives deal with diplomatic relations of the interwar years. Jaworski deals with a broad spectrum of relations, and he points at a central challenge in the bilateral relations. Though the Second Republic had Baltic aspirations, Denmark was often seen as too distant and too weak. Still, mutual relations did develop and, beyond the diplomatic sphere, Jaworski examines trade, culture, education, and sports. From the Danish perspective, studied by Andersen, the development of economic ties across the Baltic Sea in particular played a notable role. In this respect, the voice of the entrepreneur Knud Højgaard, who had been engaged in the development of Polish infrastructure, was crucial as one of the strongest pro-Polish voices in Denmark. The most prominent example of his work was the port in Gdynia, but he also invested in road construction with the Polish subsidiary company "Contractor". Andersen demonstrates how the Danish company "Højgaard and Schulz" managed to remain in Poland even during the German occupation. After the Second World War, the company attempted to remain active with the reconstruction of Gdynia's severely war-damaged port facilities. However, the communist takeover and the deepening East-West conflict ended this chapter of Danish-Polish relations.

An aspect of Polish-Danish relations which is often overlooked are the cooperations between the Polish and Danish national minorities in Germany in the interwar years. Despite the reestablishment of Polish statehood and the Danish-German border revision, minorities remained in the country. Whereas the Danish minority was rather small, with approximately 20,000 members who were largely geographically confined to Southern Schleswig, the Polish minority numbered about two million people. Thus it was a force to be reckoned with, especially in the state of Prussia. Mogens Rostgaard Nissen from the Danish Central Library of Southern Schleswig examines the cooperation between the two minorities that were founding members of the Association of National Minorities in 1924. The Danes and the Poles also cooperated politically and culturally, for instance in the publication of the minority journal "Kulturwehr" (Cultural Protection). However, following the Nazi takeover in Germany, cooperation faded, also due to the German repression focused especially on the Polish minority.

The interwar part of the anthology is rounded off by an article by Jan Stanisław Ciechanowski from the University of Warsaw. He presents the individual Polish envoys in Copenhagen from the establishment of a legation at the noble Hotel Phoenix in 1919 until the last representative of the Second Republic, Jan Starzewski, was forced to leave the country along with his British and French colleagues following the German invasion of Denmark on 9 April 1940. The histories of consecutive envoys reflect the development of newly established interstate relations with Denmark. Another major concern of the envoys was Germany, which bordered with both countries and, for better and for worse, influenced their bilateral relations.

The Second World War and the occupation of both countries naturally led to a near standstill of Polish-Danish relations. A remarkable exception was the Polish intelligence organisation established in Denmark and Sweden during the war described by the editors of this volume. It recruited both Danish and Polish citizens, or the most part beginners in the field of covert work. This kind of intelligence work, which drew on “normal citizens” rather than intelligence professionals, is defined as “Social Intelligence”, or “Socially supported Intelligence” (SOASINT). In Danish historiography, the members of these networks have been recognized as a part of the Danish resistance movement. Annually to this day, their efforts are celebrated by the Polish embassy at the central memorial site of the resistance, Ryvangen. Still, their history is not commonly known in Denmark, and in Poland it has not been studied as an intelligence operation.

The second part of this anthology is initiated by the Gdańsk historian Jacek Tebinka, who provides a *vue d’horizon* of Cold War relations from the Danish recognition of the provisional Polish government in June 1945 to the end of the 1980s. Despite the deteriorating political climate across the Baltic Sea, Denmark was by no means interested in freezing relations, and it continuously sought a dialogue with the communist authorities. Thus, it was no coincidence that the Danish Foreign Minister and later Prime Minister Jens-Otto Krag was the first NATO foreign minister to visit the so-called Polish People’s Republic (PRL) in 1959.

Diplomatic measures and periodical *détente* could not disguise the deep division the communist regimes in Central Europe had created. Offensive military planning of the Cold War made the threat of a warm war very concrete as described by the German military historian Dieter Kollmer, Władysław Bulhak (IPN), and Thomas Wegener Friis (SDU). From the 1960s onwards, the armed forces of the Polish People’s Republic (PRL) became responsible for the so-called Coastal or Polish Front of the Warsaw Pact. This massive military build-up included Polish, Soviet, and East German units prepared for the use of nuclear weapons. A few days after the outbreak of war between the East and the West, they were to launch an offensive through Northern Germany into the Low Countries. An integrated part of the plans of the Coastal Front was a flanking land invasion of the Cimbrian peninsula through Schleswig-Holstein to Denmark, as well as sea and air landings on the Danish Islands. On the Western side, West Germany and Denmark organized a first line of defence within the NATO-command Baltic Approaches.

The threat of war made military intelligence a valued commodity. Przemysław Gasztold of the IPN and the Polish War Studies University examines the *residentura*

or station of the Polish Military Intelligence Service in Copenhagen. Throughout the Cold War, it became evident that a manifest discrepancy existed between the ambitions of Warsaw headquarters and the actual results that the intelligence officers were able to deliver in the hostile environment of the Cold War. The Danes spoke a difficult language and their counterintelligence service kept the Polish “diplomats” under strict surveillance. Thus, the officers of the stations often needed to resort to second-best solutions and recruited their helpers amongst the Polish diaspora in Denmark.

The Danish historian Marianne Rostgaard devotes her article to more peaceful aspects of the Cold War. In accordance with shifting Danish governments’ wishes for dialogue with the Communist regimes of Central Europe, Denmark sought to develop programs of cultural exchange. A part of these efforts were initiatives to bring selected youth representatives together to discuss Cold War dilemmas. These so-called Youth Leader Seminars had their heydays in the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, following the overall trends of the Cold War. Thus, they slowed towards the end of 1970s and came to a standstill after the introduction of martial law in Poland in 1981.

A different kind of youth encounters that continued throughout the Cold War were students’ interactions with the language and culture of a country on the opposite site of the Iron Curtain. Despite high tensions, language abilities were needed in diplomacy, trade, and security. In these years, one of the centres for Scandinavian studies was the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań (UAM). One of this anthology’s authors, Svend Gottschalk Rasmussen, has a special tie to this university as he has been a central figure of the Scandinavians studies environment in Poland. From 1980 to 1988, he held the exchange chair for Danish language studies, provided by the Danish Ministry of Education. His article is a personalized account of his years in Poznań and of his reflections upon reading his surveillance files at IPN archive.

From a Danish perspective, the 1980s were a particularly trying time. The Danish government wanted to stay on friendly terms with the communist government. However, the establishment of the *Solidarność* movement and the subsequent repression after the introduction of the martial law, tested its will to uphold dialogue with the communist regime. Part of Danish society sympathized openly with *Solidarność*, whereas the government was more cautious and anxious not to disrupt the dialogue of the 1970s. The regime of General Wojciech Jaruzelski could only count on support from a small minority in Danish politics, namely from the Muscovite loyalists of the Danish Communist Party.

The anthology is rounded off by Niels Bo Poulsen from the Royal Danish Military Academy. He examines the new chapter of the Polish-Danish relations initiated after the fall of communism. These were years when Europe was overcoming political divisions. In the Baltic area, this meant that the former Cold War adversaries Poland and Denmark built a new friendship and partnership within NATO. The road to this new relationship included cooperation within the OSCE and the so-called Partnership for Peace (PfP). At the very end of the 20th century, in 1999, Poland became a member of the Western alliance (NATO). Within this framework

Polish, German, and Danish forces intensified their cooperation both in Europe as well as in out-of-area operations. Poulsen emphasizes the importance of a new phase of military cooperation since the Russian invasion of Crimea in 2014.

Parallel to their cooperation in the realm of security, Denmark and Poland became partners in the European Union (EU). Though, this was not primarily due to Denmark's efforts, Poland's way back into Europe was at least on the symbolic level, tightly associated with its Baltic neighbour. "From Copenhagen to Copenhagen" could be the title of this chapter of the Polish-Danish relationship, since in 1993 the Copenhagen criteria which laid down the rules for European Union Members was decided during the Danish Presidency of the European Council. In 2002, under the Danish presidency, the enlargement of Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Malta, and Cyprus was decided at the EU Summit in the Danish capital. "We have an agreement!" were the words of the Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen after what was called the "largest foreign political challenge for Denmark in recent history".⁶

Both for the small and the medium European player, the new multilateral order opened a new chapter in their history where their possibilities of action were not only defined by larger neighbours. Furthermore, the post-Cold War world created possibilities for economic prosperity, freedom of movement, and scientific cooperation.

At the end of this introduction, the Knud Højgaard Foundation, the Royal Danish Embassy in Warsaw, and the Danish Cultural Institute which made this Polish-Danish cooperation project possible receive our appreciation and thanks. We would like to extend similar thanks to the Polish embassy in Copenhagen, to the Faculty of History at the University of Warsaw, and finally to the Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw.

6 Nikolaj Petersen, *Dansk Udenrigspolitik Historie, Vol.6 Europæisk og globalt engagement. 1973–2003*, Copenhagen 2004, 596–598.

GEORG BRANDES IN POLAND AND IN HUNGARY

A comparative study

Michalina Petelska

Georg Brandes is sometimes referred to as “a travelling literary critic”. One of the characteristic elements of his activities as a literary critic and as a “critic of reality” were the numerous lectures he gave in many European countries, as well as on his trip to the USA in 1914. The radical from Copenhagen visited the Polish territories six times. His translations, correspondence and friendships with the Poles were quite intensive. His visits and his relation to the Poles have been subject to extensive research.¹ Brandes would also visit other Central European countries and Russia, although the character of those contacts did not reach the intensiveness of his friendships (and conflict) with Poles. However, Brandes’ relations with the Hungarians have also been closely examined.² This makes it possible to compare Brandes’ relations to the two major Central European Nations as well as their reception of the works and views of Brandes.³

The Polish monograph “Georg Brandes and the Poles” from 2017 is in some aspects “very Polish”, just as the study of Hungary in the work by Zsuzanna Bjørn Andersen has a Hungarian perspective. Although Georg Brandes is the main focus in both studies, they also address political and cultural life as well as details of the biographies of the Dane’s friends. This allows the real influence and scale of engagement of the Dane to show in Polish and Hungarian matters. The article reverses the above perspective, which allows broader Central European optics to be adopted. Therefore, the text does not present details of Brandes’ visits or receptions, names, or friendships. Instead, it envisages simultaneously the earlier separated motifs: the Polish one and the Hungarian one.

Another aim of the text is to move beyond the analysis of Polish and Hungarian threads. Based on all the current studies over the legacy of the Danish critic, the article proposes a new look at the place of Central Europe (and Russia) in the life and work of Georg Brandes.

- 1 Michalina Petelska, *Georg Brandes i Polacy czyli o fenomenie wzajemnego zainteresowania z Polską w tle*, Gdańsk 2017. In the ending of the book, while presenting conclusions and formulating further proposals, I signalled several analogies between the Polish and Hungarian visits of Brandes. The article expands the motifs and adds numerous new ones.
- 2 Zsuzanna Bjørn Andersen, *The Voice from Outside. A Study in the Reception of Georg Brandes in Hungary*, Budapest 1994.
- 3 It must be highlighted that the comparative study does not refer exclusively either to the situation of the Poles and the Hungarians nor political history of Poland and Hungary in the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century.

THE SIMILARITIES: ACTIVITIES AND RECEPTION

Looking at Brandes' visits to Poland and Budapest, as well as their effects, a series of similarities may be pointed out. One of the characteristic traits of Brandes as a critic and a publicist was his promotion of Scandinavian literature outside Scandinavia and, as though "in the opposite direction", to promote in Scandinavia the literature, culture, and history of the countries he had visited.

In Warsaw during 1885, Brandes lectured on a reading: "Of Spiritual Life in Scandinavia in the 19th Century"⁴. In 1902, a book by Brandes was published entitled "Henryk Ibsen" in Lvov in Galicia.⁵ It had been translated by Józefa Klemensiewiczowa, one of Brandes's correspondents, who also introduced the Polish public to other authors from Norway and Denmark.

Nearly all the relations between Brandes and the Hungarians concentrated around the works of Ibsen. Brandes devoted two lectures in Budapest to the Norwegian playwright (1900, 1907).⁶ Brandes' 1907 visit was organised in order for the Dane to participate in the Hungarian premiere of the play "Hedda Gabler" which Ibsen wrote in 1890.⁷ After the first visit of Brandes to Budapest, interest in Scandinavian literature increased significantly in Hungary and thus, the number of translations and staged plays by Scandinavian playwrights rose.⁸

Brandes' relations with Poles and Hungarians were similarly shaped. In the preparation period for his visits, lectures, and publications, his informer-friends played an important role, as they would send mainly German translations of Polish/Hungarian literature and introduce him to locals. The readings and personal contact with Brandes resulted in increased interest in the famous literary critic. The Polish and Hungarian authors would send their works to Brandes in Copenhagen or visit him personally in the Danish capital.⁹ Editorial cooperation was also vibrant, and both Polish and Hungarian press would often reprint articles by Brandes from various foreign, usually German, magazines. In several preserved letters, the editors of Polish and Hungarian periodicals appealed to the famous Dane to send new and unpublished material.¹⁰ Brandes would, whenever possible, answer such requests.¹¹

The most characteristic similarity in the context of personal relations were the female friends and correspondents of Brandes. His second visit of to Budapest, in 1907, was organised by Hedda Lenkei and Elza Szasz. Elza Szasz was a journalist and translator who knew the Dane.¹² Hedda Lenkei was an actress; during Brandes'

4 Petelska, *Georg Brandes i Polacy*, 74.

5 Jerzy Brandes, *Henryk Ibsen*, Lwów 1902.

6 Bjørn Andersen, *The Voice from Outside*, 87–90; 148–152.

7 *Ibid.*, 146.

8 *Ibid.*, 95. I have already presented the role of Brandes in promoting Scandinavian literature in Hungary in: Petelska, *Georg Brandes i Polacy*, 32–35.

9 See: Bjørn Andersen, *The Voice from Outside*, 141, 142; Petelska, *Georg Brandes i Polacy*, 190–192.

10 See: Bjørn Andersen, *The Voice from Outside*, 49.

11 See: Petelska, *Georg Brandes i Polacy*, 184–188.

12 Bjørn Andersen, *The Voice from Outside*, 115–121.

visit she played the title role in “Hedda Gabler” by Ibsen.¹³ The actress Mari Jaszai also played an important role in the Hungarian reception of Brandes.¹⁴ All three of them corresponded with Brandes. In Warsaw, the circle of people closest to Brandes included Jadwiga Brzezińska and Józefa Szebeko, while during his stay in Lvov the Dane established a longstanding and sincere friendship with the poet, Maryla Wolska.

Bjørn Andersen noticed that when writing to married couples, for instance to Elza Szasz and her husband Zsombor Szasz, Brandes would always write separate letters.¹⁵ The same pattern can be noted in the example of the Dane’s Polish friends. Brandes’ abundant correspondence with Maryla Wolska has been preserved as well as a separate letter addressed to her husband Wacław Wolski.¹⁶ The Georg Brandes Collection also contains 56 letters from Jadwiga Brzezińska and only as few as nine from Jan Brzeziński.¹⁷

It is worth dwelling on the way Brandes perceived Hungary and (the non-existent) Poland. He readily presented the countries through the prism of their history and national aspirations for freedom. Among the other pieces he wrote is an essay entitled “Arthur Görgei”, dedicated to the general and a leader of the Hungarian uprising of 1848. Brandes praised him, stating that he was: “the man of action that men of letters might envy”.¹⁸ This was in full accordance with the Dane’s critical literary views as well as with his research method (aristocratic radicalism). At the same time, it was convergent with his numerous texts regarding Poland and the Poles. His views could be summed up by the famous sentence: “We love Poland, therefore, not as we love Germany or France or England, but as we love freedom.”¹⁹

For Georg Brandes himself the most difficult similarity in his relations with the Poles and the Hungarians came with the outbreak of the First World War and its consequences. During the bloody conflict the Dane declared neutrality and pointed at the insanity and atrocity of the fighting. At the same time, he found himself in the “trap” of his own views, and extremely broad contacts. Before the Great War, he had travelled all over Europe and had friends in all its corners. He argued for the right to self-determination of nations and opposed the violence inflicted by stronger countries on weaker ones. As a result of First World War, the Hungarians might have gained their own state, yet – from their perspective – it was reduced by the territories where nations developed, among them the Slovaks, Romanians, and Croats. In such a situation some Hungarians considered the neutral attitude of Brandes as inappropriate towards Hungary.²⁰ Some Poles, in turn, held against him

13 Ibid., 129–133.

14 Ibid., 121–129.

15 Ibid., 134.

16 Michalina Petelska, Listowna przyjaźń. Korespondencja między Georgiem Brandesem a Wandą Młodnicką i Marylą Wolską, in: *Studia Historica Gedanensia* 3 (2012), 153–181.

17 Petelska, *Georg Brandes i Polacy*, 317.

18 Bjørn Andersen, *The Voice from Outside*, 86.

19 Georg Brandes, *Poland: a study of the land, people, and literature*, London 1903, 48.

20 Bjørn Andersen, *The Voice from Outside*, 206–208.

the fact that during the war he stood in defence of the Jews living in Polish territories.²¹

BRANDES CENTRAL EUROPE AND RUSSIA

In the 19th century there was no independent Polish state: Polish territories were divided among Germany, Russia, and Austria-Hungary. In the three empires and in varying periods of the 19th century, the opportunities for Poles to use their mother tongue in public life were very different. The Hungarians, on the other hand, enjoyed vast autonomy and privileges within the framework of the Habsburg Dual Monarchy. It was the political background which made communication challenging to the Dane, who knew neither Polish nor Hungarian. In Budapest, Brandes began the reading of his lecture with words almost identical to those he had previously used in Lvov. The 1898 reading in Lvov, conducted in German, began with:

The language in which I shall take the privilege of addressing you is undoubtedly not the closest to our hearts, yet I presume, one you shall understand best, since neither am I able to understand your language, nor do you comprehend mine.²²

In 1900 in Budapest, he commenced as follows:

The language in which I am going to address you is not your own language, nor is it mine. I must admit that I have no special affection for the German language and, as far as I have heard, neither have you. Nevertheless, on this occasion, I must have recourse to it since what matters most, after all, is that we should understand one another. I learnt this language at the age of thirty. And although I have full mastery of it, my pronunciation unfortunately leaves much to be desired. It is no empty phrase if I ask for your indulgence.²³

Other quotes are worth paying attention to as well. In 1885, during his first stay in Warsaw, Brandes would send letters home filled with frantic enthusiasm:

Just arrived here. The whole apartment in a private house at my disposal is decorated with paintings, absolutely excellent. I have two servants, of whom one understands German. I have five rooms including a bedroom. My name is written with capital letters on the door. On my desk is a business card of which I enclose a printed sample. Until now I have invitations for the first 8 or 9 days – a number of celebrations with estate owners, counts, literators, and so on all in my honor. As in Vienna I am being titulated as the most important critic of our time.²⁴ Or simply: “I live here in splendor and glory.”²⁵

- 21 I have devoted a separate extended article to the analysis of articles by Brandes and the reaction of the Poles: Michalina Petelska, *Antypolskie czy antywojenne? Wokół wystąpień Georga Brandesa z 1914 r.*, in: Iwona Sakowicz-Tebinka (ed.): *Rok 1914: jaka Polska, jaki świat?: w kręgu zainteresowań badawczych profesora Romana Wapińskiego*, Gdańsk 2016, 215–236.
- 22 Petelska, *Georg Brandes i Polacy*, 304. Polish newspapers quoted those words in Polish, currently they have been translated for the purpose of this article.
- 23 Bjørn Andersen, *The Voice from Outside*, 88. In her book Bjørn Andersen provides a quotation straight in translation to English.
- 24 Georg Brandes, *Breve til Forældrene 1872–1904, på grundlag af Morten Borups forarbejder udgivet af Torben Nielsen, II 1880–1904*, Copenhagen 1994, 128.
- 25 *Ibid.*, 129.

Fifteen years later Brandes wrote to his father about his impressions of Budapest:

I have a room that is 32 feet long and 18 feet wide, a carriage with two horses at my disposal and everything is free. Yesterday, I gave a talk to great applause and afterwards a reception was held for me. There were four speeches in my honour, and I spoke very well in reply.

In all the theatres, I sit in the director's box at their invitation, and I am invited out every day, both at midday and in the evening [...]. All Hungarians hope that I will write about them. The hospitality here is lavish, but it is rather tiresome never to be left alone.

The newspapers report every single word that I say in private and numerous articles have already been written about me. The illustrated newspapers display my portrait. I had to be photographed at once.²⁶

The words Brandes used were not identical. However, the situation itself and its description were surprisingly similar. This preferential treatment demonstrates how both Poles and Hungarians, though for different reasons, perceived him as a famous European, a symbol of particular ideas and the struggle for their realization. It was from such an attitude that the heated atmosphere of the Danish critic's visits resulted. It comes as no surprise that Brandes himself took advantage of such situations and assumed the role of a celebrity.

It was not the only role Brandes would assume during his lecturing tournee: he would become a speaker who made a living this way. The Dane arrived to Budapest for the first time in 1900, yet his initial plans had assumed he would visit the Hungarians as early as in 1898, that is the same year he visited Poles in Krakow and Lvov, and that he would read the same lecture.

Krakow and Lvov were located in the part of Polish territories that were under Austrian rule in the 19th century (and later under Austro-Hungarian rule). The initial plan of the "lecturing tour" assumed that Brandes would go from Lvov to Budapest – it would have been "just" a further journey within the borders of the same state. Those intentions were jeopardized by the sudden news of his mother's illness. Thus, he returned to Denmark and visited Hungary only two years later. It has not been noted in literature yet that, in his initial plans for 1898, Brandes was going to give the same lecture in Budapest which he had given in Lvov. On 26 November 1898, in Lvov, Brandes presented the lecture "What Needs to be Read and How", which was later published as a brochure in Polish entitled "O czytaniu" ("Om læsning"/"On Reading"). As Bjørn Andersen sets out, having been invited to Budapest, Brandes proposed the readout of "On Reading" as his speech and only at the request of the Hungarians he changed it to Ibsen's figure and works.²⁷

The first work by the young Brandes referred directly to Denmark ("Dualism in our recent Philosophy", 1866). He devoted much of attention to all of Scandinavia and especially to Ibsen. His most renowned multi-volume study concerned currents in the literatures of Germany, France, and England. With time and his many travels, he extended his interests even further. Based on numerous studies of the life and works of Brandes, the Polish territories, Russia, and Hungary came to play a special

26 Bjørn Andersen, *The Voice from Outside*, 85.

27 *Ibid.*, 87.

role.²⁸ Furthermore, Brandes held speeches on behalf of minorities and the oppressed, from the Finnish in Russia to the Armenians in the Ottoman empire.

Brandes began his exploration of Central- and Eastern Europe due to his contacts in the Polish lands. After he was well acquainted with the Poles, he continued his travels to Prague and Budapest as well as to St. Petersburg and Moscow. It could be argued that his “Polish training” opened up this part of Europe with its complicated national and political issues to the Scandinavian visitor.

Altogether Brandes visited Polish lands six times in the years 1881 to 1898. His journeys brought him to Poznań (1881), Warsaw (1885, 86, 87, 94), Pawłowice (1894), Krakow (1898), and Lvov (1898). In this way he experienced life in all three Polish partitions. His first trip led him to Poznań in the Germany partition. He had been invited by Germans, yet already during his stay there he came into contact with Poles. His four subsequent visits to Warsaw came at the distinct invitation of Poles. These visits caused Brandes to become the spokesperson for Polish matters on the international stage. In the same period, he also visited St. Petersburg (1887, 1895) and Moscow (1887), thus he got impressions of different parts of the Tsarist Empire.

As an intellectual and a remarkable literary critic, Georg Brandes had been familiar with the Russian culture before he began to travel to the Polish territories and to Russia. Yet, in the sense of getting to know the Russian state, its bureaucracy, particularly the methods of managing the conquered territories, Brandes’ route to Russia led through Poland. This is quite obvious, especially to everyone who has read “Impressions from Poland” which includes the sentence: “[...] Warsaw is the Capital in a country not recognized by its own government.”²⁹ The extensive analysis of the source material contained in the monograph “Georg Brandes i Polacy”, however, gives us more details of this situation. In 1885, while preparing his first lecture in Warsaw, Georg Brandes realised painfully what Russian censorship was all about. Brandes had Russian friends and correspondents, and he wrote of Turgenev, Dostoevsky, and Tolstoy, yet his encounter with the Russian administration in the conquered country compelled him to write his parents: “What Russia really is – nobody outside Russia knows it nor believes it. There is nothing worse nor stupid.”³⁰ Furthermore, he added not without irony: “Oh Russia! Beloved land! You taught me well! Those who study you know what freedom is and know its worth.”³¹

In 1886, Karol Benni, a Polish friend of Brandes, foresaw that the Dane’s experience with Russia would impact him. At this time, while Brandes was preparing for the trip to Petersburg, Benni wrote: “I am very excited about your upcoming impression – about your comparison between the ruler and the ruled.”³²

28 The basic tool is the calendar of Brandes’ life and work prepared by Per Dahl, available in print and online at georgbrandes.dk (accessed 17 Aug 2022).

29 Brandes, *Indtryk fra Polen*, 16.

30 Brandes, *Breve til Forældrene 1872–1904 II*, 132.

31 *Ibid.*, 139.

32 Georg Brandes’ Arkiv, Det Kongelige Bibliotek, a letter from Karol Benni to Georg Brandes, 21 November 1886.

It is also worth dwelling upon a less frequently noticed pattern, namely that the mental journey from Copenhagen to Budapest led through the non-existent Poland.³³ Brandes visited Budapest twice: in 1900 and in 1907. Thus Brandes' "Polish training" was also part of the path to getting to know the Hungarian psyche. While most of his prior travels brought him to Warsaw, his travels to Krakow and Lvov in 1898 acquainted him with the Poles living in the Habsburg partition. That way, by means of contrast, he disclosed the living conditions in the absolutist Russian Empire and the federal Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Even in his best-known text concerning Polish affairs, namely the book "Indtryk fra Polen" from 1885, Brandes wrote as follows: "It was in Austria that this policy was first modified. The Poles were granted liberty of speech and action, they encountered sympathy, they gradually received power, and became contented."³⁴ The consequence of such liberty was seen, among others, in the development of the Polish press in Austrian Galicia and the Russian censorship against it: "It is absolutely forbidden to take in any Galician paper, as well as to reprint any article from these."³⁵ When in 1898 Georg Brandes visited the Poles in Krakow and in Lvov, he was able to write the following words for the first time: "My stay in Galicia had this great interest to me, that here for the first time I saw the Poles as a free people."³⁶ Further on in the text, Brandes described his impressions from an observed training of the Polish paramilitary organisation "Falcon", the Polish Gymnastic Society, and other organisations. In Lvov he also visited a Polish theatre and, most notable of all, he personally met the ruling establishment: the representative of the central authorities (the governor) as well as the officials who personified the autonomy of the region (the Country Parliament marshal, the city mayor).³⁷ It was an extensive encounter with the society and authorities of a capital city of one of the crown states of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Even though the Kingdom of Hungary had a different administrative and political status within the complicated framework of the vast Habsburg state, one can undoubtedly speak here of approaching Budapest from remote Copenhagen by means of several steps. The Hungarian society enjoyed even more liberties than the Poles and two years later, during his stay on the Danube, Brandes noted down some similar observations: "Everywhere I see debating societies, theatres and libraries accessible to all who can make effort to use them."³⁸

The starting point of cooperation and closer personal relations between Brandes and the Hungarians was in 1891, when the group of Hungarian liberals who created

33 Only in a metaphorical sense, of course: the road to cognition. In the literal sense – irony from the point of view of the Hungarians! – the network of railway connections was organised in such a way that the route to Budapest had to lead through Vienna.

34 Georg Brandes, *Poland. A study of the land, people and literature*, London 1903, 134. In footnote 29 I quoted the Danish edition of "Indtryk fra Polen", yet it comes from 1888 and contains only "Førsteindtryk" and "Andetindtryk". The quote comes from a description of summer spent in a Polish manor estate in 1894. ("Third Impression (1894). A Polish Manor House").

35 Brandes, *Poland*, 147.

36 *Ibid.*, 166. In Polish, the coverage from Lvov was published as a separate small book entitled "Lwów".

37 He described all those meetings in "Lwów" ("Fourth Impression. Lemberg").

38 Bjørn Andersen, *The Voice from Outside*, 94.

the magazine "Elet" turned to the renowned Dane with a request to send in an article. Since the ideological profile of the new journalistic initiative was close to the worldview of the critic from Copenhagen, both sides established a fruitful collaboration. In January 1891, an essay by Georg Brandes entitled "Polish Romantic Literature" appeared in the first issue of the Hungarian periodical.³⁹

The author of the monograph "The Voice from Outside" studied the texts by Brandes which were the most popular among Hungarian readers. From among the several dozen books and countless articles by the Danish critic, the following works enjoyed the greatest popularity: "William Shakespeare", "Impressions from Poland", "Aesthetic Studies", and "Main Currents in Nineteenth century Literature".⁴⁰ Such large attention directed at "Impressions from Poland" resulted from the Hungarians identifying with the situation of the Poles and placing the national question in its centre.⁴¹

Bjørn Andersen highlighted in her work the reservations of the Hungarians towards Vienna, and their struggle to establish an independent state. In such a situation, one of the reasons for the benevolence of the Hungarians towards Brandes was that he did not represent Vienna, nor any of the European powers, and the fact of his considerable engagement in the Polish affairs. The topic of the 1848 struggle was one of the recurring motifs in the relations between Brandes and the Hungarians.

DIFFERENCES AND PERSPECTIVES

The way Brandes impacted his Polish and Hungarian readers and friends bore one essential difference: the Hungarians read the works of Brandes mostly in German. Only twelve articles and three books by Brandes were published in Hungarian.⁴² In comparison, fourteen books and forty articles were translated into Polish.⁴³ However, Bjørn Andersen did not attach any interpretational importance to it, underlining that for the Hungarians the German language was simply the language of communication with Europe, commonly known within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.

Another matter, which was at least apparently different is the role given to Brandes' visits by the hosts. Whenever Brandes came to Warsaw and spoke of Polish literature, it would have political ramifications. The Dane would keep that role even many years after his visits to the Polish lands, for instance during the 1905 revolution.⁴⁴ In 1908, His political importance was also underlined when he answered the call of the Polish Nobel Prize winner Henryk Sienkiewicz addressing the expropriation of Poles in the Prussian partition.⁴⁵ The Hungarians, on the other hand, wanted to use their relations with Brandes in two ways, in the context of es-

39 Ibid., 52–57.

40 Ibid., 95.

41 Ibid., 52.

42 Ibid., 244–245.

43 Petelska, Georg Brandes i Polacy, 309–315.

44 Ibid., 234–238.

45 Ibid., 229–231.

establishing a broader communication with European literature and with the aim of extending their political liberties.⁴⁶ Still, what linked the attitudes of the Poles, and the Hungarians was the treatment of Brandes as a “Cultural Missionary” and an “activist critic”. Inviting the famous Dane to Warsaw, Lvov, Budapest or to other cities in the world, was always something beyond just organising a lecture on literary subjects.

In 1900, during first visit of Brandes to Budapest, he enjoyed a great atmosphere. During his second stay in the city press commentaries were more nuanced, some of them even polemical towards the Dane. Bjørn Andersen noted one vicious remark referring to his Jewish origins.⁴⁷ The change in the attitude towards the Scandinavian guest was explained by the researcher as being intertwined with the transformation of the Hungarian society itself, with the decline of liberalism and the growth of nationalism.⁴⁸ Brandes’ visits to Warsaw were accompanied from the very beginning by heated debate in the local press. Already during his first stay, conservative newspapers and magazines warned their readers against the “cosmopolitan”, “liberal”, “progressive”, and “atheist” Brandes. Unfortunately, it must be noted that more often than in Hungary ad personam allegations referring to the Jewish origins of the guest from Copenhagen were formulated.⁴⁹ The “temperature” of the press dispute was much higher in the Polish press than in the Hungarian. At the same time, it is yet another difference which could be attributed to a broader pattern; in Poland and in Hungary (and elsewhere) the social and political attitudes of the recipients had a profound impact on the reception of Brandes’ views and works.⁵⁰ In the instance of the Polish press in Warsaw, it was observed that the lectures and works of Brandes’ were generally not the essence of the polemic, they were merely a pretext for continuing a constant ideological dispute between the press bodies of various circles.⁵¹ An identical conclusion was also formulated in regards to Hungary.⁵²

The essential difference between the relations of Brandes with the Poles and the Hungarians was the number of visits in the Polish territories (six) and in Budapest (two), a considerable predominance in the number of his Polish friends and correspondents and most of all the considerably stronger journalistic engagement into the Polish matters rather than that of Hungary.⁵³ On the other hand, the method of operation of the “travelling literary critic” in both cases showed numerous similarities.

46 Bjørn Andersen, *The Voice from Outside*, 12, 33–34.

47 *Ibid.*, 161.

48 *Ibid.*, 157–158.

49 Petelska, *Georg Brandes i Polacy*, 255–286.

50 Bjørn Andersen, *The Voice from Outside*, 11, 232–233.

51 Petelska, *Georg Brandes i Polacy*, 143.

52 Bjørn Andersen, *The Voice from Outside*, 211.

53 Despite detailed queries it is hard to close the list of correspondents with full certainty – the question of letters (archival units) which have not survived to our times, particularly in the Polish archives and libraries, from which many had burnt down or had been destroyed in the course of World War II. It is even harder to speak of compiling “a list of friends”. Nevertheless, in both monographs indexes of correspondents are provided: it was possible to identify 53

The above conclusions regarding the Polish territories and Hungary are worth being juxtaposed with the reception of the views and works of Brandes among the Czechs. For many years, the Dane had frequented Karlsbad, or Karlove Vary, for his summer retreat, where he would meet with Georges Clemenceau. Was he aware that he was staying in Czech land? Georg Brandes visited Prague on three occasions: in 1892, 1905 and in 1926. Particularly the last visit of 1926 was interesting since it was the only after the dissolutions of Austria-Hungary. At that time he met with President Tomáš Masaryk. The relations of Brandes with the Poles and the Hungarians were largely though not exclusively, a 19th century experience. The Danish critic visited neither the independent Poland nor Hungary in the interwar period.

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HISTORIOGRAPHICAL CHRONOTYPES IN THE POLISH SCHOLARSHIP

Lizaveta Dubinka-Hushcha

A constellation of historical moments, like a drop of seawater, may contain some quintessential knowledge about the totality of converging events.¹ The conference “Just Across the Sea: 100 Years of Polish-Danish Diplomatic Relations”, was just such a constellation, gathering scholars, politicians, and representatives of the Danish royal family to celebrate the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the two nations. The latter’s occurrence was also a significant historical event for the population of Western Belarus and Western Ukraine, whose territories were part of Poland between 1920–1939 and thus also represented by the Polish diplomats.

This article deals with the historiography of Danish-Polish relations in the 20th century using the chronotope framework (from Greek χρόνος, “time” and τόπος, “place”), which illuminates the traditional historical turning points in the context of a wide backdrop of historical trends and patterns.² The chronotope approach to the Polish historiography of Danish-Polish relations reveals the major topics in Polish scholarship seen through the dual context of Danish-Polish relations. To understand Polish scholars’ particular topic choices, it is important to bear the time dimension in mind. Despite the Cold War, Polish scholarship of Danish foreign policy was relatively devoid of ideological bias, reflecting a rather forward-thinking approach for its time and highlighting the importance of Danish-Polish historical and cultural ties. The fact that a small state like Denmark had such prominence in Polish historiography, particularly during this period of time, is a significant achievement. Numerous articles in Polish journals testify that Denmark continued to hold greater academic interest than the propaganda in the Eastern bloc. Indeed, few countries can boast of having a school of Scandinavian studies. Poland has several such centers, in which it has been possible to study both Danish history and the Danish language. It is difficult to say whether the fascination with Denmark in Poland was due to or in spite of the Cold War. In any case, this accumulated knowledge was essential for the new stage of relations between Denmark and Poland after the end of the Cold War.

- 1 Елизавета Дубинко-Гуца, Исторические предпосылки шлезвиг-гольштейнского конфликта и его влияние на формирование внешней политики Дании, in: Труды кафедры истории Нового и новейшего времени, Санкт-Петербургский государственный университет, 2011, 132.
- 2 The term “chronotope” was introduced into the historical science by Aron Gurevich, see: Арон Гуревич, Категории средневековой культуры, vol. 2, Moscow 1999.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

It is important to first understand how a particular chronotope becomes a historical milestone. Toward this end, one can use the “look at the past” approach developed in the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl, the hermeneutics of Philipp Heinrich Dilthey and Hans-Georg Gadamer, the sociology of Max Weber, and “The Annales” historical school. Culture can be regarded as set of mentally programmed values, which may be discerned and explained. This rationalist approach is in line with philosophical positivism. However, representatives of the hermeneutic tradition have opposed this approach, suggesting that instead of explaining culture, one should strive to understand it. According to the interpretivist tradition developed in hermeneutics, culture is a set of meanings of things and acts. It is, in fact, a true social construction of meaning. As Russian philologist Mikhail Bakhtin notes:

a meaning only reveals its depths once it has encountered and come into contact with another, foreign meaning: they engage in a kind of dialogue which surmounts the ‘closedness’ and ‘outsidedness’ of these particular meanings, these cultures.³

The term “chronotope” was coined by Bakhtin. Aaron Gurevich from the Annales School subsequently introduced it into the study of history, developing the approach in his work on the medieval history of Scandinavian countries.⁴ Historical chronotopes are more comprehensive than the usual turning points of history because they include not only the temporal, but also the spatial dimension of events. On the other hand, they also differ from the geographical determinism characteristic of geopolitical analysis because the temporal dimension further entails the ability to evolve. This has a practical consequence: By adding a temporal dimension, historiographical analysis becomes embedded in the context of relations prevalent in a society at a particular historical juncture. Chronotopes thus become metaphors of a particular narrative of the past. Historiographical chronotopes are consequently inseparable from scholars’ own perceptions of events seen through the lens of their time.

A historian is not able to test own knowledge empirically since the object of this knowledge is always in the past. The scholar deals only with its trace – a historical fact – and thereby adjusts the own attitude towards the contemporaries’ testimonies of this or that event. The historical fact appears in three qualities – as the reality of the past; as the reality of the past reflected in the sources; and as the result of a scientific interpretation of the reality of the past, reflected in the sources.⁵ The vision of the past is ultimately determined by the historical context in which the historian is embedded. Michel Foucault used the term “chronotopes of a historian” to characterize the complexity of this situation. At issue, then, is the time when the historical research was carried out; the time when the events under investigation took place; and the intermediate periods to which the previous interpretations of the

3 Mikhail Bakhtin, *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, Austin 1986, 7.

4 A. Gurevich was both a proponent and a critic of M. Bakhtin’s approach.

5 Viachaslau Menkouski, Michal Šmigel’, Lizaveta Dubinka-Hushcha, *The Hunger Games*, Bańska-Bystrica 2021, 74.

event belong, i.e. historiographic traditions.⁶ The historian is in constant combat with the sources, for they are both a means of cognition and a barrier. In addition to what the past sought to communicate through its eyewitnesses, the texts of the sources contain many things this past did not want to divulge. These are involuntary, unintentional statements within the sources, something that the historical authors reveal.⁷ According to Gurevich, this “irrational remnant”, which is not censored by the consciousness of the creators of the texts, is the most authentic historical evidence.⁸

Three main chronotopes present a wide-ranging picture of Danish-Polish historical ties in the last 100 years: a) the uniting and separating forces of the Baltic Sea; b) Denmark and Poland between great powers in the interwar period; and c) centripetal and centrifugal forces during the Cold War. In the following sections, I will summarize the perceptions of Danish foreign policy and predominant interpretations present in Polish historiography.

THE BALTIC SEA – UNIFIER OR DIVIDER?

Denmark’s geographical location at the crossroads of strategically important sea routes in Europe – connecting Northern, Eastern and Western Europe – had a significant impact on its historical development. From a geographical perspective, the importance of the Øresund strait and the Kattegat strait is comparable to the Turkish straits and Gibraltar, the so-called “jugular veins” of Europe. Control of the former provided a stable income for the Danish treasury, which benefitted from the passage fees for vessels travelling from the Baltic to the North Sea and the Atlantic Ocean.

The Polish historian Władysław Czapliński published a comprehensive book on the history of Denmark “Dzieje Danii nowożytnej 1500–1975” in 1982.⁹ As a student, Czapliński was inspired to develop an interest in the Baltic region by his teacher and supervisor Władysław Konopczyński. In Czapliński’s monograph, he pays particular attention to socio-economic and cultural relations and distinguishes three major turning points in Danish history: (1) the Kalmar Union (1397), which opened broad opportunities for Denmark and played a significant role beyond Scandinavia; (2) the historical situation around Schleswig and Holstein; (3) finally, the threat of Hanseatic cities and their power over the Baltic sea.¹⁰ One can distinguish a number of other, more specific turning points; however, in my view, they can be united under the same chronotope, namely, the struggle over *Dominum Maris Baltici*.

In this fight for dominance of the Baltic Sea, Denmark’s main rivals were Sweden and various German states. The latter controlled trade on the Baltic coast during

6 Michel Foucault, *Of Other Spaces. Heterotopias* (1967), <http://foucault.info/documents/heteroTopia/foucault.heteroTopia.en.html> (accessed 2 November 2020).

7 Menkouski, Šmigel, Dubinka-Hushcha *The Hunger Games*, 75.

8 Арон Гуревич, *Историк конца XX века в поисках метода*, <http://tuad.nsk.ru/~history/Author/Russ/G/GurevichAJa/metod.html> (accessed 10 November 2020).

9 Władysław Czapliński, *Dzieje Danii Nowożytnej 1500–1975*, Warsaw 1982.

10 *Ibid.*, 84.

the height of the Hanseatic League. The loss of Skåne to Sweden under the Roskilde Peace Treaty (1658) entailed the weakening of Denmark's control over the strait of Øresund and the Baltic Sea. Revenues from trade duties fell sharply and the Danish economy fell into decay.

The international situation of the 19th century predetermined Denmark's position as a balance wheel between the great powers. Its foreign policy reflected the fluctuations in the rise and fall of nations on the European continent.¹¹ Domination of the Baltic passed to Prussia, which in 1867 annexed the city of Kiel in the south of the Jutland peninsula and built the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal, which enabled the Prussians to bypass the strait of Øresund. Czapliński, together with other historians, emphasizes that Denmark's military and economic weakness led to a considerable diminishment of its international status.¹² Denmark consequently became a small state that was highly dependent on the policies of its more influential neighbors.

BETWEEN SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS: DENMARK AND POLAND BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS

Denmark's major goal was to have its neutrality guaranteed by the great powers, primarily Germany, Russia, and England. Russia was traditionally interested in neutralizing the Danish straits. However, the guarantees of Russia alone would not suffice, since the main threat to Denmark's security was the ongoing rift between Germany and England, which in the event of war could result in a blockade of the Baltic Sea.

Politician and historian Peter Munch (1870–1948) laid out the basic principles of Denmark's foreign policy as a small state. Denmark's defeat in the war with Prussia had a significant influence on Munch's political views. For instance, Germany's superiority was so obvious that any further reliance on the Danish military might have seemed pointless. In Munch's view, the only way to preserve Denmark as a state was to renounce the use of military force and to pursue instead a policy of neutrality and "economic disarmament". As a social liberal representing the Radical Left Party (*Radikale Venstre*), Munch attached great importance to the role of international organizations in resolving conflicts. In this spirit, he supported Woodrow Wilson's famous "Fourteen Points". In his lectures, delivered at the Institute for International Studies in Geneva, Munch drew attention to the "moral authority" of small states such as Denmark, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, all of whom were neutral during the First World War. According to Munch, small states – unlike the great powers – can only have a very limited impact on European politics. Nonetheless, they could also become a major factor in strengthening the stability of peace on the continent through multilateral international trade.¹³

11 Дубинко-Гуша, Исторические предпосылки шлезвиг-гольштейнского, 132.

12 Czapliński, *Dzieje Danii Nowożytnej 1500–1975*, 85.

13 Peter Munch, *La politique du Danemark dans la Société des Nations*, Genève, 1931.

By the beginning of the First World War, 60% of Danish exports went to England and 29% to Germany. At the same time, the share of English imports was 17% and of German 37%. The policy of neutrality enabled Denmark to derive benefits from trade with both countries.¹⁴

Denmark's trade balance in the interwar period confirms its strategic position at the intersection of German and British interests. Danish trade relations in the interwar period and the problem of striking a balance between Germany and Great Britain were the major research focus of Polish scholar Bolesław Hajduk. The growing interest toward the end of 1970s in the economic and political aspects of Polish-Danish relations during the time diplomatic ties were established between 1919 and the Second World War is an indication of growing awareness of the common history and role of bilateral trade with Denmark in the early years of Poland's regained independence. Political change was in the air in Poland in the beginning of the 1980s. The works of Hajduk help to reconstruct Poland as part of the Baltic Sea region, where the city of Gdańsk is a historical hub, connecting Northern and Western Europe as well as the Atlantic.¹⁵

An important dimension of Polish-Danish cooperation after Poland's independence was maritime and infrastructure development. Denmark participated actively in the construction of the seaport in Gdynia, with the Danish engineering company "Højgaard og Schultz" commissioning most of the construction work. The cooperation started with unofficial contacts between Danish and Polish entrepreneurs. In 1924, a French-Polish consortium was created for the purpose of building the Gdynian seaport with support from Danish engineers. Hajduk points out that

an irrefutable contribution of the Danish side was the elaboration and implementation of new construction methods of breakwaters and wharves by means of the application of ferroconcrete Copenhagen-type caissons.¹⁶

Højgaard og Schultz's construction and hydro-technical work and its participation in construction of the seaport in Gdynia was indeed significant. Other examples of cooperation in construction and infrastructure included the port in Wielkiej Wsi and railway projects involving two Polish-Danish companies. Polish officials also developed maritime projects with Denmark, which, however, was not realized.

In a paper from 1981, Hajduk demonstrated the influence of Great Britain on Polish-Danish trade relations. In 1931, Great Britain withdrew from the gold standard, which decreased the value of the pound and triggered specific currency moves in Scandinavian countries.¹⁷

14 Karl Christian Lammers (ed.), *Danmarks historie bind 7: Tiden 1914–1945*, in: *Danmarks historie vol. 7*, Copenhagen, 1988, 88.

15 Bolesław Hajduk, *Stosunki handlowe pomiędzy Polska i Dania w latach 1919–1933* in: *Komunikaty Instytutu Bałtyckiego* 34/19 (1982), 65–91; Bolesław Hajduk, *Z problematyki porozumień handlowych Polska i Dania w latach 1934–1939*, in: *Komunikaty Instytutu Bałtyckiego* 33/18 (1981), 63–79.

16 Bolesław Hajduk, *Polsko-duńskie kontakty portowe i żeglugowe w latach 1919–1939*, in: *Komunikaty Instytutu Bałtyckiego*, 30/16 (1979), 27.

17 Hajduk, *Z problematyki*, 63–79.

British policy towards the Scandinavian countries on the eve of Second World War is also described in Polish historiography by Mieczysław Nurek.¹⁸ This topic is also well-studied in Susan Seymour's book based on her doctoral research.¹⁹ The study of the interwar period is useful for understanding the driving forces that prompted Denmark to abandon its previous policy of neutrality after the Second World War in favor of military, political, and economic integration into the Euro-Atlantic institutional structures.

A comprehensive historical review of Polish relations with Scandinavian countries is offered in Paweł Jaworski's monograph "Polska niepodległa wobec Skandynawii 1918–1939" from 2001.²⁰ Jaworski calls Scandinavian policy, which rejected Poland's status as a permanent member of the League of Nations in 1926²¹ as "anti-Polish". He also highlights the importance of mutual cultural contacts "developed in the shadow of economic and political relations". The Nobel Prize in literature awarded to Władysław Reymont in 1926 was an important milestone.²²

CENTRIPETAL AND CENTRIFUGAL FORCES DURING THE COLD WAR.

In Eastern Europe during the Cold War, Poland and Eastern Germany stood out for their efforts to develop dynamic Scandinavian studies programs. Indeed, scientific periodicals like "Studia Scandinavica" (Gdańsk), "Komunikaty Instytutu Bałtyckiego" (Gdańsk), "Sprawy Międzynarodowe" (Warsaw), "Acta Poloniae Historica" (Warsaw), "Nordeuropastudien" (Greifswald) became major forums for discussing urgent foreign policy issues relating to the Scandinavian countries. Jadwiga Wróblewska's numerous writings, which cover the period after the Second World War until 1977, provide comprehensive reviews of scientific publications about Scandinavian countries in Polish.²³ Here she further cites other periodicals, e.g. "Acta Baltico-Slavica", "Czasopismo Prawno-Historyczne", "Gdańskie Zeszyty Humani-

18 Mieczysław Nurek, *Dyplomacja brytyjska wobec kwestii integracji w rejonie morza Bałtyckiego 1919–1939*, in: *Polska wobec idei integracji europejskiej w latach 1918–1945*, Toruń 2000, 195–217.

19 Susan Seymour, *Anglo-Danish relations and Germany 1933–1945*, Odense, 1982.

20 Paweł Jaworski, *Polska niepodległa wobec Skandynawii 1918–1939*, Wrocław, 2001, 283.

21 *Ibid.*, 281.

22 *Ibid.*, 282.

23 Jadwiga Wróblewska, *Stan i potrzeby badań skandynawistycznych w Polsce po II wojnie światowej*, in: *Komunikaty Instytutu Bałtyckiego*, 8 (1968), 32–34; Jadwiga Wróblewska, *Przegląd polskich publikacji z zakresu skandynawistyki za lata 1967–1969*, in: *Komunikaty Instytutu Bałtyckiego*, 11 (1969), 67–75; Jadwiga Wróblewska, *Przegląd polskich publikacji z zakresu skandynawistyki za lata 1970–1972*, in: *Gdańskie Zeszyty Humanistyczne*, 17/17 (1973/74), 17 (1975), 155–176; Jadwiga Wróblewska, *Przegląd polskich publikacji z zakresu skandynawistyki za lata 1973–1975*, in: *Komunikaty Instytutu Bałtyckiego*, 24/25 (1977), 63–77; Jadwiga Wróblewska, *Przegląd polskich publikacji z zakresu skandynawistyki za lata 1976–1977*, in: *Komunikaty Instytutu Bałtyckiego*, 27/28 (1978), 55–65; Jadwiga Wróblewska, *Przegląd publikacji z zakresu Skandynawii za lata 1978–1980*, in: *Komunikaty Instytutu Bałtyckiego*, 33/18 (1981), 89–104.

styczne”, “Kwartalnik Historyczny”, and others. However, in terms of scope and number, fewer articles are devoted specifically to Denmark in those journals compared to Sweden. Polish authors who reviewed and discussed publications on the history and foreign policy of Scandinavian countries demonstrated an interest in Danish foreign policy. This is specifically evidenced by reviews in the aforementioned periodicals from Krzysztof Drzewicki, Bernard Piotrowski, Józef Szymański, and Roman Popiński. They concerned foreign authors’ writing on the history and foreign policy of the countries of Northern Europe, though the number of original publications is limited.

In her article “Wyniki ankiety Skandynawistycznej Instytutu Bałtyckiego z roku 1978”, Iwona Janiszewska mentions 14 research institutions and about 37 researchers in Poland dealing with Scandinavian studies.²⁴ There were 15 PhD and 40 master’s theses on Scandinavian studies slated to be written and defended. Most of the subjects involved philology, literature, and culture.²⁵

From the late 1970s to the early 1980s, there was an obvious increased interest in the problems of the Nordic countries’ economic integration. Polish scholars were no exception to this general trend. They analyzed the prerequisites of Scandinavian countries’ economic and political integration after the end of the Second World War. The problems of regional cooperation between the Scandinavian countries and Finland were studied in the works of Krzysztof Drzewicki²⁶, Antoni Makać²⁷, Lucjan Orhowicz, Marek Andrzejewski, and Roman Popiński²⁸.

Czesław Wojewódka contributed to the topic with his article, published in 1979, on Polish maritime trade and cooperation with Scandinavian countries, an indication of the growing importance of this topic for the Polish researchers.²⁹ As mentioned above, it seems to have been important for the Polish researchers to highlight Poland’s historical and economic connections with Western countries. Against this background, the export of ships from Poland to Norway, Sweden and Denmark increased from 2.7% in 1967 to 47.9% in 1976 (with Norway having the biggest share); the export of yachts from Poland to Denmark increased from a sin-

24 Iwona Janiszewska, Wyniki ankiety skandynawistycznej instytutu Bałtyckiego z roku 1978, in: *Komunikaty Instytutu Bałtyckiego*, 29/6 (1979), 167–175.

25 *Ibid.*, 169.

26 Krzysztof Drzewicki, Konwencja nordycka jako podstawa prawna współpracy skandynawskiej, in: *Komunikaty Instytutu Bałtyckiego* 30/16 (1979), 77–94; Krzysztof Drzewicki, Geneza i rozwój współczesnych form współpracy skandynawskiej in: *Studia Scandinavica* 5 (1983), 69–95.

27 Antoni Makać, Stan i charakter procesów integracyjnych między krajami skandynawskimi, in: *Komunikaty Instytutu Bałtyckiego* 33/18 (1981), 19–31.

28 Roman Popiński, Nordycka współpraca gospodarczo-polityczna, in: *Sprawy Międzynarodowe*, 37/10 (1984), 111–120; Roman Popiński, Kraje nordyckie a rozwój “trzeciego świata”, in: *Sprawy Międzynarodowe*, 39/6 (1986), 89–100; Roman Popiński, Państwa nordyckie wobec bezpieczeństwa i współpracy w Europie, in: *Sprawy Międzynarodowe*, 39/12 (1986), 59–74; Roman Popiński, Ewolucja stosunków polsko-skandynawskich, *Warsaw 1985*, 1–66; Ignacy Anczewski, Wojciech Miazgowski, Roman Popiński, *Francja, Wielka Brytania, kraje nordyckie wobec Europy Wschodniej, Warsaw, PISM 1987*, 153–184.

29 Czesław Wojewódka, Związki polskiego przemysłu okretowego i żeglugi ze Skandynawia, in: *Komunikaty Instytutu Bałtyckiego*, 30/12 (1979), 61–76.

gle craft in 1976, to 47 in 1978. In turn, Poland imported boating equipment from Denmark and Finland, whose value was also on the rise in the 1970s. Wojewódka's analysis of trade confirms that Scandinavian countries were important markets for Poland, coming in second overall compared to other national shipyards. They were also a source of the Polish fleet after the Second World War.³⁰

Drawing on extensive historical material, Drzewicki's article "Konwencja nordycka jako podstawa prawna współpracy skandynawskiej" provides a full account of the formation and evolution of the legal framework for the cooperation of the Scandinavian countries in various areas of integration.³¹ Drzewicki identifies two sets of prerequisites for Nordic cooperation, one involving homogeneity, the other heterogeneity ("Homogeniczne i heterogeniczne przesłanki współpracy skandynawskiej"). According to Drzewicki, the first set includes factors that contributed to the multi-level integration of the Scandinavian countries "from below", such as geographical proximity, shared history, linguistic, and cultural and religious features (so-called homogeneous factors). The second set of prerequisites (so-called heterogeneous factors) includes disruptive forces such as the divergence of interests in the economic and political sphere. This, for instance, prevented the creation of autonomous economic and military-political organisations in Northern Europe after the Second World War. Drzewicki's model helps us to understand the reasons for the failure of the creation of the Scandinavian Defense Union in 1946–48 and thus the accession of Denmark and Norway to NATO in 1949. It also explains the political and economic tensions (heterogeneous factors) in negotiations about the creation of a customs union and a free trade zone in Northern Europe in the 1950s and 1970s and Denmark's decision to join the EEC in 1972.

Drzewicki analyses the evolution of permanent organizations of Scandinavian cooperation. He highlights the period from the first permanent forms of cooperation (second half of 19th century) to the formation of the Nordic Council. His article "Genesis and development of contemporary forms of Scandinavian cooperation", published in "Studia Scandinavica" in 1982, is an important contribution to the study of the origin and forms of political, economic, social, public, and intergovernmental cooperation of Nordic countries.³²

In Roman Popiński's studies of the Polish-Scandinavian relations, which appeared in the second half of the 1980s, the author used Danish, Norwegian, and English sources, which allows a more nuanced interpretation of the historical facts. In his analysis of Polish-Danish relations, Popiński anticipated the special role of Denmark in the future integration of the countries of the Baltic region.³³

30 Ibid., 70.

31 Drzewicki, *Konwencja nordycka*, 77–94.

32 Drzewicki, *Geneza i rozwój*, 69–95.

33 Roman Popiński, *Die Länder Nordeuropas angesichts der Verschärfung in den Ost-West-Beziehungen*, in: *Gesellschaftliche Kräfte in Nordeuropa im Kampf um Frieden und Entspannung: 3. internationale wissenschaftliche Konferenz der Nordeuropawissenschaftler sozialistischer Staaten in Greifswald, Greifswald 1985*, 46–49; Roman Popiński, *Ewolucja stosunków polsko-skandynawskich*, in: *Sprawy Międzynarodowe*, 38/4 (1985), 61–72; Popiński, *Nordycka współpraca*, 111–120; Popiński, *Kraje nordyckie a rozwój "trzeciego świata"*, 89–100; Popiński, *Państwa nordyckie*, 39/12 (1986), 59–74.

Polish scholar Stefan Stefański defended his dissertation on “Danish Foreign Policy in 1945–1978” at the Polish Institute of International Relations in 1979.³⁴ His study covered the post-war period, which was justified by the systemic changes in international relations in general and in Danish foreign policy in particular. Although clearly influenced by the ideological trends of the Cold War period, Stefański’s work is fairly apolitical and, on the whole, objectively reflects the main aspects of Denmark’s foreign policy in this period. The author had to rely on secondary Danish sources as many archival materials did not become available until the 1990s and 2000s. Apart from this shortcoming, Stefański’s study represents a credible attempt to comprehensively analyze Danish foreign policy, which was heretofore unknown in Eastern European historiography.

The role of political institutions in the formation of foreign policy attracted the attention of the Polish scholars from the mid-1980s and continued, for instance, to be analyzed in the works of Marian Grzybowski after the end of the Cold War. Grzybowski carried out a comparative analysis of the political systems of the Nordic countries, namely exploring the structure and powers of the parliament in shaping Danish foreign policy in a comparative perspective with other Nordic countries.³⁵

CONCLUSION

Both the variety and the scope of Polish scholarship on Danish history since the re-establishment of diplomatic relations are comprehensive and broad. A chronotope framework was applied to classify the narratives of the Danish foreign policy in Polish historiography according to their temporal and spatial dimensions. Three chronotopes were discussed in this article: a) the uniting and separating forces of the Baltic Sea; b) Denmark and Poland between great powers in the interwar period; and c) centripetal and centrifugal forces during the Cold War.

The first historiographical chronotope, largely explored by Czaplinski, explains how Denmark lost the battle for dominance over the Baltic Sea and was reduced from a great power to a small state subject to the fluctuations in the balance of power between the larger states. However, the Baltic Sea was not only an arena for asserting dominance, but also, as revealed by the first chronotope, a uniting element in Danish history.

The second chronotope is focused on the interwar period, when both Denmark and Poland found themselves at the fault line of military confrontation. This chronotope makes it possible to understand the limitations of neutrality and the prereq-

34 Stefan Stefański, *Polityka zagraniczna Danii w latach 1945–1978*, Warsaw 1979; Stefan Stefański, *Polityka zagraniczna współczesnej Danii*, in: *Sprawy Międzynarodowe* 32/9 (1979), 93–106.

35 Marian Grzybowski, *Królestwo Danii: zarys systemu ustrojowego*, Kielce 1996; Marian Grzybowski, *Geneza i współczesne tendencje rozwojowe skandynawskich instytucji parlamentarnych*, in: *Gdańskie Studia Prawnicze* 31 (2014), 281–303; Marian Grzybowski, *Systemy konstytucyjne państw skandynawskich*, Warsaw, 1998.

uisites for the future integration of Denmark in Euro-Atlantic structures. It also revealed Scandinavian countries' contradictory policies towards Poland.

The third chronotope reflected on the centripetal and centrifugal forces drawing Denmark and Poland closer together during the Cold War. Polish scholars focused on regional integration and most of the publications (with few exceptions) were devoted to Denmark as part of the Nordic cooperation.

Geographical proximity and mutually beneficial trade and economic relations have long been a focus of Polish research on the history of Danish-Polish relations. Moreover, Polish scholars were among the biggest contributors to Scandinavian studies in Europe, particularly during the period of the Cold War. The presence of several specialised scientific journals reveals the high academic level of Scandinavian studies in Poland. Regular review articles on the most recent publications by Scandinavian authors were published in the Proceedings of the Baltic Institute (Kommunikaty Instytutu Bałtyckiego).

In the chronotope framework, the work of Stefan Stefański stands out. He attempts to study not only the history of bilateral relations, but also the foreign policy of Denmark as such.

In this context, he points to the growing importance of Denmark as a partner for Poland during the Cold War.

Although the Polish scholarship was one of the most developed in Eastern Europe, certain topics received less attention during the Cold War period, such as the study of small state foreign policy, footnote policy in 1980s or Denmark's membership in the EU. Stefański's research on Danish foreign policy as a small state is rather an exception from the general focus on regional problems and the perception in the research that Scandinavian countries constitute a single geographical entity.

All in all, an intensive educational and cultural exchange between Poland and Denmark during the Cold War was one of the major channels through which the prerequisites for change emerged in Polish society and laid the foundations for more successful political and economic cooperation after 1989. The role of cultural institutions, in particular the Danish Culture Institute in Poland, should be underlined in particular. They were crucial for the countries with whom the level of political cooperation was rather low and made it possible for culture to become a main driver of bilateral relations.

The applied chronotope framework reproduces not only the reality of the past and its reflection in the sources, but is also the result of an author's own interpretation of Danish history "painted with a broad brush".

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EPISODIC NEIGHBOURHOOD?

Polish-Danish Relations 1918–1939

Paweł Jaworski

Polish-Danish relations have a long tradition dating back to the Middle Ages. Until today, historians have argued about dynastic ties between the Vikings and the Piasts. The modern period is marked by vivid trade contacts, but above all by alliances against Sweden during the years of war for control over the Baltic Sea. After the fall of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Danes helped Poles during national uprisings. Those who lived in Schleswig cooperated with Poles from Greater Poland (the Prussian partition with Poznań) in the Prussian Parliament in order to resist German *Kulturkampf*. Later examples of mutual contacts were the activity of the Polish resistance movement in Denmark during World War II and Danish humanitarian aid delivered to Poles after the end of the War. Cultural studies researcher Włodzimierz Pessel called the examples given here, “episodes of solidarity”¹.

The aim of this text is to analyse mutual relations in the interwar period. This includes political ties created between neutral Denmark and Poland in the search for allies and economic cooperation, with Denmark having an established position as an exporter of agricultural products and Poland able to offer, above all, coal. The third element to be analysed will be cultural contacts and cultural inspirations. However, the main aim of this article is to answer this question: did the interwar period bring a breakthrough in the lack of intensity of bilateral contacts?

AREAS OF POLITICAL COOPERATION

The first Polish-Danish diplomatic contacts took place in the first weeks after Poland regained independence. At the end of 1918, the Polish authorities asked the Danish authorities to take care of Polish citizens in Russia and Germany.² This humanitarian mission did not yet mean the recognition of the new state *de jure* by the Danish authorities. That decision was made on 30 May 1919. Judging by the voices of the Danish press, the reconstruction of an independent Poland was welcomed in Copenhagen with surprise. The opinions of the Danes about Poland were moderately favourable. In the following months, the Legation of the Kingdom of Denmark in Warsaw sent reports on Polish border conflicts, the war with Soviet Russia, and domestic problems.³ The territorial aspirations of the re-established Polish state were

1 Włodzimierz Pessel, *Czerwono biali, Biało czerwoni. Problemy sąsiedztwa kulturowego*, Warsaw 2019, 282.

2 Paweł Jaworski, *Polska niepodległa wobec Skandynawii 1918–1939*, Wrocław 2001, 16–17.

3 Eugeniusz S. Kruszewski, *Polska w raportach duńskich dyplomatów (1919–1926)*, Copenhagen 2008.

treated with caution by Danish diplomats. The Polish authorities explained Denmark's hesitance with the influence of hostile propaganda of German, Lithuanian and Jewish circles. However, the biggest Polish disappointment was the attitude of the renowned Danish philosopher Georg Brandes, an expert on the history of European culture, who has been considered a friend of Poland for several decades.⁴ This well-known advocate of Polish culture accused Poles of pogroms against the Jewish population during World War I. This, of course, through its influence on at least part of the Danish public's opinions, had disastrous consequences for Polish aspirations for independence and territorial claims in the east and west. Thus, Brandes became subject to attacks by Polish press.⁵

Such public disputes did not mean that the image of Poland was all bad nor that the Danish public turned their back on their new Baltic neighbour. This became evident when information spread in Denmark about problems with food shortages and infectious diseases in Poland. This news mobilized Danish charities. Humanitarian aid was organized by the Danish Red Cross, the Danish Committee for Aid to Poland, and the Danish Committee for Aid to Children in Poland. The collection of money, clothes, footwear, and food supplies was often initiated either by Polish diplomats in Copenhagen or by Danish diplomats in Warsaw. The value of aid granted in the years 1920–1922 is estimated to be 974,000 crowns.⁶ The medical mission of the Danish Red Cross was a special case. This organization ran an infectious diseases hospital in Dęblin (near Lublin) from November 1920 to July 1921, fighting typhus and cholera.⁷ A group of Danish veterinarians also travelled to Poland to help fight the epidemics spreading among cattle.⁸

In 1921, Danish observers arrived in Upper Silesia before a plebiscite which was deciding whether the province should be a part of Poland or Germany. This visit, which supported the Polish campaign, was probably related to cooperation with the famous Hans Peter Hanssen-Nørremølle, a former Danish member of the Prussian Landtag and the German Reichstag who had been decisive in organizing a similar referendum in Northern Schleswig and the following change of the Danish German border. In the German empire, he and the Danish minority had cooperated with parliamentarians from the Polish movement in Germany. The journey of the delegation was a manifestation of the solidarity between Danes and Poles, two groups which had experienced oppression by German nationalists.⁹ The leader of the Poles in Upper Silesia, Wojciech Korfanty, knew Hanssen personally, and re-used for the Upper Silesia campaign a poster from the plebiscite campaign in Schleswig. As Hanssen's daughter recalled:

- 4 Michalina Petelska, *Georg Brandes i Polacy czyli o fenomenie wzajemnego zainteresowania z Polską w tle*, Gdańsk 2017; Zenon Ciesielski, *Zbliżenia skandynawsko-polskie. Szkice o kontaktach kulturalnych w XIX i XX wieku*, Gdańsk 1972, 18–38.
- 5 Paweł Jaworski, *Stosunki polsko-duńskie w latach 1918–1939 w świetle prasy II Rzeczypospolitej*, in: Jan Szymański (ed.), *Polska-Dania w ciągu wieków*, Gdańsk 2004, 200.
- 6 Kamila Faszczka, *The 1920–1922 Danish Humanitarian Aid for Poland*, in: *Studia Maritima* 23 (2010), 97–109.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 102–104.
- 8 Jaworski, *Polska niepodległa*, 27.
- 9 Pessel, *Czerwono biali*, 217.

Korfanty, who was a good friend of my father, sent two Polish gentlemen to Aabenraa to get acquainted with the situation. Looking over our successful plebiscite posters, they shook their heads ironically. Oh no, Poles need a stronger medium. The only one they wanted to use at home was a poster of a child saying, ‘Mother, remember me. Vote for Denmark’. Later we received this poster in the Polish version. An amulet was added to the toddler’s neck, and a Polish flag was put in his hand.¹⁰

Favourable attitudes towards Polish territorial demands in the Polish–German borderland could also be found among Danish Social Democrats, for instance the political activist from Schleswig Emil Marott, who visited Poland in September 1921. In an interview for the Polish Socialist Party daily “Robotnik” (The Worker), he described the Polish demands in Upper Silesia as ‘substantiated and just’.¹¹

In the following years, the Polish press occasionally published articles proclaiming the strengthening of political ties with Denmark. However, such hopes were rarely founded in a political reality. In 1923, when Poland applied for a non-permanent membership of the Council of the League of Nations, the government hoped that Denmark would support its efforts. However, the Danish delegation voted for Sweden, as the Nordic countries cooperated closely within the League.¹²

In 1925, before the Locarno Conference, prominent Polish publicists called for cooperation between Poland and Denmark so that both countries would be included in the security pact negotiated between the Western powers and Germany. In the end, neither the talks nor, consequently, the cooperation took place. The ground for real cooperation was less fertile, since Polish politicians had a hard time simply understanding the Danish security doctrine of the interwar period. The Danish governments, often dominated by the Social Democrats and social liberals, believed that the problem of security should be linked to a disarmament agenda. In an interview for “Robotnik”, the minister of defence of Denmark of the social democratic governments of Thorvald Stauning (1924–1926, 1929–1932) Laust Rasmussen defended his belief that “it is the armaments race that introduces the greatest danger [for the security system in Europe]”, therefore, “if any new war is to break out, it is much better for us to be without weapons in our hands.”¹³ As a consequence, the Danish armed forces were gradually reduced – a step which was openly mocked in the Polish satirical press.¹⁴

The first years of mutual contact were summed up by the conciliation and arbitration treaty signed on 23 April 1926.¹⁵ This treaty was a symbol of mutual support for the collective security system, which was promoted by the League of Nations, and which aimed to maintain peace in Europe. Following this, the two countries

10 Ibid., 308.

11 Paweł Jaworski, O rządach socjaldemokratycznych w Skandynawii w okresie międzywojennym na łamach ‘Robotnika’, in: Teresa Kulak (ed.), *Studia z dziejów XIX i XX wieku*, Wrocław 2005, 181.

12 Karen Skram Skjoldager, *Fred og Folkeret. Dansk internationalistisk udenrigspolitik 1899–1939*, Copenhagen 2012, 231.

13 J.M., *Sprawa rozbrojenia Danii*, “Robotnik”, 19/11/1924.

14 Jaworski, *Polska niepodległa*, 32.

15 <https://archives.ungeneva.org/no-1437-danemark-et-pologne-traite-de-conciliation-et-darbitrage-signé-a-copenhague-le-23-avril-1926-enregistre-le-8-avril-1927-a-la-demande-du-ministre-de-danemark-a-berne-recueil-des-traites-vol-lxi/download> (accessed 24 Aug 2022)

entered a period of systematic contact aimed at getting to know each other. As a sign of courtesy, naval vessels made friendly visits across the Baltic Sea. In 1930, the Danish fleet came to Gdynia. In 1933, a representative sailing ship, “*Dar Pomorza*,” arrived in Denmark. In 1934, Polish destroyers visited Copenhagen, followed Polish seaplanes and a yacht of the Polish Navy. In 1935, Danish naval ships again visited Gdynia.¹⁶

From the beginning of the 1930s, Polish authorities became interested in the lives of Polish migrants in Denmark. They had primarily settled in Denmark after 1893 and undertaken hard work in beet fields. This was a part of a large strategy to support diaspora organizations in Western Europe, financially enabling them to establish Polish Houses with educational facilities and libraries.¹⁷ Polish Catholic priests were sent in order to do pastoral work and to hinder the assimilation of Poles into Danish society, or at least to maintain the emotional ties connecting them with their homeland.¹⁸

In general, in the 1930s Poland attempted to play a more active role in the Baltic Sea area. Additionally, Polish diplomacy targeted Denmark due to its strategic location at the straits connecting the Baltic Sea with the North Sea. As one Polish diplomat explained in the press, these straits connected Poland with the world.¹⁹ One sign of increased Polish interest in Denmark was the nomination of Michał Sokolnicki to envoy in Copenhagen in 1931.²⁰ During the Polish independence struggle, he had been a close associate of the national leader Józef Piłsudski. However, it is worth noting that when he presented his credentials to the Danish foreign minister, Peter Munch, political issues were not discussed at all. Sokolnicki focused on trade matters and Munch confirmed the importance of the presence of the Polish coal in the Danish economy. Minister Munch explained to the Polish diplomat that Denmark was involved in the activities of international organizations but had no intentions of joining any alliances. He also confirmed the Danish government’s intention to reduce the armed forces, including the intended dissolution of the army.²¹ Considering this track, it was no wonder that Poland had not established a military attaché mission in Copenhagen.

16 Jaworski, *Polska niepodległa*, 53, 71; Anna i Jarosław Iwaszkiewiczowie, *Listy 1932–1939*, Warsaw 2014, 237; 519–520; 551.

17 George Nellemann, *Polske landarbejdere i Danmark og deres efterkommere: et studie af landarbejder-invandringen 1893–1929 og invandrerne integration id et dansker samfund i to generationer*, Copenhagen 1981; Edward Olszewski, *Emigracja polska w Danii 1893–1993*, Warsaw, Lublin 1993; Paweł Jaworski, *Polacy w Skandynawii w świetle prasy II Rzeczypospolitej*, in: *Rocznik Instytutu Polsko-Skandynawskiego* 20/2004/2005 (2006), 30–48.

18 As Włodzimierz Pessel puts it, the so-called beet emigration is an example proving the incidental nature of the Polish–Danish neighbourhood, because the Polish newcomers gradually blended in with the Danish society. Therefore Poles working in the beet fields became only “an episode, a closed stage of history”; Pessel, *Czerwono biali*, 341.

19 Bolesław Leitgeber, *Zagadnienie cieśnin bałtyckich*, in: *Przegląd Morski* vol. 57, Toruń 1933, 3789.

20 See also in this book: Jan Stanisław Ciechanowski, “Polish Envoys to Denmark 1919–1940”, 79–92.

21 Krzysztof Kłoc, *Michał Sokolnicki 1880–1967. Piłsudczyk – historyk – dyplomata*, Kraków 2018, 466–467.

In the question of international organizations and Polish-Danish contacts on this platform, the issue of Poland's re-election to the Council of the League of Nations in 1932 became important. Poland again hoped to obtain the votes of neutral countries, including Denmark. The issue was not easy, because the Scandinavian countries were against re-election as a matter of principle. During the conversation with Munch, Sokolnicki argued that Poland's membership of the Council would bring balance to Polish-German relations. He also stressed that Poland was the only candidate neighbouring the Soviet Union, thus it would give a voice to this group of countries. Although Munch admitted that the presence of the Polish delegation in the Council "is necessary due to relations with Germany", the Scandinavian countries were among the few that abstained from voting.²²

The talks with the Danish foreign minister made it clear that the country, at least for the time being, could not be a potential partner for closer political cooperation. Still, Sokolnicki pointed out in press reports to Warsaw that Danish press commentators deemed that the declaration of non-violent coexistence signed by Poland and Germany in January 1934 neither weakened nor strengthened the countries' position in Central Europe. Publicists of the influential conservative daily "Berlingske Tidende" believed that the issue of the Polish-German border was still open, even if the Poles accepted the hegemonic position of Germany in the region.²³ Talking to the Danish political elite in early 1936, Sokolnicki learned that, in the case of war in Europe, Denmark was prepared to accept full German control over the Great Belt.²⁴

In December 1934, the Polish foreign minister, Józef Beck, visited Copenhagen on his way to Stockholm. He met Prime Minister Thorvald Stauning and Foreign Minister Munch. Despite Denmark's position, the talks nurtured the hope of consolidating the Polish presence in the Baltic Sea area.

I wanted to strengthen this policy," Beck later recalled, "and to complement it by consolidating sea routes and connections, looking for both local political base and [also] reasonable partners in Scandinavia for the coming reform of European international life, as the result of the still ongoing changes in the League of Nations."²⁵

In 1935, the Scandinavian countries decided to vote for the first time for the re-election of Poland to the Council of the League of Nations. This can very likely be traced back to Beck's persuasive talks. Taking the whole decade into consideration, it is hard to find other successes, but, as Beck's biographers noted, the Polish minister did not expect any spectacular effects due to his efforts in Scandinavia: "It was a policy of slow building a presence in the area that had previously been rather neglected by Polish diplomacy."²⁶ Denmark was clinging to a policy of neutrality and was not expected to cooperate more closely with a country like Poland that existed

22 Ibid., 472.

23 Ibid., 473.

24 Ibid., 478.

25 Anna M. Cienciąła (ed.), *Polska polityka zagraniczna w latach 1926–1932, na podstawie tekstów min. Józefa Becka*, Paris 1990, 149.

26 Marek Kornat, Mariusz Wołos, *Józef Beck. Biografia*, Kraków 2021, 470–471.

with a constant risk of conflict with neighbouring hostile powers.²⁷ The decision to accept the German proposal for a non-aggression treaty and its signing on 31 May 1939 was an additional confirmation of Danish nonalignment policy and fear of Germany.

AREAS OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Economic relations between the two countries were regulated by a trade and navigation treaty concluded on 22 March 1924. The Danish authorities waited until this time to confirm the stabilization of political power and the normalization of the economic situation in Poland. The Polish government hoped to increase exports to Denmark, particularly of sugar, barley, and potato flour. Denmark exported primarily vegetable oils, lard, bacon, and margarine, and to a lesser extent fish oil, tallow, wool, leather goods, wool, and cotton fabrics. However, economic relations were asymmetrical since Polish exports by far exceeded the import of goods from Denmark. This was in line with the economic policy of the Polish government but a constant cause for irritation on the Danish side. Until the middle of the 1920s, the total volume of Polish participation in the foreign trade of Denmark and vice versa was insignificant.²⁸ After 1926, this situation changed because Poland became an important supplier of coal to Denmark, replacing the traditional supplier, Great Britain. The strikes of British miners forced the Scandinavian countries to consider alternative suppliers. Additionally, Poland was searching for markets for its mining industry in Upper Silesia. While in 1925 Poland exported 220,000 tons of coal to Denmark, the amount rose to 942,000 tons in 1926, and in 1927 to 1.3 million tons. Denmark's share of the Polish coal extraction climbed from 3 to 12 percent. The high level of coal exports was maintained in the following years: 1928 – 1.6 million tons (almost 12 percent of extraction), 1929 – 1.8 million tons (12 percent of extraction), 1930 – 1.6 million tons (almost 13 percent of extraction), 1931 – 2 million tons (almost 14 percent of extraction).²⁹ Consequently, the overall Polish participation in Danish import increased to 2.3 percent in 1931, while the participation of Poland in Danish export was still limited and did not even reach one percent.³⁰ In 1930, the minister of industry and trade, Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski, visited Copenhagen, in order to find a way to deepen trade relations.

27 Although in 1938, after the annexation of Austria and the Sudetenland by Germany, speculations appeared in the Polish press that the next target of Hitler's attack could be Slesvig. See: Czyżby teraz przyszła kolej na Danię?, "Zielony Sztandar", 24, 1938; Duńskie... Sudety?, "Robotnik", 13/10/1938. That is why calls to abandon the policy of neutrality as short-sighted were formulated: W siódlach neutralności, "Robotnik", 11/06/1939; Jaworski, *Stosunki polsko-duńskie*, 203–204.

28 Jaworski, *Polska niepodległa*, 121–122.

29 *Statystyka przemysłu węglowego w państwie polskim za rok 1928*, Warsaw 1929, 54; *Statystyka przemysłu węglowego w państwie polskim za rok 1929*, Warsaw 1930, 55; *Statystyka przemysłu węglowego w państwie polskim za rok 1931*, Warsaw 1932, 64.

30 Andrzej Jałowicki, *Konkurencja węglowa polsko-brytyjska na rynkach skandynawskich*, Toruń 1935, 133; *Mały Rocznik Statystyczny 1939*, Warsaw 1939, 166–168.

During Sokolnicki's time as envoy in Copenhagen (1931–1936), economic issues dominated the daily work of the Polish legation. Minister Munch was right when he stressed how important Polish coal was for Denmark. However, the coal trade did not prove to be sustainable in the long run. When the miners' strike stopped, British suppliers took steps to return to the Scandinavian market. In April 1933, Britain signed an economic treaty with Denmark that assured 80 percent of Denmark's coal needs. Under the pressure of Denmark's strongest trading partners, it was difficult to maintain the same level of purchase of Polish coal.³¹

Minister Munch informed Sokolnicki that "Poland must take into account the fact of the necessary reduction of its coal export and possibly try to replace coal with other products in advance."³² Sokolnicki was aware of the advantages of the British competitors. Therefore, he urged the Polish authorities to modify the traditional policy of striving to achieve a positive balance in trade relations with Denmark.

"Conducting a rational Baltic policy," he wrote in a report to the minister of foreign affairs, August Zaleski, "seems to me to be closely related to the friendly rapprochement to the smaller nations on the coast of this sea, to Denmark first of all. However, friendly relations with Denmark and its consideration of our policy are only possible if mutual commercial interests are taken into account. Applying, to a somewhat mercantile country such as Denmark, a policy aimed at increasing the positive trade balance at all costs must prove quickly to be inefficient and unsustainable; in any case, it seems contrary to the principles of our policy towards neighbouring countries on the Baltic coast."³³

Already in 1932, Polish coal exports decreased to 1.4 million tons.³⁴ In the following years the trends accelerated: In 1934, it was just over 0.5 million tons, 1935 – below 0.5 million tons, 1936 – 0.3 million tons, 1937 – 0.3 million tons.³⁵ In this way, the level had almost reached the starting point and only covered 2.7 percent of the Polish coal extraction. Polish economic analysts agreed that Poland had lost the competition not with British coal suppliers, but actually with the strong British economy in general. This impression also circulated in Polish newspapers:

The Danes would prefer to import coal from Poland, which is cheaper and better; but this cannot be done, for then England would restrict import of Danish bacon and butter.³⁶

When Sokolnicki protested in the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs against the reduction of Polish supply, the Danish answer was that the government intended to rebalance its foreign trade. As a consequence of the end of the coal adventure, the total trade between the two countries suffered considerable backlash. Sokolnicki tried to counteract this process in the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the following years. He consistently argued that Danish partners should be granted compensation or trade relief. He believed that it was necessary to stay in the Danish

31 See also in this book: Steen Andersen, "Establishment of relations and the economic relation in the interwar period 1919–1945", 47–62.

32 Kloc, Michał Sokolnicki, 469.

33 Ibid., 468.

34 Statystyka przemysłu węglowego w państwie polskim za rok 1932, Warsaw 1933, 64.

35 Statystyka przemysłu węglowego w państwie polskim za rok 1937, Warsaw 1938, 62–64.

36 Jaworski, Stosunki polsko-duńskie, 207.

market if Poland wanted to be an important political player in the Baltic Sea area.³⁷ However, the less intensive trade between Poland and Denmark was not changed even by the bilateral economic agreement concluded on 26 August 1936.³⁸

In the background of overall limited trade, one field stands out as a *stabile* common interest: namely, shipping and the broadly understood maritime economy. The first Polish shipping companies employed Danish specialists including agents, brokers, seamen, and ship cooks. From the end of the 1920s, cooperation in the Polish migrant traffic area began. Danish companies such as Baltic America Line and Scandinavian America Line transported Polish passengers from Gdynia to the United States. In 1928, the Polish company Żegluga Polska was accepted as a member of the Baltic and International Maritime Conference in Copenhagen. This membership was not self-evident because some considered the new Polish state an “intruder at seas”. Danish support was an important element in efforts to accept Polish activities on sea routes.³⁹ Gradually, Polish-Danish cooperation deepened and formalized. In 1930, Żegluga Polska signed a partnership agreement with the Danish East Asiatic Company Ltd. (EAC, *Det Østasiatisk Kompagni*). As a result, the Polish Transatlantic Ship Society was established. In 1934, the company changed its name to Gdynia-Ameryka Linie Żeglugowe (GAL). In addition, Żegluga Polska and another company Polbryt ordered new ships from Danish shipyards.⁴⁰ In 1928, cooperation in the sector of fisheries was also initiated. Danish crews of fishing boats trained Polish novices in the profession.⁴¹

Another close partnership related to Poland’s evolving shipping industry was the partnership with the subcontractors for the construction of Gdynia’s port, which was built on the Polish coast from scratch. This investment affected the economic development of the whole Polish state, and it was given to the Danish contractor Højgaard & Schultz.⁴² In 1935, this company also received the commission to construct the fishing port in Wielka Wieś. In 1938, the investment was completed, the port was officially opened, and the town renamed to Władysławowo. In 1936, the head of the company, Knud Højgaard, was elected president of the new established Danish-Polish Chamber of Commerce. The association included about 100 people, representing various fields of activity, who wanted to develop cooperation with Denmark. This cooperation focused primarily on Gdynia. Thus, in 1936, the Copenhagen city and port authorities invited the representatives of Gdynia to the capital of Denmark. The same year, the delegation of Copenhagen visited Poland.⁴³

37 Kloc, Michał Sokolnicki, 471.

38 Bolesław Hajduk, *Z problematyki współpracy i konkurencji w polsko-skandynawskich relacjach gospodarczych w okresie międzywojennym XX wieku*, in: *Studia Maritima* 28 (2015), 97–98.

39 It was underlined by Jan Szymański, *Polsko-skandynawska współpraca w zakresie żeglugi w okresie międzywojennym (1919–1939)*, Gdańsk 1988, 108.

40 Jaworski, *Stosunki polsko-duńskie*, 208–209.

41 Szymański, *Polsko-skandynawska współpraca w zakresie żeglugi*, 138–139.

42 Bolesław Hajduk, *Polsko-duńskie kontakty portowe i żeglugowe w latach 1919–1939*, in: *Komunikaty Instytutu Bałtyckiego* 30 (1979), 25–46.

43 Jaworski, *Stosunki polsko-duńskie*, 210–211.

EDUCATIONAL INSPIRATIONS

An important field of Polish-Danish cooperation linking economy and education was the study of Danish methods of agricultural development. Before World War I, Denmark was already presented in the Polish lands as a model country in the field of farming and animal husbandry. Their yield of cereal crops was, in fact, impressive. According to official statistics in 1925, Poland produced 12.8 kg of rye from 1 ha, whereas Denmark harvested 14.2 kg. In the case of potatoes, it was 116 kg from 1 ha in Poland and as much as 146 kg in Denmark.⁴⁴ As a consequence, special study visits were organized. The participants learned how Danish dairies, farms, schools, and agricultural museums functioned. In the re-established Poland, the Central Union of Agricultural Associations, in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Polish Legation in Copenhagen, was sending apprentices to farms in Denmark in order to see how local educational institutions and agricultural cooperatives worked.⁴⁵

The government supported the idea of such traineeships. The minister of agriculture, Stanisław Janicki, in the government of Władysław Grabski, the prime minister known mainly for currency reform carried out in 1924, himself went to Denmark to get acquainted with agricultural achievements. Denmark was considered an example of a country that had “achieved great results by small means and in a relatively short time”.⁴⁶ Polish observers were sure that the excellent organization of work and a high level of education among the farmers were the sources of Danish success. In the 1930s, Denmark became a model of agricultural cooperatives⁴⁷. Today, researchers agree that the cooperative movements that developed in Poland at that time on a large scale, began, as in Denmark, to contribute to the growth of the country’s prosperity.⁴⁸

The flagship of Danish educational practices were the so-called folk high schools, special boarding schools with a strong emphasis on general education and good citizenship. A well-known educational activist from Greater Poland, Priest Antoni Ludwiczak (1878–1942), became a supporter of this form of extracurricular education. In 1919, Ludwiczak convinced the management of the People’s Libraries Society in Poznań, in which he himself actively worked, to donate funds for running of the first Polish folk high school, located in a manor house in Dalki (near Poznań). The adaptation of the building into a school lasted two years. Thanks to the generosity of the society and other financial institutions, of which the main donor was the Bank of Industrialists, the school opened on 4 October 1921. The

44 S.M., Wizyty ministra Janickiego w Czechosłowacji i Danii, “Gazeta Rolnicza”, 25–26/1925, 755.

45 Jaworski, *Stosunki polsko-duńskie*, 212–213.

46 S. Zaorski, *Z praktyki rolniczej w Danii* (lato 1922 r.), “Gazeta Rolnicza” 40/1922, 974.

47 Jaworski, *Polska niepodległa*, 174–175.

48 J. Chloupkova, G. Lind Haase Svendsen, G. Tinggaard Svendsen, *Building and Destroying Social Capital. The Case of Cooperative Movements in Denmark and Poland*, in: *Agriculture and Human Values* 20/3 (2003), 244–248; On the importance of the Danish model for the Polish cooperative movement: Jaworski, *Polska niepodległa*, 174–177.

founding of the school was solemn and took place in the presence of local authorities, the church hierarchy, and representatives of the higher education. The school was based on the principles of the originator of folk universities in Denmark, Nicolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig.

The most important subjects taught at the school in Dalki were the mother tongue and literature as well as both Polish and global history. Geography, mathematics, physics, chemistry, and biology were also part of the curriculum, and daily gymnastics was considered necessary. The school offered accommodation but living there was supposed to resemble family life, with everyday conversations and common meals. Ludwiczak wanted to instil the idea of democratization in the social life of his students.

In 1924, the second folk high school in Poland was established in Szyce, near Cracow. The founder was Ignacy Solarz, who was associated with the peasant movement. In the following years more schools appeared and, in 1939, twenty folk high schools were in operation in Poland. They played a useful educational role. Their students became aware of the need for civilisation and cultural changes in the Polish countryside. They learned social thinking and cooperation in groups. In the interwar period, many important publications that promoted the creation of folk high schools and that were simultaneously a kind of instruction for running such institutions were published. They always mentioned the Danish pioneers of extra-curricular education, and Denmark's achievements were the main argument for the benefits brought by the development of a folk high school network.⁴⁹

POPULARIZATION OF DANISH CULTURE IN POLAND

In 1924, the Polish-Danish Association was established in Poznań, headed by the well-known historian and professor at the University of Poznań, Bronisław Dembiński. A similar Polish-Danish Society, headed by Senator Ignacy Baliński, was established in Warsaw. Additionally, in Copenhagen a Danish-Polish Association was established.⁵⁰ In the second half of the 1930s, the Baltic Institute played an important role in the initiating of cooperation. All the institutions mentioned actively popularized Danish culture and language by offering language courses, trips, and mediation in establishing cooperation. In the field of higher education, it was already possible to study Danish language at the University of Poznań in the 1921/1922 academic year. This course was taught by Ingeborg Stemann until in 1925 she moved to the University of Warsaw.⁵¹

Relatively little is known about the popularization of Polish culture in Denmark. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the famous opera singer Jan Kiepura and the composer and pianist Karol Szymanowski played concerts in Copenhagen in

49 Jaworski, *Polska niepodległa*, 249–258.

50 Jaworski, *Stosunki polsko-duńskie*, 216.

51 Eugeniusz S. Kruszewski: *Første danske lektor ved Poznans Universitet*. In: *Folia Scandinavica* 10 (2009), 37–46.

the 1930s.⁵² The first exhibition of Polish art took place in Copenhagen in 1929. In 1934, an exhibition of Polish graphics was presented in Aarhus with the title “Exhibition of woodcuts and Polish books”.⁵³ There are many indications that the cultural transfer from Denmark to Poland was more comprehensive and much more well-established.

In the interwar period, Danish literature was relatively well known in Poland, although the culmination of the popularity of Scandinavian writers took place at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. The Danes themselves sometimes evaluated the works of their own authors with reservation. In 1938, the Danish journalist William Jensen even stated in the popular and prestigious Polish weekly “*Wiadomości Literackie*” that among contemporary Danish novels it was difficult to choose “a work of significant artistic value”.⁵⁴ In response, the pioneer of Scandinavian studies in Poland, Stanisław Sawicki, published a polemical article. Making an outline of literary works, he tried to prove the “triumphal march through almost all of Europe” of Danish novelists: Jens Peter Jacobsen, Herman Bang, Henrik Pontoppidan, Karin Michaelis, Sophus Michaelis and Karl Gjellerup. In his article, he made a broad presentation of Danish literature, also considering poetic and dramatic works.⁵⁵

Only some of the authors mentioned by Sawicki were known to wider reading circles, whereas others only by connoisseurs of the Scandinavian literature. Judging from the statistics of translations, Hans Christian Andersen still dominated among Danish authors. His “Fairy Tales” were published in interwar Poland as many as 71 times and accounted for 30 percent of all editions of translations of Danish literary works.⁵⁶ Other authors struggled to break through, although their novels were printed as periodicals in the press, new books were reviewed, and news from the literary life of Denmark was accessible to readers.

Until Poland’s independence, Poles only encountered the achievements of Danish visual arts abroad. The exception was the work of the Danish sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen, who made monuments of outstanding Poles that were erected in representative places of Warsaw. The monument to Nicolaus Copernicus was unveiled in 1830, while the monument to Prince Józef Poniatowski was not erected in Warsaw before the outbreak of the November Uprising. Only nearly a century later, after the end of the Polish-Bolshevik war 1920, was it recovered from Soviet hands and, in the presence of a delegation of the city of Copenhagen, unveiled in Warsaw in 1923.⁵⁷

In 1936, the first exhibition of Danish art reached Poland. At that time, in the exhibition halls of the Institute of Art Propaganda in Warsaw, 68 paintings by 34 Danish artists and 98 sculptures by 17 Danes were presented. Among the artists, the works of Jens F. Willumsen, Kræsten Iversen, Joachim Skovgaard, Michael Ancher

52 Iwaszkiewiczowie, *Listy*, 560.

53 *Ibid.*, 611–613.

54 Jaworski, *Polska niepodległa*, 208.

55 *Ibid.*, 209–210.

56 Ewa Suchodolska, Zofia Żydanowicz, *Bibliografia polskich przekładów z literatury pięknej krajów skandynawskich do roku 1969 włącznie*, Poznań 1971.

57 Jaworski, *Polska niepodległa*, 28.

and Vilhelm Hammershøi particularly were displayed. Reviewers were not impressed by the paintings, but the graphics and sculptures were highly appraised.⁵⁸

The interwar period was a time of silent moves and a golden age for the early Danish film industry that produced for international markets. The star most admired by Polish and international cinema viewers was Asta Nielsen.⁵⁹ Gunnar Tolnæs also gained fame through his career in Danish productions although he was Norwegian by origin. An actress, Agnes Petersen, even played the lead role in the Polish-Austrian-Hungarian co-production “Cult of the Body” in 1930. Lau Lauritzen’s films with a pair of Danish comedians, Carl Schenstrøm and Harald Madsen (also known as Pat and Patachon), were also very popular. For a long time, their popularity was comparable to that of American comedians. With the dissemination of sound film from the early 1930s, some critics recognized that their humour was acceptable only among children and teenagers: “a lot of movement, escapes, chases, knocking over, making dirty white or black.”⁶⁰ Nevertheless, their films still attracted crowds of admirers to cinemas.

SPORT AS AN AREA OF MUTUAL RELATIONS

Scandinavian gymnastics met with great resonance in Poland, with detailed analysis of the Swede Pehr Henrik Ling’s system. One of the most famous propagators of new methods of practicing gymnastics became the Dane Niels Bukh from the Folk High School in Ollerup. He wanted to introduce the Ling exercises, in a modified form, into school teaching and military training. These ideas found fertile ground in Polish scouting circles and in the Polish army. In 1931 and again in 1937, Bukh, together with a group of gymnasts, came to Poland to demonstrate their skills.⁶¹ Their performances aroused great interest.⁶²

In 1934, the national football teams of both countries played their first match only against each other. After that, until the outbreak of the war, they met only twice (in 1936 and 1937), with the balance of matches being positive for Denmark.⁶³ Compared to the number of matches played by the Polish national team in the interwar period with the national teams of other countries (ten times each with Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Sweden; eight with Czechoslovakia, Romania and Latvia), the number of matches with Denmark was modest.

In 1936, the Polish Cycling Association invited a group of Danish cyclists. They came to Poland with their coach Thorvald Ellegaard, who between 1901 and 1911 won the world championship six times. The Danes participated in the compe-

58 *Ibid.*, 232–233.

59 Barbara Beuys, *Asta Nielsen. Filmgenie und Neue Frau*, Berlin 2020.

60 Pat i Patachon jako wynalazcy prochu, “Kino” 24/1932, 14; Jaworski, *Polska niepodległa*, 243–245.

61 Hans Bonde, *Gymnastics and Politics. Niels Bukh and male aesthetics*, Copenhagen 2006, 107.

62 Jaworski, *Polska niepodległa*, 261–262.

63 In 1934 Danish team won 4:2, in 1936 it was 2:1 (both matches were played in Copenhagen). In 1937 in Warsaw Poland won 3:1.

tion and trained together with their Polish colleagues. In 1937, Danish cyclists re-visited Poland.⁶⁴ At the end of the 1930s, Polish-Danish boxing matches took place. In 1938, the best known confrontation, when the Warsaw team fought with the boxers of Copenhagen, took place.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite the Baltic aspirations of the Second Polish Republic, Polish-Danish political relations were not particularly intensive in the interwar period. The countries had separate priorities and aims which did not align. From a Polish point of view, Denmark was too weak and too distant. Economic cooperation was also too limited, although Denmark was temporarily an important importer of Polish coal and Polish shipping owed a lot to Danish shipping companies. Cultural traditions were perceived as alien to each other, even exotic, although – from the Polish point of view – Denmark was considered a country inspiring for its application of various solutions. First and foremost, there was interest in the Danish way of creating economic prosperity and successful education. The potential of imitating the “Scandinavian world” was pointed out at that time by the well-known historian Władysław Konopczyński. In the case of Denmark, he mentioned the benefits of general and vocational education, the dairy industry and “rural farming in general”, as well as the whole Scandinavian area – physical culture, democratic system, and some customs.⁶⁵

Was the contact between the neighbouring states only episodic in the interwar period? Though personal contacts in the outset were limited, they did develop, and many examples of Polish-Danish rapprochement could be seen. The situation was incomparably better for Poland than before 1918. Mutual interest did exist across the Baltic. The rebirth of the independent state was an important impulse for Poland to strengthen cooperation in various fields with Denmark, which was regarded as a friendly country. The interwar period saw the numerous mutual visits of diplomats, politicians, specialists, journalists, artists, military, and tourists. The outbreak of the Second World War meant the end of most of these achievements.⁶⁶

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64 Jaworski, *Polska niepodległa*, 266.

65 Władysław Konopczyński, *Kwestia bałtycka*, Kraków/Warsaw 2014, 267–268.

66 Pessel, *Czerwono biali*, 230–231.

ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS AND THE ECONOMIC RELATION IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD 1919–1945

From Turmoil to Turmoil

Steen Andersen

Denmark and Poland were two very different countries in 1919. Poland had resurfaced as a result of the First World War – and Denmark was one of the few countries that had come out almost unscathed through the war. Political instability and war were a major part of the diplomatic reports coming from Warsaw to Copenhagen in 1919. But the two countries had one thing in common: they both fought politically and diplomatically for their borders. As a newly created nation, Poland had to defend both its eastern and western borders. Denmark was trying to regain some of the land that had been ceded to Prussia after a defeat in 1864. Both countries were dependent on the international legal order that had been created in the wake of the end of the First World War. Denmark had evacuated its diplomatic representation in St. Petersburg in December 1918, and therefore needed to regain connections to Danish interests in the peripheral states around Russia. Trade relations came to be at the center of Danish interests in relation to Poland through the interwar period. The interest of the Danish side was to support Danish companies, which had either established themselves in Poland or in the Baltic countries.¹ In the 1920s, it was a strategic goal for Denmark to support a more commercial and cosmopolitan foreign policy course. This article will describe the main features of Danish-Polish economic relations in the interwar period, drawing on Danish archival material. The research question is: What was the Danish interest in economic and political cooperation with Poland in the interwar period? The answer lies equally within an analysis of the overall political challenges and the concrete initiatives which shaped Danish-Polish relations.

The framework for the Polish-Danish relationship was Poland's difficult geopolitical position between the Soviet Union to its east and Germany to its West. The new Polish leaders recognized early on the possibility of north-south cooperation. In this context, the political and economic connections to Denmark came to play an important role.

Deliberation about the strategic value of Polish-Danish cooperation was already taken into consideration when diplomatic relations were established. In March 1919, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs summarized the following reasons for establishing an diplomatic mission in Denmark:

1 Bo Lidegaard, *Overleveren 1914–1945, Dansk Udenrigspolitisk Historie*, vol. 4, Copenhagen 2005, 163–168; 190–203.

- “a. Denmark, with its geographical location on the Baltic Sea, was a starting point for Coalition actions against Bolshevism.
- b. Denmark and Poland shared a possible enemy – Germany.
- c. The Port of Copenhagen served as a junction between Gdańsk and Western Europe and the United States.
- d. Exchange of Polish labor and exports for Danish expertise in shipping and infrastructure. [...]
- e. The need for consular assistance to Poles interned as Russian Prisoners of War in neutral Denmark who might otherwise be exposed to Bolshevik and German influence”²

Though concrete issues such as Polish citizens did play a role, securing long-term strategic interests of both economic and political nature was of the highest priority. On the Danish side, the establishment of relations happened at a time when the Danish foreign service was going through restructuring and budget cuts.³ Still, the relationship with Poland was considered to be crucial for Denmark and thus it was prioritized. It was in Denmark’s interest to establish a close and mutually dependent relationship with its neighbour on the other side of the Baltic Sea. Furthermore, it was Denmark’s policy to support the new states that arose in the wake of the First World War. Denmark and Poland officially signed diplomatic relations on 30 May 1919, and both countries established diplomatic missions in Warsaw and Copenhagen respectively.⁴

THE SOVIET-POLISH WAR

Danish-Polish relations were founded during a turbulent period for Poland. This is clear from the first diplomatic report from the Danish mission in Warsaw, dated 29 November 1920. It stated: “The conditions here seem to be increasingly variegated”. The account described in detail the advance of Soviet troops in Eastern Poland. However, the envoy Poul Victor Birgler could also calm Copenhagen with the French military attaché’s estimate that the Bolshevik army would not be able to occupy all of Poland.⁵

The suffering of the Polish people in the post-world war conflict with the Soviet Union led to private Danish aid initiatives.⁶ More than 50,000 Poles were taken as prisoners of war by the Red Army, and approximately 115,000 soldiers were wounded. A private committee raised money for a field hospital and large stocks of medicine

2 Kirsten Bach, *Polen og Danmark i Mellemløstiden (1919–1939). En undersøgelse af Polens syn på og politik over for Danmark*, unpublished thesis SDU, 2002, 32.

3 Poul Victor Birgler was acting envoy from 1919 to 1920, his formal title was ‘Legation Council, Charge d’affaires ad interim in Warsaw’.

4 See also in this book: Jan Stanisław Ciechanowski, “Polish Envoys to Denmark 1919–1940”, 79–92.

5 *Indberetning fra gesandtskabet i Warszawa til Udenrigsministeriet, 29/11/1920. Udenrigsministeriet: Depecher (1848–1972) 325: Warszawa 1919–1921. UM.*

6 See: Kamila Faszczka, *The 1920–1922 Danish Humanitarian Aid to Poland*, in: *Studia Maritima* 23 (2010), 97–108.

were acquired. Ten Danish doctors and twenty Danish nurses were sent to Poland in October 1920. Their task was the rescue of Polish soldiers who returned from Soviet prison camps. 'Dannebrog' was posted at the military camp in Deblin. Former prisoners of the Red Army had been systematically starved while living in camps with indescribable conditions.

The reports from the Danish field hospital painted a dark and gloomy picture of humanitarian and medical conditions as it states a high mortality rate among returning Polish soldiers. When the Danish field hospital arrived in Poland, conditions were so miserable for the returning prisoners that their death rate was around 70 percent.⁷

The field hospital treated malnutrition, typhoid, scurvy, malaria, tuberculosis, and blood poisoning. This was an example of what would be today called 'public diplomacy', and it functioned in close coordination with the Danish Foreign Ministry. The hospital returned to Denmark in February 1921 and had treated about 3,000 prisoners of war for serious illnesses. The hospitalized patients had a mortality rate of a mere 9 percent. Danish aid was appreciated and the Danish Foreign Ministry deemed that it helped to strengthen the connection with Poland.⁸ In the political arena, the Soviet-Polish war demonstrated the weakness of the post-world war peace arrangements. This also had implications for Danish-Polish relations. In accordance with the Treaty of Versailles, Poland received 140 kilometres of Baltic coastline and a solemn ceremony for the country's "wedding to the Baltic Sea" was even held. The treaty also guaranteed Poland the use of the port of the Free City of Danzig. However, it soon turned out to be associated with many difficulties. These complications proved to be particularly onerous during the unloading of weapons for the Polish Army fighting the war against Bolshevik Russia in 1920. To Denmark, the Danzig-question was delicate because, from 1922, Consul General Harald Koch was responsible for the administration of the permanent arbitration court which was tasked with regulating access to the Free City of Danzig.⁹ This jurisdiction included the city of Danzig (Gdańsk), the towns of Zoppot (Sopot), Oliva (Oliwa), Tiegenhof (Nowy Dwór Gdański), Neuteich (Nowy Staw) and some 252 villages, covering a total area of 1,966 square kilometres.

To solve the Danzig risk to Polish foreign trade, on 12 May 1921, a draft law was submitted to the Polish Parliament, calling on the Polish government to build Poland's own port. Gdynia was no obvious choice at all. The launch of a new rail line was necessary for two reasons: in order to connect the new port with the region of Silesia (for the export of coal) and in order to bypass the Free City of Danzig. However, the Second Polish Republic was quickly forced to face brutal economic

7 Danish National Archive (Rigsarkivet: RA): Dansk Hjelpeambulance Komité: Materiale vedr. Valdemar Sejr-ambulancen i Estland (1919–1919).

8 Ibid.

9 Den danske Udenrigstjeneste 1770–1970, vol 2, Copenhagen 1970, 62.

reality.¹⁰ At that time, Poland was a very poor country. In 1924, Poland was hit by an economic crisis and inflation was raging.¹¹

The works in Gdynia were suspended due to a shortage of funds. This is when engineer Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski entered the stage with his innovative concepts. Kwiatkowski placed great emphasis on the importance of domestic capital. He set his sights on the Association of Upper Silesian Coal Mines “Robur” as one of the first investors. This scheme was subsequently duplicated in cooperation with other companies who were also willing to provide the necessary capital. The scale of the expenditures were so great that it was necessary to find additional sources of financing. Kwiatkowski came up with another innovative idea of auctioning for the quay operation rights.¹² The Polish investments in Gdynia paved the way for intensified Danish-Polish cooperation.

ACCESS TO THE BALTIC SEA

A breakthrough in Polish-Danish relations was the conclusion of the Trade and Shipping Treaty on 22 March 1924. For Poland, it was a political signal that Poland was taking an active part in the Baltic Sea. Warsaw perceived Denmark as a harmless player that did not nurture political goals in the Baltic Sea that could harm Polish interests. Thus, the Polish government had great interest in attracting Danish capital and business. The success of the treaty was confirmed by the construction of the port of Gdynia, where the Danish engineering company Højgaard & Schultz actively participated in both the construction of the consortium and the execution of the construction.¹³

On 19 March 1924, at a meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Danish Parliament, the government gave an account of negotiations with Poland. The Danish side was interested in “[...] expanding the existing net of trade treaties [...] with the new states that emerged during and after the war.” They all based themselves on the most-favored-nation principle. Three areas were extremely important for Denmark to be involved in. The transit trade in foreign goods across Denmark to Poland and Danzig was to be secured (Article III). In addition, transit goods were to be exempted from taxes (Article VI). Emigration traffic over Danzig played a very big role. An attempt was therefore made to secure the interests of Danish ship-

10 Indberetning fra gesandtskabet i Warszawa til Udenrigsministeriet, 1/5/1923; Indberetning fra gesandtskabet i Warszawa til Udenrigsministeriet, 11/5/1923; Indberetning fra gesandtskabet i Warszawa til Udenrigsministeriet, 25/5/1923, Udenrigsministeriet: Depecher (1848–1972) 325: Warszawa 1922–1924. UM.

11 Indberetning fra gesandtskabet i Warszawa, No. VIII, Den polske saneringsplan, den 4/4/1924, Jnr. 5.E.1.UM; Goetz H. von Thadden, Inflation in the reconstruction of Poland 1918–1927, PhD thesis, School of Economics and Political Science, London, 137–144.

12 Bach, Polen og Danmark i Mellemløbet (1919–1939), 24.

13 Ibid., 37–38; Forslag til Rigsdagsbeslutning i Anledning af de i Warschau afsluttede Handels- og Skibsfartstraktat mellem Danmark og Polen med dertil hørende Slutprotokol og Tillægsprotokol vedr. Traktatens Gyldighed for Fristaden Danzig. Udenrigspolitisk Nævn. UM 3.E.92.RA.

ping in the transport of Poles who wanted to go to the United States (Article XVII). Again, the principle of most-favored-nation was introduced, as competition from other countries was fierce. The Danish Foreign Ministry had held meetings during the negotiations with the East Asiatic Company Ltd. (EAC, *Det Østasiatisk Kompagni*) and the international shipping company DFDS (*Det Forenede Dampskibsselskab*), which pressed to ensure a most-favored-nation clause in the Treaty, thus ensuring survival in competition with other companies. Poland writhed in the reins as they wanted a shift from most favoured to issuance of concessions but gave in to the Danish pressure. Denmark proved that Belgium already had a most-favoured-nation right on emigrant traffic. In addition, the two companies highlighted interest in early involvement in the emigrant routes through Danzig, which was a positive development for Poland. An agreement was reached that regulated three main areas: the exchange of goods, customs, and excise duties (Articles I–XVI), shipping (Article XVII) and the activities of persons and companies (Articles XVIII–XXII). The guiding principle was, as stated, the principle of most-favored-nation. Within shipping, both parties were granted the right to use each other's ports for transit under the same customs and tax rules which applied in the country of origin (Article III). Transit goods (stored) were exempt from tax (Article VI). Individuals and companies had the right within applicable law to settle and engage in handicrafts, industry, etc. (Article XVIII). In addition, businesspeople had the right to time off, movement in connection with procurement, and to be exempt from additional taxes (Article XXI). The agreement consisted of 24 articles, the essential elements of which are included here. The agreement clarified trade between the two countries. For Poland it was a great achievement in its effort to establish itself as a Baltic Sea state both economically and politically. Economically, they saw the opportunity to increase exports to Denmark and at the same time use Denmark as a transit country for trade with the rest of Scandinavia and Western Europe. Politically, the agreement was seen as a step in the right direction on the road to a Baltic Sea assets policy.¹⁴

For Denmark, the agreement was economically a step in the right direction, as: “[...] Poland, a country that knows its size, its population and its natural riches seem destined to play one Significant Role in Europe's Economy”.¹⁵ For Denmark, the agreement was primarily of economic importance. It was about access to the Polish market, and it expanded Copenhagen Freeport's role as a central storage site for transit goods in and out of Poland. The economic argument was deliberately chosen in a balancing act to avoid triggering German protests over an agreement. The fear was that Germany would interpret the cooperation as political support for the Polish state.¹⁶

14 Forslag til Rigsdagsbeslutning i Anledning af de i Warschau afsluttet Handels- og Skibsfarts-traktat mellem Danmark og Polen med dertil hørende Slutprotokol og Tillægsprotokol vedr. Traktatens Gyldighed for Fristaden Danzig. Udenrigspolitisk Nævn. UM 3.E.92.RA.

15 Referat af møde i Udenrigspolitisk Nævn. “Memorandum vedr. de i Warschau førte Handelstraktatforhandlinger”, 19/3 1924. UM 3.E.92. RA.

16 Indberetning No. 41 – Handelsforhandlinger mellem Danmark og Polen, 7/2/1924. Den Kongelige Gesandt i Warschau, 25/2 1924. 64. Dan. 62. Danmark-Polen – Handelstraktat. UM.

The Trade and Shipping Treaty was to shape the relationship throughout the interwar period.¹⁷ For Poland, it was an important step towards playing an active part in the Baltic Sea. The Polish government perceived Denmark as an innocuous partner and thus Danish capital and business were more attractive than investments from larger powers. It enabled Poland to act more independently from the large and threatening Baltic powers: Germany and the Soviet Union. The Baltic cooperation with Denmark was in alignment with both Marshal Piłsudski's first federation plans in the early 20s and Foreign Minister Beck's attempt to create the third Europe to prevent being involved in a coming great war between Germany and the Soviet Union. That the port of Gdynia was crucially important to Poland was underlined by the fact that it was the only major public works project that the Polish state could afford to undertake. The first phase of the project was estimated to cost 50 million gold francs, which the Polish state could not afford to pay. Instead, the financing model was based on the consortium covering all expenses for the first three years, and then the Polish state paying the consortium over the following eight years. As collateral, the consortium was given a mortgage on the large Polish state forests in the Poznań province. The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs was satisfied that Poland officially said that the intention of building the port was to relieve the port of Danzig, as it could not handle the increased traffic. This formulation would not immediately strain the Danish relationship with Germany in light of the fact that a Danish company, Højgaard & Schultz, played a central role in the consortium. However, the Danish diplomatic mission was clear about the real reason for the Polish plans for the construction of the garden in Gdynia and wrote in the report to the foreign minister that "the real idea behind it, however, is to become independent from Danzig, which – although the relationship seems better at the moment – Poland is still causing many knots."¹⁸ In the Danish diplomatic formulation, there was recognition of Poland's difficult situation along with attempts to avoid straining the Danish-German relationship, which was the main consideration in Denmark's foreign policy throughout the interwar period.

Poland's Baltic aspirations created great opportunities for Danish contractors working internationally. The negotiations began in 1922, and on 24 July 1924 the Danish contractor Højgaard & Schultz signed an agreement for the construction of the Gdynia harbour. During the construction of the harbour, the project was extended several times and the result was that Højgaard & Schultz was engaged in Gdynia from 1924 until the outbreak of World War II in September 1939. In addition to the port of Gdynia, Højgaard & Schultz also built two other Polish ports. Altogether, these port contracts were worth approximately 100 million crowns.¹⁹

17 Bekendtgørelse angaaende end under 22. Marts 1924 i Warshau afsluttet Handels- og Skibsfartstraktat mellem Danmark og Polen med dertil hørende Slutprotokol vedrørende Traktatens Gyldighed for Fristaden Danzig. Jnr. 64. Dan. 62 – Danmark-Polen Handelstraktat. UM. RA.

18 Indberetning fra gesandtskabet i Warszawa, No. VIII, Den polske saneringsplan, 4/4/1924, Jnr. 5.E.1.UM.

19 Knud Højgaard: Højgaard & Schultz A/S. Ingeniører og Entreprenører, Copenhagen 1943, 18.

In 1924, Gdynia was a small fishing village with 800 inhabitants. It would develop over the next 15 years to become a city with 100,000 inhabitants and a port four times the size of Copenhagen's Freeport.

In addition to harbour work in Poland, Højgaard & Schultz constructed a hydropower plant, and in 1935 the company founded the Polish subsidiary "Contractor", which built roads for the Polish state. In addition, Højgaard & Schultz also established industrial production in Poland in the form of asphalt and tar products for road construction.²⁰ In 1936, the Polish company was transformed into a partnership between Højgaard & Schultz and another Danish construction firm: Wright, Thomsen & Kier. The technical side of the road construction and the actual execution of projects by the workers in Poland were put into the hands of Wright, Thomsen & Kier, while Højgaard & Schultz was to take care of the administrative tasks and contact with the authorities. In addition to being associated with the certain risk of building infrastructure and industry in a newly created Polish state, Højgaard & Schultz's construction of the port itself was a project with political overtones.²¹

This led to protests from Berlin and the city of Danzig. Particularly after 1933, Højgaard & Schultz's involvement in Poland became a matter which the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs handled with caution, since it did not want to offend the rising German Reich.

Højgaard & Schultz became one of the Polish government's most important Danish business partners. The company's president, Knud Højgaard, actively acted as a mediator between the Polish and the Danish governments.²² In July 1930, he hosted the official dinner when the Polish trade minister visited Denmark. As Højgaard was not estranged with Danish politics, Prime Minister Thorvald Stauning was also guest at this reception.²³ The fact that the meeting between the Polish minister of transport and the Danish prime minister took place "privately" and did not serve as an official state dinner was standard for Danish non-offensive foreign policy vis-a-vis Berlin.

DANISH-POLISH RELATIONS UNDER INCREASING PRESSURE

Since the 1920s, Denmark had always taken special consideration of the fact that German interests must not be affected negatively by the expansion of Danish-Polish relations. After Hitler took power in January 1933, the Danish fear of German demands for a border revision increased and the Danish course in regard to Berlin became even more cautious. Denmark was one of the first countries to conclude a trade agreement based on clearing with the new Nazi regime in 1934. Every quarter,

20 Steen Andersen: *De gjorde Danmark større: demultinationale danske entreprenører i krise og krig 1919–1947*, Copenhagen 2005, 69.

21 Bach, *Polen og Danmark i Mellemløbetiden (1919–1939)*, 80.

22 Joachim Lund, *Virksomhedsledelse og den autoritære stat – Knud Højgaard 1878–1978*, in: *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 110/1 (2010), 134.

23 "Polens Havn i Gdynia", 31/5/1932. Den polske handels- og industriminister E. Kwiatkowski aflagde Danmark et besøg i juli 1930, 31/5/1932. Jnr. UM 60.H.1.

the Danish-German trade agreement committee met to organize trade between the two countries. In the 1930s, this agreement was one of the mainstays of Danish foreign policy and relations with other countries had to be established while taking it into account. In addition, the great powers began a trade war over the Scandinavian market and Denmark came under increasing British pressure to comply with London's interests. In 1933, Denmark entered into a trade agreement with Great Britain which guaranteed that the British could get 80 percent of the Danish coal market.²⁴ Both the cautious Danish line toward Germany and the agreement with Britain effectively blocked continued Polish export of coal to Denmark led to frustration in Warsaw.

To strengthen Polish-Danish trade, the Polish government wanted to establish a fixed long-term framework instead of the existing 3-month agreements on product quotas.²⁵ Although the Danish side agreed in principle, this situation lasted until 1935, when negotiations on a trade agreement started. In reality, Denmark was pursuing goals which made deepening of economic ties difficult. On one side, the Danish government wanted to correct the skewed trade balance, as Poland sold more to Denmark than they bought, and on the other it needed to reduce Polish exports to Denmark to appease the great powers of Germany and Great Britain.²⁶ The German Reich required Denmark to buy more industrial goods in Germany and thus cut down on imports of Polish-produced industrial goods, and the British side demanded a reduction in the quantity of coal imported from Poland.

In 1935, Denmark was furthermore under pressure due to a new trade agreement with the United Kingdom which changed the trade balance in the UK's favor. The director of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Otto Carl Mohr, therefore instructed the Danish envoy in Warsaw that it would be necessary to cut imports of Polish coal and grain, as well as iron and zinc products. The Polish side argued that Denmark bought inexpensive coal and grain in large quantities, and that this was actually advantageous to the country's economy. Furthermore, it pointed out that the Danish demand for a reduction in Polish exports would in fact lead to a cessation of trade between Denmark and Poland. The Polish envoy in Copenhagen emphasized that Poland catered for Danish companies, that Polish ships were sent for repair to Danish shipyards, and that Højgaard and Schultz had won the bid to build the port of Wilka Wies. In addition, Højgaard & Schultz had recently received permission to establish its road construction subsidiary "Contractor".²⁷ In other words, the parties' positions were far apart; Poland's desire to maintain and possibly expand exports to Denmark was in sharp contrast to Denmark's intention to balance

24 Bach, *Polen og Danmark i Mellemlkrigstiden (1919–1939)*, 47.

25 Bekendtgørelse om en under 10. januar 1934 i København undertegnet Protokol mellem Danmark og Polen vedrørende Fortoldningen af visse Varer; Udkast til en Handels- og Skibsfartstraktat mellem Danmark og Polen/Danzig. Jnr. 64. Dan. 62. Danmark-Polen. UM.

26 Registrering af en dansk-polsk Overenskomst om Fortoldningen af visse Varer, 16/11/1934. ØPI; Bekendtgørelse om en under 10. januar 1934 i København undertegnet Protokol mellem Danmark og Polen vedrørende Fortoldningen af visse Varer. Jnr. 64. Dan. 62 – Danmark-Polen – Handelstraktatforhold. UM.

27 Andersen, *De gjorde Danmark større*, 304.

its trade by reducing Polish exports. Poland did not give up easily. It brought forth additional compensation offers to Denmark by offering to use the Danish merchant navy and trade companies for Western European and transatlantic markets. However, this proposal formulated by the Polish envoy in Copenhagen, Sokolnicki, was rejected by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Warsaw arguing that such an arrangement would discriminate against prior promises to other countries.²⁸

In the beginning of 1936, the Danish-Polish trade negotiations were stuck in a stalemate.²⁹ On that occasion, the Danish mission in Warsaw reported to Prime Minister Thorvald Stauning that Polish foreign policy was solely determined by Polish self-interests and “no abstract doctrines can exert the slightest influence”. It was therefore difficult for Denmark to appeal to mutual interests. Negotiations would get nowhere if an agreement was not clearly in Poland’s favor. In mid-January, Polish Foreign Minister Beck had stated in the Polish Parliament Sejm that Poland’s trade policy was not guided by economic considerations, as Poland did not want to become a European trading object. Poland’s political interests were not for sale and Beck had finished his speech by saying: “We are a poor people, but the world is too poor to buy us”.³⁰ The message from the mission was therefore that if the Danish side wanted an agreement signed with Poland, it would need to give Poland some political concessions. This would put Danish foreign policy to the test as this would challenge the Danish relationship with Germany. The Polish side used the appointment of a new envoy to revitalize the negotiations. During an audience with King Christian X and the minister of foreign affairs, Peter Munch, Starzewski emphasized that there was significant danger for Denmark if it made itself economically and politically dependent on one of the two great powers, Germany or Great Britain.³¹ It was a bold move for the Polish envoy to be so direct in making it clear that Denmark’s ongoing negotiations and existing agreements were part of a process of pushing Poland aside. Foreign Minister Munch did not like to be criticized for his course towards Germany, but conversely, it was on no account in Denmark’s interest to let the great power’s showdown dictate overall Danish trade policy.³²

The trump card of the Polish side was to involve Knud Højgaard. Starzewski managed to pull the influential entrepreneur into the negotiations. He went to the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and initiated separate discussions with the head of the trade policy department, Nils Svenningsen.³³ Højgaard succeeded in convincing the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs that there were significant current and future interests in Poland, and that it was therefore worth finding a compromise which did not reduce Polish exports dramatically. On 20 July 1936, official negotiations were re-opened in Copenhagen, and thanks to the pressure from Danish busi-

28 Bach, *Polen og Danmark i Mellemlkrigstiden (1919–1939)*, 45.

29 Indberetning fra den danske gesandtskab til statsminister Thorvald Stauning, 22/1/1936, jnr. 5.E.1, UM.

30 Ibid.

31 Bach, *Polen og Danmark i Mellemlkrigstiden (1919–1939)*, 70.

32 Steen Andersen, “Der er intet foruroligende for Danmark”, *Danmark mellem stormagter frem mod den 9. april 1940*, Odense 2020, 24.

33 Bach, *Polen og Danmark i Mellemlkrigstiden (1919–1939)*, 67–70.

nesses a compromise was reached within about a month. The solution was an ingenious move which recognized interdependence by focusing on economic interests rather than on political interests. The agreement ran for one year. Coal was highlighted separately with a quota of 300,000 tonnes annually as the dominant export item.³⁴ A secret clause determined that Denmark had the right to reduce coal imports down to 210,000 tonnes annually, thereby obliging an increase in these imports when the opportunity arose. In addition to coal, grain, wood, and iron were the most important exports to Denmark. Secret clauses also regulated both grain imports and payment. The agreement was extended every year until the end of 1939.³⁵

Through his mediation Højgaard consolidated his position in the relationship between Denmark and the young Polish state. In January 1934, he became a main driving force behind the establishment of the Polish-Danish Society, and from 1937 he was its chairman. Furthermore, in November 1936, he was elected chairman for the newly established Danish-Polish Chamber of Commerce. Knud Højgaard's role in connection with Denmark's trade negotiations was well in line with other significant Danish business leaders, such as the president of EAC, H.N. Andersen, and Alexander Foss, the president of the Concrete Manufacturer F.L. Schmidt, who were both making considerable profits in Poland.³⁶

HOLDING ON TO THE MARKET

Højgaard & Schultz as well as Wright, Thomsen & Kier's business in Poland were captured during the German invasion on 1 September 1939. Upon the annexation of the Western parts of Poland into the Reich, the Eastern into the Soviet Union, and the creation of a German occupied zone, the climate for business changed.³⁷ The Danish companies strived to continue their operations. In particular "Contractor" remained an operator within road construction. To support the road construction firm's activities, Højgaard & Schultz established the asphalt factory "KEMI" in Warsaw in 1935.³⁸

Højgaard & Schultz was also still engaged in Gdynia, where the large harbour construction had not yet been completed, and it was also here that the company first came to feel the consequences of the harsh German occupation policy. The large

34 DANICA-samlingen: P.III.422/D./2. RA, "Audiens hos kongen og med udenrigsministeren", 9/06/1936; DANICA-samlingen: 5718 3/D/2/36. RA, "Polsk-danske handelsforhandlinger", 27/01/1936.

35 Bach, Polen og Danmark i Mellemløstiden (1919–1939), 71.

36 Lund, Virksomhedsledelse og den autoritære stat, 134.

37 Indberetning fra det danske gesandtskab i Warszawa, 6/11/1939 – Oversigt over Begivenheder i Polen i Krigens første Måned. Jnr. 6.F.31. UM.

38 Joachim Lund, Hitlers spisekammer. Danmark og den europæiske nyordning 1940–43, Copenhagen 2005, 238; Joachim Lund, Rapport vedrørende entreprenørfirmaet "Højgaard & Schultz" A/S – Med henblik på firmaets byggeaktiviteter i Tyskland, Øst- og Sydeuropa 1939–14 og spørgsmålet om anvendelse af tvangsarbejde. unpublished report Copenhagen Business School, May 2001, 23.

new harbour facility was immediately appropriated by the German navy which made it a military area under the name "Gotenhafen".³⁹

All Polish and foreign companies were denied access to the area and Contractor's remaining entrepreneurial equipment was confiscated. Since the completion of the main section of the harbour construction in Gdynia, Højgaard & Schultz had withdrawn from Poland and left the business to Contractor, which only employed Poles. Contractor had a share capital of 500,000 złoty, the majority owned by either Højgaard & Schultz or Knud Højgaard personally. The board of the company, with Højgaard at the head, consisted of four Danish engineers and one Pole.⁴⁰ The daily management of Contractor was in the hands of manager Feliks Rostkowski, with technical assistance from Danish engineers for larger projects. Prior to the German invasion, Wright, Thomsen & Kier had employed an engineer in the country to supervise Contractor's road construction at Czestochowa, but after the occupation, the projects were managed by Polish engineers. For this reason, the Danish companies had no clear conception of their subsidiary's conditions and in October 1940, the company's deputy manager Holger Rasmussen was sent to Poland to investigate the conditions.⁴¹

Based on his observations, Rasmussen prepared a report, which, besides being one of few central sources on Contractor's work during the war, provides interesting insight into what kind of knowledge the parent companies actually had about the situation in Poland. The trip to Poland took place from 29 September to 19 October 1940 and right from the beginning the account provides an impression of how the authorities of the German occupation had thoroughly regulated and taken control of Polish society down to the slightest detail. Thus, it turned out to be impossible for Rasmussen to get a room when he arrived, as hotels could not independently assign their rooms, which were reserved for the Wehrmacht or the German civilian administration.⁴²

Until the war, Contractor had almost exclusively built roads for the Polish Ministry of Traffic. However, in line with Hitler's orders given to Governor General Hans Frank that Poland must be erased as a nation and henceforth treated as a colony, the German "Technisches Amt" (Technical Office) and its various "Außenstellen" (Regional Branches) was the new entrepreneurial developer in the General Province.⁴³ Despite the Germans' inclination to reject all cooperation with Polish companies and to instead relay tasks to German companies, ideological intentions had to give way to practical realities. Therefore, Contractor succeeded in winning a public contract on road repair and the building of an asphalt road at Grójec, 50 ki-

39 Lund, Hitlers spisekammer, 240.

40 Lund, Rapport vedrørende entreprenørfirmaet, 26.

41 Lund, Hitlers spisekammer, 243.

42 Memorandum of a trip to Warschau and Gotenhafen in the period 29 September – 19 October 1940. Written by engineer Holger Rasmussen, 30/10 1940. "Contractor Polen", reg. no. 2666. The H & S Archives. RA.

43 Det Kongelige Danske Gesandtskab til Udenrigsministeriet, 22/1/1942, No. 187 – A/S Højgaard & Schultz' Interesser i det tidligere Polen. Genereller Spørgsmål vedr. Tilgodehavenender. Jnr. 83. Pol. 67a. UM.

lometres east of Warsaw. During his stay, Rasmussen was also approached by District Commissioner (Kreishauptmann) Werner Zimmermann concerning the construction of more asphalt roads.⁴⁴

Contractor had succeeded in continuing business and its future prospects boded well – bearing in mind that “in the imminent building season considerable road constructions are projected in the General Government” – most likely due to its technical expertise.⁴⁵ Moreover, thanks to the asphalt factory KEMI, Contractor could offer the construction of new modern roads with asphalt covering, which most Polish entrepreneurial companies could not. Rasmussen’s report assured Copenhagen’s management that relations with the manager of the German road construction administration (Regierungsbaurat) Eicke were good and that one “could expect all possible support” in the future from him.⁴⁶ Above and beyond gathering information, the trip to Poland also served the purpose of acquainting the new regime with the owners of the company. The introductions were made to protect the company assets from risks engendered by German mistrust of local companies. From this perspective, Rasmussen’s mission was a success, since he reported that “the German authorities have, however, been reluctant to relay large-scale projects to the existing Polish companies, since they do not believe that the individual companies are equal to the projects.” Contractor attempted to counter the German economic repression by establishing a joint venture consisting of the four largest Polish road construction companies under the name “Vereinigte Straßenbauindustrie G.m.b.H.” (United Road Construction Ltd.). The German reaction to this initiative was positive, as the occupational authorities assured the new company that it would be engaged in a major road construction project south of Warsaw.

	Cumulative turnover	including turnover from dike works at Weichselwall
1940	733,248	388,129
1941	1,656,181	679,371
1942	2,033,844	1,521,222
1943	2,046,273	1,582,390

*Contractor’s Turnover in the General Province 1940–1943 (in zloty)*⁴⁷

From 1939 to 1943, the largest project Contractor was involved in was the construction of dikes along the Vistula River. In the beginning of 1940, the Department for Water Resources (Abteilung Wasserwirtschaft) of the General Government initiated a large drainage project, which was to provide the colonists with reclaimed

44 Memorandum of a trip to Warschau and Gotenhafen, “Contractor Polen”, reg. no. 2666. The H & S Archives. RA.

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid.

47 Contractor’s turnover figures are based on account material in the Wright, Thomsen & Kier Archives and the H & S Archives. RA.

land. Contractor built a 1700 running metre dike as part of the project the Germans called the “Weichselwall”. The project did not demand technical expertise, merely manual labour to dig and shovel along the river. At the time Rasmussen inspected the dike constructions, the company was employing 320 men at an hourly wage of 0.80 zloty. The Germans allocated considerable resources to the dam and dike projects, which had been scheduled to be completed within a short time horizon. In order to follow the plan’s time scale and minimise costs, the Germans deployed a large number of forced labourers to the private companies, mainly consisting of Polish Jews.⁴⁸

The German administration of the General Government needed a great deal of labour to modernise Polish infrastructure. Towards the end of 1940 more than 700,000 Jews were deployed as forced labour in damming projects, and road and railroad construction.⁴⁹ The Danish historian Joachim Lund has combed the German archives for clues to answer the question of Contractor’s use of forced labour. The company’s turnover on the dike projects increased from 388,129 zloty in 1940 to 1,582,390 zloty in 1943; given that Contractor’s work force in 1940 numbered 320 men, these numbers indicate an increase to around 1000 men in 1942–43. Entries from October 1940 in the German material mention the deployment of 1000 Jewish men as forced labour in water regulation projects in Czystochowa, where Contractor also worked. A report from the manager of the Weichselwall constructions to the Governor General Hans Frank states that 3700 Jewish men were deployed as forced labour out of a total workforce of 5700. In a 1941 account from the central authority for Water Resources (Wasserwirtschaftsverwaltung) of the General Government there is specific mention of “Deployment of Jews in the District of Warsaw”, where Contractor was building dikes.⁵⁰ During the war, it became normal procedure for private companies in Poland to use forced labour side by side with a normal, salaried workforce. Bearing in mind that forced labour was so widespread in the dike construction projects, Lund states that there is “no reason to conclude that Contractor and thereby Højgaard & Schultz should not have worked under the same conditions as the other companies”. His conclusion is that “by all accounts forced labour was applied in this case.”⁵¹ In this way the Danish-owned company became part of the Holocaust.

In his research on the transition between exploitation and extinction of the Jews, the American Holocaust historian Christopher R. Browning emphasizes that the German dike projects in the Warsaw area produced a camp system known for starvation and brutal treatment of Jews. The conditions were so abysmal that the Germans themselves in an inspection report admitted that “the inclination to use

48 Steen Andersen, Living condition and business environments in Denmark 1940–1945, in: Christoph Buchheim, Marcel Boldorf (eds.), *Europäische Volkswirtschaften unter deutscher Hegemonie 1938–1945*, München 2012, 27–52, here: 47.

49 Wolf Gruner, *Jewish Forced Labor under the Nazis – Economic Needs and Racial Aims, 1938–1944*, Cambridge 2006, 235 ff.

50 Joachim Lund, Building Hitler’s Europe: Forced Labor in the Danish Construction Business during World War II, in: *Business History Review* 84/3 (2010), 490.

51 Lund: Rapport vedrørende entreprenørfirmaet, 31–32; Lund, Hitlers spisekammer, 250.

Jewish labour camps is, after many bitter experiences, no longer great. The cost stands in no profitable relationship to the labour output".⁵² During the excavation of the dikes the workers were often knee deep in water, and coupled with the sanitary conditions, this meant that the Jews succumbed to death in great numbers. In August 1941, German calculations reached the conclusion that the benefit of forced labour was surpassed four and a half times by the costs of establishing the camps at Weichselwall. The longer the occupation and war lasted, the worse the conditions in the work camps became for the Jewish prisoners engaged in forced labour. The numbers of forced labour prisoners who died of starvation rose drastically and their treatment became increasingly brutal. Already, in the autumn of 1940, Jews who had been deployed digging trenches near the Soviet border were shot down by the guards when their work was done, in spite of a shortage of labour. The SS and the civilian German administration reacted to what was described as "lazy work performance" with brutality. Hangings and shootings had already been daily events in the German work camps in the General Government before the mass extermination of the Jews was initiated. In the beginning of March 1943, Himmler commanded that all smaller work camps in the General Government were to be closed and that Jewish forced labourers be concentrated in larger camps, where they were to be deployed in armament production; all the Jews who were not employed in the armament industry were to be put to death. At this time around 120,000 Jews were interned in the work camps that the General Government housed. In the Radom district, where Højgaard & Schultz worked, the SS and the Water Resources Administration controlled 22,000 Jewish prisoners doing forced labour. Towards the end of May 1943, the Radom district had been "cleansed" and the Jews fit for work sent on to the larger camps; most of the remaining Jews were murdered.⁵³

A decisive question is how much Højgaard & Schultz management knew about the forced workforce employed by their subsidiary. Like the decision to form a joint venture with the three other large road construction companies to attract German orders, the decision to use forced labour was likely made by Contractor's *in situ* management. The scarcity of source material makes it difficult to assess management's role and attitude at the time. In October 1940, the company sent an engineer to Poland to inspect Contractor's projects and to size up the German organisation of the project, and on this occasion the envoy also visited the Weichselwall, where he met with, among others, the manager of a senior representative of the Water Resources authority. The report's silence regarding the intensive use of forced labour in the dike construction can be seen as an expression of a widespread tendency among companies doing business in the Third Reich to look the other way and not mention forced labour. Whatever the circumstances, one must conclude that if Højgaard & Schultz had wanted to know whether Contractor used forced labour, they would have been able to find out. To the companies that wanted to find out, it was no secret that the German occupation policy in the General Government entailed extensive use of forced labour. Drawing a parallel to another Danish contractor,

52 Christopher R. Browning: *Nazi Policy, Jewish Workers, German Killers*, Cambridge 2000, 64–65.

53 Gruner, *Jewish Forced Labor*, 269.

“Christiani & Nielsen’s” concerns about bidding for projects in the occupied Polish land, it is clear here that management was aware of the conditions in the country. In March 1943, Christiani & Nielsen were approached by a German company that proposed joint ventures in Norway and in Poland. While they chose not to reject the former and referred it to the Norwegian branch, management made its attitude to the other offer clear, stating that they did not want to enter into “works of the nature concerned and certainly not in Poland”.⁵⁴

After the German occupation of Poland, Contractor was facing two risks created by the political development. The first risk was economical and resulted from the fact that so far, the company had worked for a state which no longer existed officially. The second risk was the threat that occupying forces would confiscate the company’s equipment for ideological reasons. The company had no efficient way to counter these risks. Nevertheless, Contractor could neutralise part of the uncertainty by turning the company into an attractive cooperation partner for the rulers in the General Government. This could be accomplished by establishing a group of road construction companies and by exploiting the fact that German companies did not want to work on the Weichselwall. Objectively, the flexible strategy was advantageous to Contractor, allowing the company to attract major projects and remain on good terms with the German authorities. The relationship was so good that Højgaard & Schultz succeeded in getting full compensation for the equipment seized by the Germans in Gdynia.⁵⁵ The company worked on the Weichselwall project until the end of 1943, when it was suspended by the Germans. Unfortunately, available sources do not reveal the concerns of the circle of owners just before the Soviet entry into Poland in August of 1944. The port of Gdynia was severely damaged by Allied bombing raids and the German side launched a destruction of the port in 1945 to prevent Soviet use of the facility. In early 1946, Højgaard & Schultz returned to Gdynia to begin reconstruction of the ruined port. This work continued until 1949, when the company’s activities were nationalized by the new communist regime. In the period from 1946 to 1949, Højgaard & Schultz purposefully tried to enter into new contracts with the new Polish government to obtain goodwill in relation to the receivables that had been accrued in the time leading up to the outbreak of war and the amounts due for payment to the company during the war.⁵⁶ In 1948, The Polish People’s Republic announced that it was liable for contracts concluded before 1 September 1939, but not for the time following, as that responsibility belonged to the Third Reich, which had abolished the Polish state’s existence between 1939 and 1945.

54 Christiani & Nielsen, summary of management meeting, 24/3/1943. Archival no. 10.557.RA.

55 Letter from the Danish National Bank to the Commissioner of Industrial Cases in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 3/9 1942, which states that Højgaard & Schultz have received 227,394.08 DKK from Marinehafenbaudirektion, Gotenhafen, to cover “Ersatzansprüche”. Case. no. E 78 “Højgaard & Schultz”. Archival no. 1508. RA.

56 Kommentarer til Oversigten over danske Tilgodehavender i Polen. Ø.P.V. Journal 83.Pol. 67a. UM.

CONCLUSION

The Second Polish Republic was a young state that was in the process of building its relationship with the outside world up from rock bottom. After armed disagreements with virtually all of its direct neighbors, Poland was diplomatically isolated. This situation barely changed during the interwar period, even after forming an alliance with France. In its first years, it was threatened by both economic dependence on Germany as well as by the war with Soviet Union. Thus, Poland sought alternative remedies in order to maintain political independence and extend foreign political possibilities. The new border to the north with direct access to the Baltic Sea was such an opportunity. This became a part of Poland's Baltic Sea policy which helped to prevent German dominance. Denmark was considered to be a good partner, as it adopted a non-aggressive Baltic Sea policy. Admittedly, Denmark took no part in Marshal Piłsudski's attempt to create a Baltic Sea alliance, but a strategic partnership did develop with the expansion of the port of Gdynia and the conversion from continental trade to Baltic Sea trade as part of a north-south axis. From 1925, with the beginning of the coal adventure, Denmark gained much economic and political significance to Poland. The constant Polish trade surplus emphasized the need for the involvement of Denmark in both economics and politics across the Baltic Sea. Furthermore, Poland's contact with the outside world was secured through Danish straits. In other words, the political and economic goals went hand in hand. The construction of the port of Gdynia and Poland's access to Copenhagen's Freeport represented the core of the Danish-Polish relationship up through the interwar period.

Throughout the 1920s, the Danish foreign policy line towards Poland was primarily dictated by commercial considerations. This was about ensuring Danish companies' access to lucrative markets in the Baltic Sea region. The Danish side had no interest in the Polish project to create a 'third bloc' in Europe. For Denmark, it was important to be able to support and expand the relationship with Poland without this process triggering sharp political reactions from the German government. The overall foreign policy goal for changing Danish governments throughout the interwar period was to get the German government to recognize the Danish-German border as it had been drawn up after the Treaty of Versailles in 1920 and the subsequent referendum. The Danish side was well aware that too close an approachment with Poland could create problems in the Danish-German relationship.

The Polish market was extremely important to parts of the Danish business community, and the Danish companies tried with mixed success to continue their business in Poland after the Nazi occupation of Poland in 1939 and the occupation of Denmark the following year.

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DANISH-POLISH MINORITY COOPERATION IN GERMANY

Mogens Rostgaard Nissen

During the interwar period, representatives of the Polish and Danish minorities in Germany met regularly, especially until the Nazi regime came to power in 1933. During the 1920s, cooperation developed to ensure better conditions for the national minorities in the Weimar Republic, as the authorities continuously limited their opportunities to thrive.

This article assesses the significance of the cooperation between the Danish and Polish minorities, primarily though from the perspective of the Danish minority in Southern Schleswig. The focus is particularly on why the cooperation created a strong internal debate among the Danish minority leaders. It was officially established in 1924 in the form of the Association of National Minorities in Germany (Der Verband nationaler Minderheiten in Deutschland), and it ended with the Nazi takeover in 1933. Still, even under the new and more difficult conditions, the contact between representatives of the two minorities prevailed.

The article draws in particular on three studies on the minority cooperation. The first is by Danish Historian Johan Peter Noack, who wrote the main work on the political history of the Danish minority in the period 1920–45.¹ Based on very diverse source material, he assessed the importance of minority cooperation and of the political strife it created internally among the Danish minority leaders. He further analyzed the opposition to minority cooperation in the German Foreign Office (Auswärtiges Amt) and in the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The second study is by Danish minority researcher Tanja Rigitta Schumacher, who examined the Danish minority's interests in minority cooperation within the Association of National Minorities in Germany. She focuses in particular on the internal disagreement in relation to minority cooperation and the importance of the Danish government's reluctance to this cooperation.² Finally, historian Jana Prose discussed the importance of the minority association's journal *Kulturwehr* (Cultural protection) in which the challenges and opportunities of national minorities in Germany were debated.³

These studies are supplemented with source material from the Archive of the Danish Minority in South Schleswig (ADCB). For this article, the archives of the central Danish- and Frisian-minded participants in the minority cooperation have

- 1 Johan Peter Noack, *Det danske mindretal i Sydslesvig 1920–1945*, bind 1 og 2, Aabenraa 1989. See especially 404–438.
- 2 Tanja Rigitta Schumacher, *Mellem nationale interesser og mindretalsloyalitet. Det danske mindretal i samarbejdet i Forbundet af nationale Mindretal i Tyskland 1924–39*, Aabenraa 2002.
- 3 Jana Prose, *Det danske mindretals engagement i mindretalssamarbejdet i Weimarrepublikken*, in *Sønderjyske Årbøger* 127/1 (2015), 125–154.

been reviewed, along with protocols and correspondence in The Schleswigian Association (Den slesvigske Forening), which was the central organization of both minorities in Southern Schleswig.⁴ In addition, downloaded articles from the Danish minority paper, *Flensburg Avis*, are also evaluated. Following the dissolution of the Association of National Minorities, archival material was probably lost in connection with the Gestapo's seizure in 1938.⁵ As *Kulturwehr* exists in the ADCB for the years 1925–1938, some articles have also been included in the present study.

THE ELECTION TO THE GERMAN REICHSTAG IN 1924

The Association of National Minorities was founded in 1924. Working contacts between the Danish and Polish minorities predated the formal cooperation. The founding meeting on 27–28 March was held by the Polish minority in Berlin, indicating that the latter was also the lead partner of the association. The chairman of the Union of Poles in Germany (Bund der Polen in Deutschland, Związek Polaków w Niemczech), Count Stanisław Sierakowski, was the Association's chairman, while Jan Kaczmarek was general secretary.⁶ Counting two million people, the Polish minority was also by far the largest in Germany. The other members of the association included the Danish, North Frisian, and Sorbian minorities, while the Lithuanian minority in East Prussia was only loosely affiliated. The Danish and North Frisian minorities each consisted of 20,000 members, while there were about 250,000 Sorbs.⁷

Of the four minorities active within the minority association, only the Polish and Danish minorities were officially recognized by the German authorities.⁸ This created some special problems for the Sorbs and the North Frisians, as they neither had the right to set up minority schools nor to receive public support for other minority associations. Thus, one of the objectives of the minority association was that it should work to ensure the Sorbs and North Frisians official status as national minorities.

It was the Poles who took the initiative to set up the association, since they had the clearest interests in the cooperation.⁹ They wanted to establish electoral cooperation between the minorities, so that the association could secure seats for the Prussian Landtag and the German Reichstag. In addition, they wanted the association to

4 Arkivet ved Dansk Centralbibliotek for Sydslesvig (ADCB): I61 – Dansk Generalsekretariat for Sydslesvig; ADCB: F20 – Den slesvigske Forening, Flensburg; ADCB: P110 – Ernst Christiansen; ADCB: P518 – Julius Bogensee; P29 – Jacob Kronika; P123 – Martin Lorenzen; P26 – Johannes Oldsen.

5 Schumacher, *Mellem nationale interesser og mindretalsloyalitet*, 10.

6 *Ibid.*, 31–32; “Kulturwille”, 1925, front page.

7 Jacob Kronika, *Die Nationalen Minderheiten in Deutschland*, “Kulturwille”, 1925, 4–7; Julius Bogensee, Jan Skala, *De nationale Mindretal i Tyskland*. Flensburg 1929, 8–20. These figures are to be taken with very strong reservations, and the German authorities estimated the number of people with minority affiliations significantly lower.

8 Bogensee, Skala, *De nationale Mindretal*, 11–15.

9 Noack, *De Danske mindretal*, 406–407.

work to ensure better cultural rights, especially concerning schooling. Despite the fairly liberal legislation, both the Polish and the Danish minorities had difficulties obtaining permission to set up minority schools. Furthermore, the German authorities regularly denied children access to the minority schools. Finally, the Poles wanted a joint journal to be established, which was published in 1925 under the name *Kulturwille* (Cultural Will), and from the following year *Kulturwehr* (Cultural Protection). The purpose of the journal was to increase awareness of the authorities' unjust treatment of national minorities in Germany. The editor of the magazine was the Sorbian, Jan Skala, and he was another key player in the minority association. Count Stanislaw Sierakowski was the owner of *Kulturwille/Kulturwehr*. The smaller minorities had a natural interest in cooperating with the Poles, who were the most prominent, among other things, due to their size, because it secured stronger political influence in Germany for all the national minorities.¹⁰

The Danish minority had a special place in the minority association, despite its modest numbers. The new Danish-German border from 1920, based on two referendums in Schleswig, created both a Danish minority in Germany and a German minority in Denmark. This made it possible to argue for reciprocity in reference to Denmark's treatment of the German minority.¹¹ The liberal Danish constitution ensured the German minority the right to freely establish schools and other minority institutions, just as the authorities did not interfere with what children were admitted to the German minority schools. When the Danish authorities treated the German minority relatively leniently, it served the Danish minority well during the negotiations with the German authorities. The reciprocity was particularly important for the German Foreign Office. A major interest was the treatment of German minorities around Europe, which could be affected by the oppression of national minorities in Germany. Thus, the Foreign Office wanted to adopt a relatively tolerant minority policy in Germany, especially toward the Danish minority. Consequently, the Polish minority leadership also saw advantages in cooperating with the Danish minority, which could benefit the other national minorities in Germany, especially for the large Polish minority.

At the founding meeting in Berlin, the Danish minority was represented by Julius Bogensee. He was a journalist and deputy chairman of the Schleswigian Association in Flensburg, which was the cultural and political association as well as main minority organization. At the same time, Bogensee co-founded the minority school organization, *Dansk Skoleforening for Sydslesvig* (Danish School Association for South Schleswig).¹² He traveled to Berlin with Johannes Oldsen, who was chairman of the *Frisisk-Slesvigske Forening* (Frisian-Schleswig Association), and represented the North Frisian minority, affiliated with the Danish minority organization. Oldsen was a journalist at *Der Schleswiger*, which was taken over by the Danish minority newspaper, *Flensburg Avis*, in 1925.¹³ Thus, there was a very close

10 See Prose, *Det danske mindretals engagement*, 406–407.

11 In particular Prose, *Det danske mindretals engagement* focusses on this reciprocity between the Danish and German minorities in the former Duchy of Schleswig.

12 Julius Bogensee, *Det danske mindretal i Sydslesvig*, Copenhagen 1942, Front page.

13 Thomas Steensen, Johannes Oldsen (1894–1958), Bredstedt 1995.

relationship between the Danish and the North Frisian minority. In addition to Bogensee, the journalist Jacob Kronika was heavily involved in minority cooperation. Kronika was general secretary of The Schleswigan Association from 1924–26 and later through the 1930s and during World War II, he was the correspondent of *Flensburg Avis* and *Der Schleswiger* in Berlin, while also serving as the minority's semi-official contact to the various German authorities in the German capital.¹⁴ Even after 1933, Kronika had regular contact with the Polish and Sorbian minority representatives in Berlin. From the correspondence, it appears that Kronika was on friendly terms with both Skala and Kaczmarek. The third central Danish minority actor was *Flensburg Avis*' editor-in-chief, Ernst Christiansen, who was the minority's actual and also controversial leader in the interwar period.¹⁵

Within the minority leadership, the three newspaper men Bogensee, Kronika, and Christiansen were the most in favor of minority cooperation. When Bogensee returned to Flensburg from the founding meeting, he reported to the board of the Schleswigan Association on what had happened.¹⁶ He only related the considerations about the election to the Reichstag in May 1924, while suggesting that the minorities had a common interest in drawing up a minority list to avoid wasting votes. At the founding meeting the Danish minority had been placed third on the electoral list, while the top two seats went to two candidates from the Polish minority. Therefore, the Poles were committed to "speaking our case in the Reichstag". It does not appear that the meeting discussed whether the Danish minority should be part of the minority association and the electoral cooperation. The issue of whether it was fair that the Danish minority was represented in the Reichstag by a Pole, if members of the list got elected, also seems to have been ignored. In any case, if the matter was disputed it was not written down. *Flensburg Avis* also reported on what had happened at the meeting between the representatives of the minorities. The purpose of The Association of National Minorities was to improve the conditions of the national minorities in Germany, as the German authorities had violated for five years the protections that were stipulated in the German Weimar Constitution. Here again no doubt was expressed about whether the Danish minority should participate in the electoral cooperation in the parliamentary elections. The minority leadership thus appears to have been in full agreement.¹⁷

At the subsequent meeting of The Schleswigan Association on 11 June 1924, it was emphasized that elections to the Reichstag in Schleswig had gone much better than expected and that it had been a great success for the Danish minority.¹⁸ The election was not a success for the minority list as a whole, however, and no mandate was won. It also failed to get a minority seat elected in the two subsequent elections to the Reichstag in December 1924 and May 1928, respectively, although in 1924 it

14 René Rasmussen, Jacob Kronika in Berlin 1939–1945, in *Grenzfriedenshefte* (2002), 25–42.

15 See: René Rasmussen, Ernst Christiansen, in: Inge Adriansen (ed.), *Sønderjylland A–Å*, Aabenraa 2011, 63.

16 ADCB: F20 – Den slesvigske Forening, Flensburg; meeting on 29/3/1924.

17 "To Opraab fra den nye Sammenslutning af Mindretallene i Tyskland", in *Flensburg Avis*, 29/3/1924.

18 ADCB: F20 – Den slesvigske Forening, Flensburg, meeting on 29/3/1924.

won two seats in the Prussian Landtag, the house of representatives at the state level.¹⁹

Leading up to and immediately after the elections to the Reichstag and the Landtag on 7 December 1924, several meetings were held in the municipal board of the Schleswigian Association in Flensburg, which was the main and dominant branch of the association. Meetings were also held in the board of the so-called joint association, where representatives from all local branches of the Schleswigian Association met, including Oldsen from the Frisian-Schleswigian Association.²⁰ It is worth noting that the electoral cooperation and the common list with the other national minorities were not up for discussion. Before all three elections in 1924, it had been difficult to find suitable candidates to run on the two electoral lists. Several were asked but refused. Even though it was generally understood that it was more likely that the minority list would be elected to the Landtag than to the Reichstag, prominent members of the Danish minority nevertheless hesitated to get involved. When the elections were over, the minority organization in Flensburg criticized the Danish-minded candidates on the electoral roll for being too conservative. Especially in the Flensburg branch, a large share of the members belonged to the working class who felt that they were not well represented by the conservative Danish-minded candidates. One of the members of the board, August Petersen, criticized the decision to nominate only bourgeois Danish-minded candidates for the Prussian Landtag, while the members of the working class were bypassed. This opinion was reinforced in the following parliamentary elections, and it was a major reason why the Schleswigian Association in Flensburg chose to withdraw from electoral cooperation with the other minorities in 1930.²¹

NEGOTIATIONS ON SCHOOL SCHEMES

One of the most prominent goals of The Association of National Minorities was to ensure improved schooling for the minorities in Germany. To this day, it remains crucial for national minorities to have their children taught in minority schools, where they can learn about their language, culture, and history. In the interwar period, the Danish minority leadership considered schooling to be an effective way of preventing assimilation.²²

Although all national minorities wanted better schooling, there were also major differences between them with regard to education. The North Frisians and the Sorbs, as non-recognized minorities, were not even allowed to establish minority

19 Bogensee, Skala, *De nationale Mindretal*, 37.

20 ADCB; F20 – Den Slesvigske Forening, Flensborg; meetings on 1/11 and 22/12/1924; I61 – Fællesforeningen, meetings on 7/11 and 14/11/1924.

21 Bogensee, Skala, *De nationale Mindretal*, 37–38; Prose, *Det danske mindretals engagement*, 133–34.

22 Bogensee, Skala, *De nationale Mindretal*, 33–34; Bogensee, *Det danske mindretal i Sydslesvig*, 25–31; Schumacher, *Mellem nationale interesser og mindretalsloyalitet*, 46–53; Prose, *Det danske mindretals engagement*, 140–144.

schools. The Poles, for their part, did not have the right to set up minority schools in all areas of Germany where there were Polish minorities. Although the Polish minority were spread all over the Weimar Republic, it was only permitted to establish minority schools in Prussia. Accordingly, large Polish groups in the Ruhr district were left out. At the same time, the Polish minority was interested gaining cultural autonomy, which meant that it would be responsible for the minority schools and other minority institutions. In exchange, they would be willing to finance them.²³ The Danes wanted minority schools, too, but they were neither interested in cultural autonomy nor prepared to cover the costs. In addition, along with the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, they feared that if the minority schools were financed by their kin-states, it would open up German investments in the German minority activities in Denmark, and thereby interfere in Danish domestic policy. Moreover, as a large part of the Danish minority did not speak the Danish language, and since Article 113 of the Weimar Constitution precisely defined national minorities on the basis of linguistic criteria, it meant that the Prussian school authorities could deny children access to Danish schools who did not speak proper Danish.²⁴ This, of course, caused great concern within the minority since it was exactly this group that was at risk of assimilation if denied language training.²⁵ Therefore, the Danish minority wanted a school system where every Danish-minded person was part of the minority, no matter their language skills or family background.

In the 1920s, the school issue received a lot of political attention, both from the German Foreign Office and from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.²⁶ It was also an area that revealed internal disagreement within the leadership. For numerous reasons, it was more likely that the Danish minority could negotiate an advantageous schooling model than if it cooperated with the Polish minority. The most important reason was that any resolution to the Polish school issue would have far greater implications for Germany than one for the small Danish minority. At the same time, the German Foreign Office in particular wanted to cultivate ties with Denmark and the rest of the Nordic region. In the latter half of the 1920s, German diplomats agreed that a sensible schooling model for the Danish minority could pave the way for better German-Nordic relations. Finally, reciprocity in relation to the German minority in Denmark played an important role. The Danish minority basically applied for an educational model similar to the one already granted to the German minority.

To promote a solution, the Danish minority chose to part ways with the other minorities on the school issue.²⁷ During the negotiations, both the Danish and Ger-

23 Ibid.

24 Noack, *De Danske mindretal*, 208–302; Schumacher, *Mellem nationale interesser og mindretalsloyalitet* 46–53; Prose, *Det danske mindretals engagement*, 140–46.

25 In particular, Noack, *De Danske mindretal*, has described how the local and regional authorities prevented many children from entering Danish schools. In 1920, only about 25 % of the applicants for the first Danish school in Flensburg were allowed by the authorities to enter.

26 Noack, *De Danske mindretal*, 404–438; Schumacher, *Mellem nationale interesser og mindretalsloyalitet* 46–53; Prose, *Det danske mindretals engagement*, 140–46.

27 Noack, *De Danske mindretal*, 220–252; Schumacher, *Mellem nationale interesser og mindretalsloyalitet*, 46–53.

man foreign ministries stayed on the sidelines, for they had a common interest in establishing a schooling model for the Danish minority that did not include the Polish minority. The school issue exposed a conflict of interests between the German Foreign Office and the Prussian Ministry of the Interior, as the latter was much less inclined to accommodate the wishes of the Danes. However, by the end of the 1920s, the German Foreign Office drew the longer straw. Negotiations were conducted throughout the year 1925, before a schooling model applicable to the Danish minority was finally implemented the following year.²⁸

During the negotiation process, the Polish representative in the Prussian Landtag, Jan Baczewski, found out that the Danes were negotiating with the Prussian school authorities on their own.²⁹ This led in May and June 1925 to an angry correspondence between the general secretary of the Association of National Minorities, Kaczmarek, and the general secretary of the Schleswigian Association, Kronika. The Poles contended that the Danish unilateral approach weakened the minority associations' negotiating position. However, in the autumn of 1925, the Poles changed their view on the Danish schooling model, concluding that it might open an opportunity for the Polish minority to achieve a similar model.³⁰

The 1926 schooling model itself did not bring much satisfaction to the Danish minority. This was due to the fact that there was a geographical delimitation. Minority schools could only be established in the Flensburg area and the northernmost part of South Schleswig, which authorities defined as the settlement area of the autochthonous minority.³¹ The minority leadership preferred to see the scheme as a step closer to achieving a better permanent solution. Ironically, the Poles ended up advocating the achieved Danish model. As it was based on language and descent and thus applicable to the definition of the minority, it was better suited to the Polish minority than to the Danish one.

Until 1926, it does not appear that there was much internal debate within the Schleswigian Association related to minority cooperation. The Danish unilateral approach in 1924–25 was apparently not discussed at the board meetings, and the minority leadership does not seem to have believed that they were going behind the backs of the Poles. But that changed over the next few years, when minority cooperation was heavily debated within the board of the Schleswigian Association. This was spurred on in the autumn of 1927 by the Poles, who sent a proposal to the German government for a school act concerning all national minorities in Germany.³² Although Bogensee approved a draft of the proposal on 2 September, a different version was allegedly sent to the authorities and published in *Kulturwehr* in October 1927. The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs was prompted to intervene, believing that the proposal neither served the interests of the minority nor Denmark. The real reason for the intervention was to keep the Danish minority from cooper-

28 "Grænsevagten", January 1926, 70–77.

29 Schumacher, *Mellem nationale interesser og mindretalsloyalitet*, 48–50.

30 Noack, *De Danske mindretal*, 252–253; Prose, *Det danske mindretals engagement*, 140–141.

31 Noack, *De Danske mindretal*, 252–269; Schumacher, *Mellem nationale interesser og mindretalsloyalitet*, 46–54 and Prose, *Det danske mindretals engagement*, 140–144.

32 *Ibid.*

ating too closely with the Polish. Indeed, the ministry even threatened to cut the financial subsidies for the minority if it did not break ties with the Poles.³³

The Polish appeal to the German government for a comprehensive schooling model for the whole of Germany also ignited debate internally among minority leaders. On 12 December 1927, the Danish consul in Flensburg reported to Copenhagen on a meeting with Danish minority representatives. He noted there was skepticism among the minority leaders about cooperation with the Poles in general and dissatisfaction with the Polish proposal for a common school act in particular. It was perceived as overreaching and not in line with Danish interests.³⁴ On 23 December, the chairman of the Schleswigian Association, Laust Kasper Lausten, sent a letter to Kaczmarek explaining the resentments the publication of the Polish proposal in the *Kulturwehr* had created, both in relation to the Danish government and internally within the Danish minority. He ended his letter by emphasizing that, in the future, the Danish minority should receive such proposals in good time before they were published so they could be discussed and amended. If this requirement was not met, he suggested that the Danish minority would be inclined to leave the Association of National Minorities in Germany.³⁵

The differences over the school issue foreshadowed the Danish minority's growing doubts about the benefits of participating in the minority association.³⁶ On the other hand, the school schemes that were ratified on 31 December 1928 for the Polish and Danish minorities, respectively, largely met all the Danes' wishes. The minority could accordingly set up schools all over South Schleswig, and parents were free to send their children to a minority school regardless of their language skills.³⁷

The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Danish consul in Flensburg (Valdemar Neergaard-Møller until 1932) were very critical of the Danish minority's cooperation with the Polish minority. This was also evident in the context of a conflict between the Association of National Minorities in Germany and the Congress of European Nationalities, an organization of European minorities.³⁸ The European minority organization was increasingly governed by European German minorities and, moreover, there were disagreements with the minority association in Germany. First of all, the European organization would not recognize the North Frisians as a national minority, and they were consequently not invited to attend the organization's European minority conferences.³⁹ Furthermore, there was a disagreement between the two minority organizations as to whether minority issues should be resolved internationally – as the European organization believed – or whether na-

33 Ibid.

34 Schumacher, *Mellem nationale interesser og mindretalsloyalitet*, 50–51.

35 Ibid.; ADCB, I61-03-15, letter of 23/12/1927.

36 Noack, *De Danske mindretal*, 252–269; Prose, *Det danske mindretals engagement*, 142.

37 Noack, *De Danske mindretal*, 252–69.

38 Noack, *De Danske mindretal*, 404–420; Schumacher, *Mellem nationale interesser og mindretalsloyalitet*, 54–63.

39 See: Thomas Steensen, *Die friesische Bewegung in Nordfriesland im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert: (1879–1945)*, Neumünster 1986.

tional minorities were a domestic matter, as the minority association in Germany believed. And finally, there was disagreement about whether the demand for national minorities should be cultural autonomy. Again, the Danish minority was strongly opposed to this because it opened up the possibility for states to interfere in other countries' internal affairs. Specifically, they were concerned that Germany would use the opportunity to provide economic, political and cultural support to the German minority in Denmark and thus interfere in Danish affairs.⁴⁰ In 1927, the Association of National Minorities in Germany withdrew from participating in European minority congresses, which created political turmoil. The conflict was largely related to the large German minority in Poland and the Polish minority in Germany. In the eyes of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Danish minority had decided to follow the Poles, which they were very displeased with.

The Danish minority tried to avoid being a part of this conflict.⁴¹ They wanted to back up the North Frisians, and therefore could not accept that the Frisians were not invited to the minority congresses. It was also contrary to the demand for cultural autonomy. The minority leaders therefore chose to follow the policy of the Association of National Minorities in Germany, ending the cooperation with the Congress of European Nationalities from 1927. But the break intensified the pressure from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which feared that the close cooperation between the Danish and Polish minorities could lead the German government to link the border problems between Germany and Poland with the Danish-German border from 1920. Pressure was exerted on the Danish minority leadership, while Ernst Christiansen specifically was criticized. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs wanted Kronika, Bogensee and Christiansen to be replaced by other members who were more critical of the cooperation with the Poles. Overall, the conflict between the minority organizations only increased the Danish minority leadership's skepticism about the value of participating in the minority alliance with the Polish minority.

THE ELECTIONS IN 1928 AND 1930

Elections were held for the Prussian Landtag and the German Reichstag in May 1928. As the Danish historian Noack has described, the elections took place at a time when the Danish minority was in a deep crisis. Since 1925, the number of members of the Schleswigian Association had decreased markedly.⁴²

The election results in May 1928 were very poor. In South Schleswig, the number of votes on the minority list decreased by half compared to the election in 1924, which caused anxiety among the minority leaders. Furthermore, the fact that the minority list did not win any seats either in the Landtag or the Reichstag did not improve the situation. Apparently the poor election results convinced *Flensburg*

40 Noack, *De Danske mindretal*, 404–420; Schumacher, *Mellem nationale interesser og mindretalsloyalitet*, 54–66.

41 *Ibid.*

42 Noack, *De Danske mindretal*, 423–438.

Avis not to report on it. In the days that followed, there was not a single article on the outcome. The first board meeting of the Schleswigan Association in Flensburg was not held until three months after the elections. At that time, there were other items on the agenda than the miserable election. Ultimately, the minority leadership chose to ignore the debacle both internally and vis-a-vis the members.

Before 1928, there was no discussion of whether the Danish minority should participate in the electoral cooperation with the other national minorities. Bogensee merely announced that the Danish minority would be placed in second place on the minorities' united lists for the Landtag and the Reichstag.⁴³ This was probably a gesture to the Danes to ensure their support for the upcoming elections. In *Flensburg Avis*, the lists of candidates for the elections were presented in an election call, in which the Danish-minded were encouraged to vote for the minority lists. Ernst Christiansen wrote the election call and emphasized that any Danish-minded vote for anyone other than a Danish-minded candidate would be "a vote against us".⁴⁴

The farmer Peter Budach and Ernst Christiansen were nominated for the Reichstag and for the Landtag, respectively. This led to renewed criticism from the Flensburg branch's board.⁴⁵ Again, August Petersen spearheaded the opposition against the bourgeois candidates, who did not acknowledge that ordinary minority members were largely working class. Along with another workers' representative, he proposed at least replacing Ernst Christiansen as the Danish minority's leading candidate with someone who had a better reputation with the workers. At an earlier meeting, Petersen noted that he had been repeatedly told there was a criticism among several Danes that "we here in Schleswig must vote for the Poles." This can be seen as a critique of the whole idea of drawing up a common minority list.⁴⁶

The subsequent elections to the Reichstag were held on 14 September 1930. They were a cause of considerable disagreement among the Danish minority leadership.⁴⁷ The dispute was over whether the Danish minority should again be included in the cooperation with the other minorities in Germany, or whether they should break with the Association of National Minorities in Germany and refrain from participating in the election. The discussions were closely linked to the minority's ongoing massive decline in membership and the miserable election result two years earlier. Those who supported participating in the election to the Reichstag believed that it was crucial to show the flag and demonstrate that the Danes wanted to have the opportunity to vote Danish. At the same time, there was a basic resignation that it was totally unrealistic to have a Danish candidate elected. Those who were opposed the state and national elections argued that the minority should concentrate on local and district politics since they had far greater influence on the daily

43 ADCB; F20-6 – Den slesvigske Forening, Flensburg; meeting on 28/4/1928.

44 Flensburg Avis, 26/4/1928, 3; Noack, De Danske mindretal, 426–27.

45 ADCB; F20-6 – Den slesvigske Forening, Flensburg; meeting on 28/4/1928.

46 ADCB; F20-6 – Den Slesvigske Forening, Flensburg; meeting on 4/4/1928.

47 ADCB; F20-6 – Den slesvigske Forening, Flensburg; meetings on 17/7/1930; 6/8 and 12/8/1930; I61-00-6-3 – Fællesforeningen – meetings on 27/7/1930; 6/8 and 17/8/1930 and Noack, De Danske mindretal, 423–438; Schumacher, Mellem nationale interesser og mindretalsloyalitet, 70–73; Prose, 2015, 133–39.

life of the Danish-minded. In the national and parliamentary elections, potentially Danish-minded voters were faced with the impossible choice of weighing national over other political interests. Some also argued that there was a risk of repulsing workers in the minority who wanted to vote Social Democratic and therefore might feel compelled to leave the minority altogether. Noack has also stated that, especially among the workers within the Danish minority, there were prejudices against Poles in general and a strong resistance to the Danish-minded helping to elect Poles to the Landtag and Reichstag.⁴⁸

In the board of the Schleswigian Association, where the various branches of the association were represented, it was decided on 27 July 1930, after a long debate, that the Danish minority should stay on the minority list. Among others, the pro-cooperation quartet Bogensee, Kronika, Christiansen, and Oldsen participated in the meeting.⁴⁹ It was also decided to convene again on 6 August, with all board members for a plenum discussion of the branches of the Danish association. In other words, the question of the future of minority cooperation remained open.

The decision to continue to participate in the parliamentary elections was made despite August Petersen's objections. Petersen, who did not take part at the meeting, demanded that the minority only participate in the elections to the Land- and Reichstag if the election of "one of our own representatives" was likely.⁵⁰ Petersen's reservations about the existence of a strong Polish voice was not a working-class issue. Director Nissen from the minority home bank also noted his objection in the minutes against active campaigning in the election to the Reichstag.

At the meetings on 6 August there were very strong discussions.⁵¹ A few days before this date Bogensee was in Berlin to discuss the election with the other minority representatives, and supported the joint decision to have a minority list. Kaczmarek was authorized to negotiate with the two small German parties, *Volksrechtspartei* (the People's Rights Party) and *Christlich-Soziale Volkspartei* (the Christian Social People's Party), to form an electoral alliance. This turned out to be a mistake, because the latter party of Danish-minded workers was perceived to be a German national party.⁵² Thus, the majority of the Danish minority regarded this electoral alliance very negatively and preferred voting for the Social Democrats instead. At the extended meeting of the joint board, there was a heated debate about whether the Schleswigian Association should stand for election. It is noted in the minutes that August Petersen in particular "spoke very strongly against participation in the election".⁵³

Petersen continued to express his opposition at the meeting among a large contingent of members of the Schleswigian Association in Flensburg, which met an

48 Noack, *De Danske mindretal*, 429–32.

49 ADCB; I61-00-6-3 – Fællesforeningen – meeting on 27/7/1930.

50 ADCB; F20-6 – Den slesvigske Forening, Flensburg; meeting on 21/2/1930; Noack, *De Danske mindretal*, 429.

51 ADCB; I61-00-6-3 – Fællesforeningen – meeting on 6/8/1930; Noack, *De Danske mindretal*, 429–33.

52 Noack, *De Danske mindretal*, 430.

53 ADCB; I61-00-6-3 – Fællesforeningen – meeting on 6/8/1930.

hour later than the meeting in the joint board on 6 August 1930. His speech came after Bogensee's, who was also deputy chairman of the Flensburg branch. He again spoke about the meeting in Berlin with representatives of the other minorities. He and Christiansen stressed that it was crucial to run on the minority list, even though the prospects of getting a Danish-minded mandate elected were modest. Otherwise the German national conservatives would conclude that the minorities had withdrawn from national politics in relation to the Reichstag and the Landtag.⁵⁴

The executive committee of the Flensburg branch announced that it would resign if a majority was against participating in the election.⁵⁵ This was an attempt to push their wishes through, and probably also an expression of the fact that they did not expect the opposition to the election participation to be as strong as it turned out to be. Quite predictably, August Petersen argued against participating, but there were surprisingly many who shared his view. After a vote, it was decided that the Flensburg branch – and thus by far most important part of the Schleswigian Association – would not participate in the election to the Reichstag. As a consequence, the executive committee chose to resign and a new one was elected.

The new leadership of the Schleswigian Association in Flensburg consisted of those who were against the participation in the election. August Petersen was elected deputy chairman. The disagreement led to a major shift within the leadership of the main branch in Flensburg: the leaders who supported minority cooperation were replaced by those who were highly skeptical of it. The conflict had three different but interrelated causes. First, the previous leadership consisted of conservative members who had been involved in the referendum in 1920, and after the referendum still pushed for Flensburg's return to Denmark, despite the city's large German majority. These bourgeois leaders were at odds with the minority, which belonged to the working class and stood close to the Social Democrats. Second, a dispute had arisen between the Schleswigian Association in Flensburg, and the parts of the association in the rural districts, as the other branches of the association, including the Frisian-Schleswig Association, had decided to participate in the election to the Reichstag. And finally, third, there was a kind of generational change, where a younger guard took over the leadership. The new executive committee would have the same chairman and deputy chairman until the end of World War II.⁵⁶

DANISH-POLISH CONTACTS AFTER 1933

The Danish minority withdrew from cooperating with the Association of National Minorities in Germany during the election in 1930. However, it was not until the Nazi takeover in 1933 that the breakup became final. Nonetheless, also after 1933, individual contacts were sustained between the Danish and Polish minorities, especially between Jacob Kronika and the Polish minority leadership in Berlin, just as

54 ADCB; F20-6 – Den slesvigske Forening, Flensborg, meeting on 6/8/1930; Noack, *De Danske mindretal*, 429–33.

55 *Ibid.*

56 Noack, *De Danske mindretal*, 429–435.

Ernst Christiansen was in constant dialogue with his Polish partners. Nonetheless, after 1933, Danish-Polish relations were kept informal.⁵⁷ After 1933, there are very few examples in the protocols indicating that either the minority association or the Polish minority was discussed. It seems, as the leaders of the Danish minority very well knew, that cooperation with the Poles might jeopardize the Danish minority in Germany.

As late as March 1938, Ernst Christiansen gave a speech at the large congress of the Polish minority in the “Theater des Volkes” in Berlin, where 5,000 people from all over Germany celebrated the fifteenth anniversary of the Union of Poles in Germany.⁵⁸ In *Flensburg Avis*, Kronika wrote in detail about the congress and about Christiansen’s speech, who had “with honor and joy” accepted the official invitation to participate.⁵⁹ Christiansen naturally considered beforehand whether he should deliver a speech, and chose to do so. This is remarkable given that the connection to the Polish minority was neither appreciated by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs nor the Nazi government. There was likewise a critical attitude within the minority leadership concerning contacts with the Poles. However, judging from the minutes of the meetings of the various boards of the Schleswigan Association, Christiansen’s participation and speech at the Polish congress do not appear to have been questioned. In his speech, Christiansen emphasized both that the Danish-Polish cooperation had led to strong objections from various parties, and he expressed his regret that there was no longer any formal cooperation. He also underlined that there was basis for closer cooperation between the minorities, without remarking on their different interests.⁶⁰ In the report, Kronika noted that Christiansen was received enthusiastically and even interrupted several times by spontaneous ovations.

Throughout the 1930s, the Polish minority tried to rekindle ties. For this purpose, Kaczmarek visited Flensburg several times. In March 1935, he visited the Danish minority. The Danish consul in Flensburg – the extended arm of the Danish government in South Schleswig – refused to attend the meeting because he did not want the Gestapo to see him with the Polish minority.⁶¹ In July 1936, Kaczmarek encountered the same excuse when he revisited Flensburg. During his visit at this time, he attended meetings in Sønderborg in the Danish borderlands and Copenhagen. While we do not know what he discussed with unnamed leaders from the Danish minority, the Gestapo was well aware that the meeting took place and reported it to the Foreign Office, including participants on the Polish side.⁶² The report testifies that there was continued contact between the two minorities in the

57 Schumacher, *Mellem nationale interesser og mindretsloyalitet*, 81–83.

58 Jacob Kronika, *Flensburg Avis*, 8/3/1933, 3; Schumacher, *Mellem nationale interesser og mindretsloyalitet*, 83.

59 ADCB; P29-6 – Jacob Kronika – letter of 14/2/1938.

60 Jacob Kronika, *Flensburg Avis*, 8/3/1933, 3; Schumacher, *Mellem nationale interesser og mindretsloyalitet*, 81–83.

61 Schumacher, *Mellem nationale interesser og mindretsloyalitet*, 81–83.

62 Auswärtiges Amt, *Das Politische Archiv*; 117 Kopenhagen; letter of 7/7/1936 from Preußische Geheime Staatspolizei, Schleswig to Preußische Geheime Staatspolizei, Berlin and forwarded to Auswärtiges Amt on 16/7/1936.

summer of 1936, and that the Gestapo and the German authorities kept an eye on their cooperation, which they considered problematic.

The Danish minority's contact with the Polish minority and Kaczmarek's visits to Flensburg and Denmark were apparently not discussed in the various boards of the Schleswigian Association. *Flensburg Avis* and *Der Schleswiger* also did not write anything about it. The minority leadership thus preferred to keep silent about the continued connections between the minorities. On the other hand, there is no doubt that Bogensee, Christiansen, and especially Kronika stayed in regular contact with Polish and Sorbian colleagues and friends. Evidence of this is found in Kronika's book "Lys i vinduet" (Candles in the window) and his edited diary notes 1933–1939, where he regularly reports in detail on Kaczmarek and the Polish minority in general, just as he describes Jan Skala and the Sorbian minority's problems with the Nazi authorities.⁶³

CONCLUSION

The cooperation between the Danish and Polish minorities in Germany developed via the Association of National Minorities in Germany (Der Verband nationaler Minderheiten in Deutschland) in the latter half of the 1920s. It was established so that the minorities could stand united against the German authorities, who did not adhere to the liberal provisions of the Weimar Constitution on the protection of national minorities in Germany. But the collaboration spurred disagreement within the Danish minority, especially concerning the issue of supporting candidates on a common minority list in elections to the Prussian Landtag and the German Reichstag. Controversially, the lists were not elected mandates and it seemed completely unrealistic that Danish-minded candidates could be elected.

The group within the Danish minority which supported the minority cooperation was strongly tied to the Danish minority newspapers *Flensburg Avis* and *Der Schleswiger*. Opposition, conversely, came mainly from the part of the minority that belonged to the working class. The opposition was due to a general skepticism about whether Danish-minded residents should help to elect Poles to the respective parliaments. Moreover, many Danish-minded workers wanted to vote Social Democratic and therefore felt pressure to leave the Danish minority.

The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs was very critical of the Danish minority's cooperation with the Polish minority. It feared that the tense situation at the Polish-German border might overtake the Danish-German border as well. Various attempts were made to force the Danish minority to break off cooperation with the Poles, among other things, by threatening to cut the financial subsidies from Denmark to the minority. Pressure from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs increased over the years, especially after the Nazi regime came to power in Germany in 1933.

63 Jacob Kronika, *Lys i Vinduet. Slesvigske Dagbogsblade fra Berlin 1933–1939*, Copenhagen 1957.

From the Danish government's perspective, cooperation between the two minorities was out of the question.

Nevertheless, there was a non-formalized cooperation between the Danish and Polish minorities after 1933. Its character, however, was collegial and based on promoting friendly relations between individual representatives from the two minorities.

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POLISH ENVOYS TO DENMARK 1919–1940

Jan Stanisław Ciechanowski

The history of diplomats who represented the Second Republic of Poland in the Kingdom of Denmark in the years 1919–1940 mirrored the development of the diplomatic service of the reborn state. It started with the renewal of diplomatic relations and ended with the suspension of them due to the German invasion of Denmark in April 1940. The representatives had the official diplomatic rank of envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary, a lower category than ambassador that has disappeared nowadays. Traditionally and informally, they were also called *ministers cf Poland to Denmark*.

The first Polish legation was established in 1919 in the noble Phoenix Hotel, not far away from the Royal Palace Amalienborg. In July 1922, it moved even closer to the Danish head of state, as it rented the elegant Knuthske Palæ. Throughout the interwar period the mission remained small, counting an envoy of the third class and later, second class, one secretary of the legation, and a few – normally five or six – contracted employees without diplomatic status. This was quite a large number of employees for a relatively small mission. For comparison, in 1939, among the Nordic countries, Denmark hosted a smaller Polish mission than in Sweden, but similar to the one in Finland, and bigger than in Norway. The history of consecutive Polish representatives to the neighbouring Baltic country mirrors the development of both bilateral relations and the overall political climate of these volatile periods.¹

This article presents the individual envoys' biographies, focusing on their activities during their stay in Denmark. The main literature and sources used are summarized at the end of each biographical entry in a related footnote. Other footnotes lead to the specific issues discussed. The analysis is largely based on Polish historiography and files of the archive of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For the interwar period the sources are generally challenging due to the destruction and relocation of archives during the Second World War. This particularly relates to the fate of the documented work of the Polish post in Denmark (partly destroyed during the German invasion in April 1940) as well as the personal collections of the individual protagonists of this text. These are now spread all over the world, not only in Warsaw, but in London, Washington, Stanford and New York.²

1 See: Magda Gawinecka-Woźniak, *Rola dyplomatów w relacjach polsko-duńskich w pierwszej połowie XX w.*, in: Rafał Simiński, Anna Szczepańska-Dudziak (eds.), *Między misją a profesją. Ewolucja roli dyplomaty w stosunkach międzynarodowych na przestrzeni dziejów*, Szczecin 2016, 129–135.

2 See e.g.: Magdalena Hułas (ed.), *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne 1940*, Warsaw 2010, XVI–XVII; National Archives and Records Administration College Park, MD, RG 84, Entry UD 2385 A, box 20.

ENVOY ALEKSANDER DZIEDUSZYCKI (1919–1924)

In November 1918, Poland regained its independence. On 30 May 1919, Denmark became the first Scandinavian country to recognize the government in Warsaw. The first Polish representative to Copenhagen, Aleksander Dzierżewski, was chosen rather by accident. Both his background and path into Polish diplomacy was characteristic for the founding years of the Second Republic. Count Dzierżewski was a landowner from a well-known Polish noble family from Galicia, a former crown-land of the Habsburg monarchy. Born in 1874 in Gwoździec Stary near Kołomyja in Pokuttia (nowadays in Ukraine), he was not a professional diplomat, but a career cavalry officer, graduating from the Vienna military academy. He served the emperor of Austria and king of Hungary, Franz Joseph I, as his titular chamberlain.

On the brink of the First World War, Count Major Dzierżewski was sent to Madrid as an Austrian-Hungarian military attaché, separate from the typical activities for this post during the war. He was also deeply involved in propaganda efforts supporting the Central Powers' cause.³ In October 1916 he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel and only in December 1918 did he leave this post due to the disintegration of the Habsburg empire. Simultaneously, during the war, Dzierżewski became the natural leader of numerous Poles living in the Spanish capital. Most of them had been forced to leave France at the outset of the war since they were subjects of the Austro-Hungarian or German empires. After the war, despite his role as a former representative of the Central Powers, Dzierżewski was one of the main organisers of the Polish press agency in Madrid. The main aim of this agency was to oppose the propaganda from the German foreign press agency Transocean, broadcasted from the famous radio transmitter in Nauen. It agitated against Poland's interests, especially in disputed regions on its border with Germany and wanted to demonstrate that Poles did not deserve to be independent. In February 1919, the Spanish Government officially recognized the Polish National Committee in Paris led by national democrats and other conservatives (already recognized by the Entente Powers in 1917). Already by December 1918, the same Committee wanted to nominate Dzierżewski as its representative in Madrid. The French Government did not want to grant him a visa to come to Paris. The reason for this negative attitude was that the lieutenant-colonel was – in the eyes of the French authorities – an active and efficient spy who had conducted anti-French activities in close cooperation with a German military attaché throughout the entire war. Despite French hesitation, his entry was accepted, probably due to the lack of another proper Polish candidate with good knowledge of Spain and its elites in a situation where the care of numerous new Polish citizens in that country was necessary and urgent. In March 1919, Dzierżewski was finally appointed a delegate of the Polish National Committee. In April, the Committee was dissolved, and already by the following month, Dzierżewski started to represent the Warsaw Government as a temporary delegate. He wanted to become the first envoy, as a creation of the

3 Jens Albes, *Worte wie Waffen: die deutsche Propaganda in Spanien während des Ersten Weltkrieges*, Essen 1996, 143–144, 356.

Polish regular legation in Madrid was imminent, but it never happened. When on 20 May 1919, the Spanish Government officially recognized Poland, Warsaw decided not to ask for an *agrément* for Dzieduszycki. The reason was that in informal conversations, the Ministry of State in Madrid considered the former Austro-Hungarian military attaché as not the most adequate candidate to be the first official representative of independent Poland. Most probably French pressure on both sides had shown its effect. Dzieduszycki left Spain in July.⁴

Only a few days after the debacle in Madrid, on 24 May, a new possibility arose, as the Danish recognition of the Warsaw government was expected. The latter decided to send Dzieduszycki to Copenhagen as the first Polish envoy, thus compensating him for the Spanish disappointment. It seems that the decisive reason to accept him in a newly created Polish diplomatic post and to give him a good position, was actually his wife, Maria. She was the sister of Jan Maria Ciechanowski, who served as secretary of Ignacy Jan Paderewski, famous pianist and composer and, in 1919, Polish prime minister and foreign minister.

The nomination for Count Dzieduszycki, then 45 years old, for the Copenhagen post, was one more example of the wider phenomenon observed in Polish diplomacy in the first years of the country's independence. There was a general tendency employed to send aristocrats and other members of nobility to the European courts to represent Poland, due to their international contacts and knowledge of languages and diplomatic customs.

On 13 October, Dzieduszycki presented his credentials to the king of Denmark and Iceland, Christian X. From 1921 onwards, Dzieduszycki was granted dual accreditation, so he represented Poland in Norway as well.

The count turned out to be a dynamic organiser and leader of the Polish diplomatic mission in Copenhagen. Throughout his stay in Denmark he enjoyed popularity, particularly in the Copenhagen establishment. His social talents and personal relations facilitated Polish efforts to shape possible areas of cooperation and develop mutually beneficial economic cooperation, including Danish help in the construction of a port in Gdynia. In particular, this referred to the problems related to the still very limited access to the Baltic Sea at that time. In this respect Dzieduszycki encountered positive reactions from the Danish side, not least from the prominent businessman and confidant of the king, Knud Højgaard. Simultaneously, in order to strengthen bilateral economic relations, in particular trade, Dzieduszycki took steps to appoint the first honorary consulates and thereby ensured representation of Polish interests outside of the Danish capital.

In the field of propaganda, well known to him since the First World War, Dzieduszycki led a coordinated attempt to counter negative press coverage on Poland, especially with regards to German backed publications in Danish newspapers and

4 Archiwum Akt Nowych Warsaw (AAN), Komitet Narodowy Polski, 61–64, 170–172, 238, 250, 464, 515, 516, 1805; AAN, Kancelaria Cywilna Naczelnika Państwa, 12, 72; Archivo Histórico Nacional Madrid, Ministerio de Estado, P. 696/12506, P. 1183/18143, H. 1681 and 2605; Krzysztof Smolana (ed.), *A Biographical Dictionary of the Polish Foreign Service 1918–1945*, vol. 3, Warsaw 2012, 39–41; Witold Stankiewicz, Andrzej Piber (eds.), *Archiwum Polityczne Ignacego Paderewskiego*, vol. 2, Wrocław 1974, 245.

the national news agency Ritzau. In the opinion of the Poles, central issues to the Polish nation building and border settlements like the uprisings and plebiscites in Upper Silesia, and the establishment of the free city of Gdańsk were presented there in a pro-German manner.

Dzieduszycki remained in Denmark until 1 January 1924. The reason for his departure from Copenhagen should once more be found in French resentment of this aristocrat. This became even more evident on 30 September 1924, as he left the Polish diplomatic service due to pressure from Poland's main ally. He then dedicated himself to Arabian horse-breeding. In October 1949, in Cracow, Dzieduszycki committed suicide, suspected to be a result of his persecution by the communist security service.⁵

ENVOY KONSTANTY ROZWADOWSKI (1924–1928)

In 1924, the Polish legation in Copenhagen was inactive and on the brink of dissolution. Between January and December, Poland was represented in Copenhagen only by a *chargé d'affaires*, Kazimierz Papée, who later became the Polish ambassador to the Holy See. The wider political background during this period included the catastrophic economic situation in Poland and the consequent drastic cuts in the Polish state budget. Because of these, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs considered reducing the number of representations in Nordic countries to one, located either in Copenhagen or, more likely, in Stockholm. Finally, both legations were retained, also due to French pressure. Despite uncertainty, the year 1924 also showed a quite beneficial outlook for the Polish-Danish relations as, on 22 March, a bilateral commercial and navigational treaty was signed. Both areas were of great significance.

When the crisis that almost led to the legation's dissolution blew over, Konstanty Rozwadowski was appointed as the new envoy to Copenhagen. He had a quite similar social background to his predecessor. 46 years old at the time of his appointment, Rozwadowski was a lawyer and economist. He was born in 1878 in Wiązowa near Żółkiew in Austro-Hungarian Galicia, currently located in Ukraine, to a family of landlords.

Rozwadowski started his administrative career at the beginning of the 20th century in Galicia's vice-regent's office in Lwów, where he served for eighteen

5 AAN, Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych (MSZ), 435, 436, 5734, 5746; AAN, Poselstwo RP w Kopenhadze (PK), 10; Kazimierz Karolczak, *Dzieduszyccy. Dzieje rodu. Linia poturzycko-zarzecka*, Cracow 2001, 216; Teresa Zielińska, *Poczet polskich rodów arystokratycznych*, Warsaw 1997, 102–103; Krzysztof Kania, *Edward Bernard Raczyński 1891–1993, dyplomata i polityk*, Warsaw 2014, 33–34; *Rocznik Służby Zagranicznej Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej według stanu na 1 kwietnia 1938*, Warsaw 1938, 57; Janusz Sibora, *Narodziny polskiej dyplomacji u progu niepodległości*, Warsaw 1998, 228, 232, 341; Edward Raczyński, *Od Narcyza Kulikowskiego do Winstona Churchilla*, London 1993, 38; Józef Łaptos (ed.), *Dyplomaci II RP w świetle raportów Quai d'Orsay*, Warsaw 1993, 43, 44, 51, 56, 57, 72–74, 97, 98, 126–127, 282; Jacek M. Majchrowski et al. (eds.), *Kto był kim w Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, Warsaw 1994, 93–94.

years. In 1918, he entered Polish diplomatic service and, in 1923, he became the head of the Economic Section of the Political Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Copenhagen was his first post abroad. It seems his economic knowledge was decisive for this nomination. As a Polish envoy there, his main aim was to continue Dzeduszycki's efforts in seeking Danish support for the Polish maritime trade. Additionally, Rozwadowski was notable for his aid given to Polish economic migrants in Denmark, e.g. for various organisations related to the Roman Catholic Church and to the Scouts movement. He also supported the birth of sailing as a sport in Poland, aiding with his own funds the purchase of the first Polish sea yacht in Denmark.⁶

Rozwadowski served in Copenhagen from 1 December 1924 until 1 August 1928. After Marshal Józef Piłsudski's *coup d'état* in 1926, Rozwadowski's position was quite delicate as he was a close relative of General Tadeusz Rozwadowski, the commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the overthrown government. The envoy was, however, strongly defended by a new minister of foreign affairs, August Zaleski, and in 1928 he was sent as minister to Stockholm. This appointment should be viewed as a promotion.

In 1934, he retired from diplomatic service at the age of 56 and started to work in the private Swedish maritime enterprise Johnson Lines. In 1939, following the German invasion, Rozwadowski left Poland for Paris, and moved to Brazil the next year. Later, he re-entered Polish diplomacy, and between 1942 and 1945 served as *chargé d'affaires* in Uruguay. He lived out the remainder of his life in exile and died in Territet near Montreux in Switzerland in 1964.⁷

ENVOY JAN ZYGMUNT MICHAŁOWSKI (1928–1931)

Between 3 September 1928 and 1 August 1931, the Polish minister to Copenhagen was Jan Zygmunt Michałowski, a 47-year nobleman and former Austro-Hungarian diplomat born in 1881 in Wylezin near Tarczyn in Mazovia.

He studied at the Consular Academy in Vienna. Michałowski also studied law at the university in Vienna. Afterwards, he served as Austro-Hungarian vice-consul in Tangier, Morocco, and consular attaché in Sofia, Bulgaria. He was moved to the imperial-royal diplomatic service and acted as both the secretary to the Austro-Hungarian embassy in London and the legation in Belgrade. During World War I, Michałowski was enrolled in the Austro-Hungarian army. In December 1918, he joined the Polish diplomatic service and headed a special mission to Stockholm before the Swedish government's recognition *de jure* of Poland's independence. Michałowski stayed there as the primary Polish envoy, and between 1924 and 1928

6 Włodzimierz Głowacki, *Wspaniały świat żeglarstwa: z dziejów żeglarstwa w Polsce i na świecie*, Gdańsk 1972, 208.

7 AAN, MSZ, 436; Alina Szklarska-Lohmannowa, Rozwadowski Konstanty, in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* (PSB), vol. 32/3, nr 134, Wrocław 1991, 417; Łaptos, *Dyplomaci*, 176, 251, 268, 282, 287; Bolesław Leitgeber, *Bez przesądów i lęku: z albumu poznańskiego dyplomaty, malarza i podróżnika*, Poznań 1993, 114.

he held the same post in Budapest. He was not pleased with his nomination to Copenhagen, stating during a conversation with a French diplomat that he had already “had the pleasure” of spending time in a Scandinavian state, in that case Sweden.

The greatest achievement during Michałowski’s tenure was the takeover of the transatlantic shipping line The East Asiatic Company Limited – EAC, Det Østasiatiske Kompagni in Copenhagen by a specially appointed Polish company, Polish Transatlantic Shipping Company Limited. Thanks to the agreement made in 1930, the Polish side obtained not only three relatively new steamers but also the logistical and professional assistance of Danish personnel including experienced captains. The Polish company was later renamed Gdynia-America Shipping Lines and under this name it went down in Polish naval history and legend.⁸

On Michałowski’s return from Copenhagen, he was placed at the disposal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs authorities. Due to this situation, he decided to leave diplomatic service at the age of 50. The exact reasons for his early retirement remain unknown, but at the time the whole political and social profile of the Polish diplomatic services had started to change. The old elite of Polish diplomats, who came from the diplomatic services of the former partition empires (mostly Austria-Hungary), was gradually being replaced, partially by a younger generation of Polish career diplomats without a similar background, and partially by representatives of the specific ruling military elite of the Second Polish Republic. These particular elite were called “sanacja”, and originated from different groups of supporters of Józef Piłsudski (the head of state between 1918 and 1922 and practically a dictator between 1926 and 1935).

Michałowski died in Cracow in 1947.⁹ His son, Zygmunt, served as a director of the Polish Section of the Radio Free Europe (1976–1982), a key element in the American propaganda efforts during the Cold War.

ENVOY MICHAŁ SOKOLNICKI (1931–1936)

A good example of a former comrade-in-arms of Józef Piłsudski who found his way into diplomacy was the next Polish envoy to Denmark, Michał Sokolnicki, who was born in 1880 in Kaszewy Kościelne near Kutno in Mazovia in the former Russian partition. He had much stronger ties to the new Polish political establishment than his predecessors. From 1901, Sokolnicki had been one of Piłsudski’s closest collaborators in the ranks of the Polish Socialist Party, as well as later in various organisations related to that party before and during the First World War. Besides this, Sokolnicki was a well-known historian and expert on Napoleonic wars. He held a Ph.D. from the University of Bern.

8 Henryk Dehmel, *Gdynia Ameryka Linie Żeglugowe SA, 1930–1950*, Gdańsk 1969, 1–230.

9 AAN, MSZ, 436; Łaptos, *Dyplomaci*, 63, 64, 125, 126, 128–130, 138, 175, 176, 178, 179, 282, 287, 288; Sibora, *Narodziny*, 341; *Polska Służba Zagraniczna po 1 września 1939 r.*, London 1954, 67; Jan Szymański, *Polen och Sverige i skuggan av Europas 1800-och 1900-talshistoria*, in: *Polen och Sverige: År av rivalitet och vänskap*, Stockholm 1999, 60.

Sokolnicki was sent to Denmark at the age of 50. He headed this post from 1 August 1931 till 31 May 1936. Previously, he had served as a counsellor in London and as a Polish envoy to Helsinki from 1920–1922. In 1923, he was fired from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (at the time in the hands of the national democratic party hostile towards Piłsudski and his supporters), but he returned after the coup by the latter in May 1926. He presented his credentials to the king on 2 September 1931. Due to his position in ruling circles and to his high political ambitions, Sokolnicki actually considered the Copenhagen post more of an exile than a promotion. However, this does not mean that he did not achieve any successes as a Polish envoy there. He managed to arrange a private visit of the influential Polish minister of foreign affairs, Józef Beck, and his wife to Copenhagen between 21 and 30 December 1934. They came as guests of the envoy, even though Sokolnicki had a complicated relationship with Beck, based on some criticism of the authorities in Warsaw during the dictatorship. It was an unofficial stay, but the Polish politician met King Christian and Prime Minister Thorvald Stauning, and also attended a breakfast meeting with Peter Munch, the minister of foreign affairs. It is worth noting that Beck's Scandinavian trip continued to Sweden, this time officially. Beck's travel should be considered in the context of Poland's Baltic Sea policy, which aimed at improving the relations with the Nordic and Baltic states, primarily of course with Sweden.¹⁰

During his years in Copenhagen, Sokolnicki tried to balance the negative opinions of the Danish press about some elements of the authoritarian Polish regime. Thanks to these efforts, the Danish press in 1934/1935 started to write more positively about Poland. The change in attitude of the Ritzau Agency, the semi-official Danish news agency, should especially be noted. Till then, it was often necessary to fight mostly German propaganda, which, in the opinion of Polish diplomats, had a big influence in Ritzau. In general, from the middle of the 1930s onwards, the Danish press only seldomly attacked Poland and Polish government, and instead positive Polish developments were often stressed. Summing up the situation in this respect in December 1935, Sokolnicki reported to the deputy minister of foreign affairs, Jan Szembek, that the Danish press normally was not particularly interested in Polish issues, however the disputed electoral law was depicted in a very negative way. In the opinion of the diplomat, a positive development was that the anti-Polish campaign, organised by Germans, had stopped but sometimes there were notable small negative actions based on Czechoslovakian and French sources. In this period the Polish diplomatic mission also faced counteracting communist anti-Polish propaganda spread by Danish far-leftist circles.

Sokolnicki was also a supporter of lowering Polish custom tariffs for Danish products, stressing that Copenhagen's keen interest in this subject would result in increasing bilateral trade to the benefit of both parties.

In 1936, Sokolnicki was nominated as Polish ambassador to Turkey, where he served until the end of the Second World War. After the war, he stayed there and was

10 See also in this book: Paweł Jaworski, "Episodic neighbourhood? Polish-Danish relations 1918–1939", 33–45.

a professor of history at the University of Ankara, where he died in 1967. Sokolnicki is the only one of all of the Polish ministers to Copenhagen in the interwar period whom a biography has been written.¹¹

ENVOY JAN STARZEWSKI (1936–1940)

The last representative of the Polish Second Republic to Copenhagen was Jan Starzewski, born in 1895 in Wadowice in the historical region of Lesser Poland. He held a PhD in Law from the Jagiellonian University of Krakow. As did his predecessor, he belonged to the new elite with a background in Piłsudski's Polish Legions. Still, his career was not easy, as he had been the aide-de-camp to general Władysław Sikorski, the future political enemy of Piłsudski and one of the leaders of the opposition in the 1930s. Starzewski tried to get rehabilitated within the ruling circles by publishing a comprehensive book in 1930 on the psychology of the founding father and first marshal of Poland, but the latter did not applaud this publication.¹²

In the diplomatic service, Starzewski served on posts in some of the most important capitals from a Polish perspective, namely Berlin, Bucarest, and Paris. He also acted as the vice-head of press section at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, chargé d'affaires in Tallinn (1933–1934), and vice-head of the oriental section at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1935–1936). Copenhagen was his first independent post. When nominated, he was only 41, thus becoming the youngest Polish envoy to Denmark. He served there from 1 June 1936, presenting his credentials on the 8th of the same month. Starzewski was a very active diplomat in some of the decisive years of pre-war tension. In August 1938, Minister Beck visited Copenhagen briefly on his way to Oslo and met Foreign Minister Munch.

In 1939, just before the war, Beck wanted to recall Starzewski and send him to Lisbon. The new designated envoy to Denmark was to be Seweryn Sokołowski, a former army major and vice-director of the minister's cabinet. This change was pending as in September 1939 the Third Reich (and a short time later, the Soviet Union) attacked Poland. With the outbreak of the World War, a majority of Polish diplomatic and consular personnel from Germany were evacuated to Denmark. The Polish ambassador to Berlin till that time, Józef Lipski, stressed that they received a most hospitable and cordial welcome in Copenhagen. In November 1939, Starzewski offered his services to the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in France or the army.

11 Józef Piłsudski Institute of America New York, Archive of Ambassador Michał Sokolnicki, 25–30, 105–106; Hoover Institution Library and Archives Stanford, Michał Sokolnicki papers, 1, 3, 6; AAN, MSZ, 435, 436, 5746; Krzysztof Kłoc, Michał Sokolnicki 1880–1967. Piłsudczyk – historyk – dyplomata, Cracow 2018; Włodzimierz Suleja, Andrzej Zięba, Sokolnicki Michał Hubert, in: PSB, vol. 40/1, nr 164, Warsaw 2000, 80–87; Tytus Komarnicki (ed.), *Dziariusz i Teki Jana Szembeka (1935–1945)*, vol. I, London 1964, 446, 457; Łaptos, *Dyplomaci*, 111–114, 212, 213, 266, 282, 287; Edward Raczyński, *Czas wielkich zmian*, Paris 1990, 43.

12 Jan Starzeński, *Józef Piłsudski. Zarys psychologiczny*, Warsaw 1930, 1–395.

When Germany occupied Denmark on 9 April 1940, King Christian X, as Starzewski wrote after the war, obtained an approval from Hitler so that the representatives of the three countries at war – France, Great Britain, and Poland – were able to leave Denmark freely. In the opinion of the Polish diplomat, the monarch requested this because he considered that it was required for his personal honour. In a farewell audience, the king stated that in Denmark's eyes, Starzewski's mission continued and that only circumstances, caused by force, made his continuation impossible till the end of the occupation. In the king's opinion, from a legal point of view, the diplomatic relations between Denmark and Poland were not broken. On 13 April, the envoy with other allied diplomats left Copenhagen on a special train to the Netherlands through Germany. After the liberation of Denmark and the capitulation of Germany, Starzewski was to come back to his post. However, the withdrawal of recognition of the Polish Government in London by Copenhagen in July 1945 made this comeback impossible. After the war, Starzewski remained in Polish diplomacy in exile. From August 1954 until his death in January 1973 he was practically in charge of it, first as head of the Foreign Affairs Department of the National Unity Executive and then, starting in July 1972, as minister of foreign affairs in the government-in-exile in London. In parallel, he was a lecturer in various Polish educational establishments there. He died in London.¹³

POLITICAL TRENDS AND CONCLUSIONS

The representatives of Poland to Denmark did their duty in a relatively peaceful corner of the interwar world. World politics and the strategic deliberations of the Polish government were of course the background but most of their time was characterized not by spectacular and great politics, but by daily arduous work with many obstacles and foreign pressure complicating bilateral relations. Nevertheless, Copenhagen was an attractive post for Polish diplomats because of several reasons. First of all, Copenhagen was simply close to their country, which made both political and personal relations with Warsaw a lot easier. Second, Denmark was a good observation point for the Baltic entrances, especially vis-a-vis the common Polish-Danish neighbours in the German Reich. Third, it must be taken into consideration that Denmark played quite an important role for Polish interests in the Baltic Sea region. The changing envoys spent much energy analysing and explaining the perspective of the Nordic countries and widening Warsaw's horizons. Poland was

13 Archives of the Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum London, B.2370, note by Starzewski, London, 19 May 1969 (my warmest thanks to Ms. Jadwiga Kowalska, Deputy Keeper of the Institute's Archives, and Ms. Eugenia Maresch, for having provided me a copy of this document); AAN, PK, 12, 19; AAN, MSZ, 432, 435, 1455c; Henryk Batowski, *Polska dyplomacja na obczyźnie 1939–1941*, Cracow 1991, 26–27, 45, 345; Henryk Batowski, *Walka dyplomacji hitlerowskiej przeciw Polsce 1939–1945*, Cracow 1984, 77–78; Łaptos, *Dyplomaci*, 266, 282; Bronisław Hełczyński, *Śp. Jan Starzewski 1895–1973*, in: *Niepodległość 9* (1974), 431–433; Marek Kornat, *Starzewski (Ostoja-Starzewski) Jan*, in: *PSB*, vol. 42/3, Warsaw 2004, 432–436; *The Jozef Pilsudski Institute London, Archive of Janina and Jan Starzewski 1931–1973*, 1–12.

looking for the support of Scandinavian or Nordic countries for its dealings in the League of Nations before this international organisation lost its importance. Warsaw wanted to oppose the attempts of the great powers to dictate their will to the League. Furthermore, in 1935, Poland sought to promote its candidacy for a seat as a semi-permanent member of the League of Nations Council.

The territorially extensive interwar Polish state had to juggle very different strategic considerations. It had to keep a vigilant eye on its potentially hostile neighbours, Germany and the Soviet Union, while at the same time expanding in an attempt to play a role in Northern, Central, and South-Eastern Europe. In this game, Denmark and the other Nordic states might have played a role. Foreign Minister Beck stated that there was a potential in relations with “solid” Scandinavian nations. In the years preceding the World War II, the Polish-Danish understanding was deeper as a result of the danger of war and the lack of the League of Nations’ effectiveness.

To the Polish diplomacy, it was obvious that military cooperation with Denmark or other Scandinavian countries, in the case of war, was completely impossible. Furthermore, Denmark pursued a disarmament policy combined with the hope that the League of Nations would be a warrant for peace. When these hopes proved to be in vain, Denmark pursued a policy combining reduced armed forces and neutrality in the case of conflict. The idea that Denmark could play more or less a role as induring World War I was carefully analysed by Poles and caused serious concern and astonishment. Special interest was paid to the Danish military situation with Copenhagen’s very cautious policy towards Germany, and generally, a rather passive stand on the international stage.

One of the constant worries of Polish diplomats was the image of Poland and of Poles in the Danish press. They often felt it necessary to counter media reports which they felt were guided by enemies of the Polish independence. In the 1930’s, National Socialism gained only limited influence in Denmark and the Polish representatives were pleased that public opinion made it impossible to imagine Denmark as a German ally, despite the fear of an intimidating neighbour. Not only German influence, but also pro-Soviet movements, communist press, and Danish anti-communism interested the watchful Poles. This did not only include local communists, as Copenhagen played a growing role as a significant meeting place for communists from other countries with Moscow emissaries and as a hub for Comintern activities in other European countries.¹⁴

From the mission in Copenhagen, Polish diplomats attentively observed German intentions, including foreign policy, propaganda, and treatment of minorities. The Polish envoys were especially interested in the situation of the Danish minority in Southern Schleswig and changing tendencies among the German minority in Northern Schleswig, where Third Reich’s penetration was very strong and the revisionism and popularity of national socialism among Germans steadily grew.¹⁵

14 AAN, MSZ, 5703, 5705, 5707, 5708; Paweł Jaworski, *Polska niepodległa wobec Skandynawii 1918–1939*, Wrocław 2001; Jan Szymański (ed.), *Polska-Dania w ciągu wieków*, Gdańsk 2004.

15 See also in this book: Mogens Rostgaard Nissen, “Danish-Polish minority cooperation in Germany”, 63–77.

The Polish diplomatic post in Copenhagen also had an eye for Denmark's geopolitical position, primarily taking into account the role of Denmark as an exit from the main route between the Baltic and the North Seas, and a paper of Danish straits during a potential conflict. However, the Polish envoys were also concerned with Danish oversea territories like Greenland, Iceland, and the Faroe Islands. With respect to Greenland, the Danish-Norwegian conflict and its international settlement was a question of international importance at the time. The Polish diplomats also observed the growing ferments in Danish-Icelandic relations.

The Polish mission employed a relatively large staff of economic, commercial, and shipping experts, mainly due to the fact that the Baltic Sea was the most important lifeline for Polish foreign trade. There were also many bilateral ties which were important in daily cooperation due to the short nautical distance to the maritime borders of Poland. Warsaw was convinced that close collaboration in the region was necessary and that activation of relations in the Baltic zone was vital for the country. Practically, it was the main issue to deal with for Polish diplomats. The commercial and navigational treaty of 1924 was key to the cooperation and was followed by another one from 27 August 1936, and also other agreements. Between 1926 and 1933, as a result of the Polish-German customs war and the strikes of British miners and transport workers, Poland was able to sell large amounts of coal to Denmark as well as wood and grain. Danes were exporting ships, machines, and fat to Poland, but negotiations in this field were tough as Polish tariffs were high and Warsaw had a positive balance of mutual trade that worried the Danes. This challenge was also a commercial pressure on Copenhagen by Germany and Great Britain, and their solid position on the Danish market.

From a Polish economic point of view, Denmark was not only interesting as a market, but also constituted a safe and reliable cooperation partner. This was, for instance, the case when it came to investments in the strategic port of Gdynia, common maritime enterprises like the Gdynia-America Shipping Lines. At a time when Poland was building seafaring capabilities, it was attractive to acquire Danish knowledge of navigation, shipping, fishing, functioning of ports, agricultural cooperatives, and folk high schools.¹⁶ It is worth noting that important help in that cooperation and also in cultural and propaganda activities of a reborn dynamic state was delivered by Polish honorary consuls and vice-consuls – Danish citizens, who were generally evaluated highly by Polish diplomats. In 1939, there was a relatively big group, numbering six full and three vice-consulates, respectively in: Aalborg, Aarhus, Haderslev, Næstved, Nakskov, Odense, Copenhagen, Hasle, Bornholm, and Horsens.¹⁷

16 Bolesław Hajduk, *Działalność spółki Højgaard & Schultz AS w Polsce w latach 1924–1949*, in Szymański (ed.), *Polska-Dania*, 175–198; Jaworski, *Polska niepodległa wobec Skandynawii*, 121–122, 144–147, 150–153, 249–258; see also in this book: Steen Andersen, “Establishment of relations and the economic relation in the interwar period 1919–1945”, 47–62.

17 AAN, MSZ, 435, 5703, 5706, 5709, 5718–5720, 5727; AAN, PK, 5–7, 12; Rocznik, 58–60, 90; Wojciech Skóra, *Służba konsularna Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej. Organizacja, kadry i działalność*, Toruń 2006, 880; Jaworski, *Polska niepodległa*, 111–202; Szymański, *Morska współpraca*

One great challenge for Polish envoys was the situation of Polish immigrants in Denmark. There were around ten to twelve thousands of these, 75 percent of them already Danish citizens, mainly workers and peasants. They constituted 80 percent of the Roman Catholics in the country. This issue was delicate, especially when dealing with the demands of the Poles who wanted to have their own Polish Catholic priests and not Dutch or Belgian ones in the parishes where they constituted the majority, especially in Nakskov, Maribo, and Nykøbing on the islands of Lolland and Falster. The same problem appeared in Jutland. There were even so-called church strikes because of this problem, which was a topic for complicated negotiations including the envoy Starzewski, the Danish Catholic Church, and the Holy See. As a country with large diaspora, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs viewed it as a task for its cultural policy to ensure that the Polish migrants were able to maintain their culture, traditions, and language. Thus, it supported Polish organizations. For instance, the ministry provided them three teachers from Poland in 1939.¹⁸

The culmination of bilateral relations came with Sokolnicki and Starzewski's missions. The result of the activity of these Polish ministers and the good climate in which they performed their duties was more economic cooperation, as well as more exhibitions and other cultural events, tourist trips between Gdynia and Copenhagen as well as official and study visits especially by Navy officers, representatives of ports, academic youth, and journalists. In 1931, for example, in the span of two weeks, 33 Danish representatives of the latter profession visited almost the whole of Poland, except for its eastern parts. It was significant as at that time there were no permanent Danish correspondents in the capital of Poland nor Polish ones in Copenhagen. In 1936 the Polish-Danish Association in Warsaw was created. Awards policy was also important. In this relationship, *Polonia Restituta* crosses, the order often granted to foreigners, were bestowed by the president of Poland upon request of the Polish legation in Copenhagen and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Danish diplomats, businessmen (especially in shipping and navigation), policemen, and journalists. The White Eagle Order, the highest Polish decoration, was awarded to King Christian X.¹⁹ In turn, the Danes awarded Dziejuszycki, Michałowski, and Sokolnicki with the Order of the Dannebrog I class as well as Rozwadowski and Papée with the II class. Starzewski was not decorated because of the war.

Since military issues were not so important, only at the beginning of the relations was there a Polish military attaché in Copenhagen. Later, he was removed and never came back, mostly as a result of Denmark's policy of disarmament and reduction of its military forces. In 1935, the Polish II Bureau of the General Staff refused to nominate an officer for Copenhagen or to spread the competences of the military

Polski z Danią w okresie międzywojennym (1919–1939) in: Szymański (ed.) Polska–Dania, 147–174.

18 AAN, MSZ, 2906, 5729, 5746, 10637, 10638, 10445, 11060; Eugeniusz S. Kruszewski, *Problemy osadnictwa Polaków w Danii 1893–1939*, London 1980.

19 AAN, MSZ, 431–433, 435, 5715, 5716, 5737, 5740, 8703, 9068; AAN, PK, 12, 15; Szymański, *Morska współpraca Polski z Danią w okresie międzywojennym (1919–1939)* in: Szymański (ed.) Polska–Dania, 169–173.

attaché in Sweden. As the crisis in Europe came closer, the situation changed. A Polish intelligence outpost appeared in Copenhagen, which was headed first by Major Karol Politowski (“Reggio”) from 1935 to 1938 and then from 1938 to 1940 by Lieutenant Waclaw Gilewicz (“Reggio II”). The main task of this outpost was to cooperate with Danish intelligence in the German direction.²⁰

All Polish envoys to Denmark were well prepared for their diplomatic duties. Theoretically, the legation in Copenhagen could be a good training post for younger promising diplomats who were entering the elite of Polish foreign service. Practically, this was only the case for Starzewski, who was not able to foresee that it would be his first and last independent mission in service of a free Poland. Only two of the interwar envoys to Denmark achieved more important diplomatic posts afterwards. The other two finished their careers in Copenhagen, and another shared this fate shortly afterwards. After the war, three of these diplomats remained in exile. Two stayed in Poland as they were, before the war, no longer active in diplomacy. It should be noted that all five ministers came from noble or even aristocratic families. As previously said, this tendency to send these kinds of people to royal courts can be observed in Polish diplomacy. Despite the fact that Denmark had quite a “democratic” court, without the pompous etiquette like Spain or Belgium, the traditional noble grip on foreign affairs was still tangible. Copenhagen was a good place for lower ranking diplomats to learn and get experience in the service. It is worth remembering that Copenhagen was the first diplomatic post for Count Edward Raczyński (1919–1922), who was later the ambassador to London and during the war also minister of foreign affairs, and in the years 1979–1986 the president of the Republic of Poland in exile. In Denmark, he was writing reports on its capital as a “key to the Baltic”. The famous writer and poet Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz also was secretary of the Polish legation in Denmark (1932–1935).²¹

In the second half of the 1930s, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs was pleased with satisfactory and friendly ties with Copenhagen. However, some historians tend to interpret the relations between Poland and Denmark as secondary or even on the “peripheries” of Polish diplomacy. In this aspect, it should be stressed that in the interwar period, Warsaw had no diplomatic missions which could be considered as not significant. Of course, neither the Polish legation in Copenhagen nor the Danish legation in Warsaw was in the highest league of diplomacy, but they were a kind of “must be” representations. The envoys were responsible for important work in political, economic, consular, cultural, propaganda, and intelligence areas. It should also be noted that it is always important for every diplomacy to create and maintain as good and close relations with other countries as possible,

20 AAN, MSZ, 5715; Jan Stanisław Ciechanowski (ed.), *Intelligence Co-operation Between Poland and Great Britain During World War II*, vol. 2, Warsaw 2005, 292–293; Władysław Bułhak, Thomas W. Friis, *Placówka wywiadowcza Oddziału II Sztabu Głównego Wojska Polskiego/Sztabu Naczelnego Wodza w Kopenhadze (kryptonim Reggio, “Reggio II”) i pierwsza faza polsko-duńskiej współpracy wywiadowczej w latach 1938–1940*, in: *Wywiad i kontrwywiad wojskowy II RP*, vol. 12. Tadeusz Dubicki (ed.), Łomianki 2022, 147–160.

21 Kania, Edward, 33–35; Raczyński, Czas, 41–44; Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, *Gniazdo łabędzi. Szkice z Danii*, Warsaw 1962, 187–219.

especially but not only neighbours. Firstly, because it is a normal task in all diplomacy and there are always positive results. Secondly, because one never knows how the situation will change and when a partner will be needed. Here, the examples of the Baltic States who turned out to be a crucial place for Polish refugees in September 1939, and the importance of Spain and Portugal for Polish interests between the collapse of France and landing of the Allies in Normandy, are worth mentioning.

The bilateral ties from the years 1919–1940 were a good basis upon which to develop in the future, and especially from 1989/1990 when Poland was freed from the Soviet communist control. In this case, we can quote William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*: "What's past is prologue."²²

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22 William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, Act 2, Scene I, in: Burton Raffel (ed.), *The Annotated Shakespeare*, Yale 2006.

POLISH INTELLIGENCE IN DENMARK IN 1941–1945

Theoretical, Cultural, and Operational Aspects

Władysław Bułhak/Thomas Wegener Friis

The Second World War largely ended Polish-Danish relations, since first Poland came under German control, and within half a year Denmark followed. Furthermore, the war fundamentally changed the political map and tossed aside most prior agendas.¹ Denmark stayed formally a neutral nation under involuntary German occupation. The Danish historian Bo Lidegaard even characterizes it as an Allied friendly nation and “de facto recognized Allied” from June 1944.² De jure, Poland and Denmark were not playing on the same team. However, parallel to the Danish government and state authorities, another Denmark existed throughout the war: the so-called “Fighting Denmark”, a conglomerate of very diverse groups from the far left to the far right united by their resistance against the occupation and collaboration. This alternative face of Danish society found a political platform in 1943 as the so-called Freedom Council (Frihedsrådet).³ A recognized part of the very diverse resistance movement was a group of Polish freedom fighters. The database of the Museum of Danish Resistance recognizes this faction under the name “Polish-British Intelligence”.⁴ The literature on Denmark during the Second World War is overwhelming. The official bibliography of the Danish Royal Library alone counts around 14,000 works (status of 31/12/2016) within that category. However, the role of the Polish fighter has, until now, only been the subject of popular work and not scientific analysis.⁵ This article seeks to encourage a deeper study of Polish intelligence and resistance activities in Denmark and, beyond that, in Northern Europe during the Second World War.⁶ The aim is to describe the so-called Continen-

- 1 Though some relations on the economic field continue between occupied Denmark and both the annexed so-called Reichsgau Danzig-Westpreussen and the occupational zone General Government, see also in this book: Steen Andersen, “Establishment of relations and the economic relation in the interwar period 1919–1945”, 47–62.
- 2 Bo Lidegaard, *Danmarks Udenrigspolitik Historie, Overleveren 1914–1945*, Vol. 4, Copenhagen 2004, 581.
- 3 Claus Bundgård Christensen, Joachim Lund, Niels Wium Olesen, Jakob Sørensen, *Danmark Besat. Krig og Hverdag 1940–1945*, Copenhagen 2005, 536–560.
- 4 <https://modstand.natmus.dk/OrganisationSoegning.aspx> (accessed 26/08/2022); one needs to fill in “Polsk-englesk efterretningstjeneste”.
- 5 Georg Nellemann, *For Danmarks frihed og Polens ære*, Copenhagen 1988; Dines Bogø, *Dræbt af Gestapo*, Copenhagen 2003.
- 6 The article is a part of a larger project on the subject: Władysław Bułhak, Thomas Wegener Friis, *Placówka wywiadowcza Oddziału II Sztabu Głównego Wojska Polskiego/Sztabu Naczelnego Wodza w Kopenhadze (kryptonim “Reggio”, “Reggio II”) i pierwsza faza polsko-dunskiej współpracy wywiadowczej w latach 1938–1940*, in: Dubicki Tadeusz (ed.), *Wywiad i*

tal Action of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Denmark (codename “Felicja”), as well as the activities of the intelligence station of Polish military intelligence (known as the Second Department of Polish general staff or just the Second Department) in Stockholm with the codename “SKN”, and to clarify the notion of social intelligence, an important theory for this subject.

THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

The concept of social intelligence appeared long before the outbreak of Second World War. It was used, for example, to describe the counterintelligence situation in Poland in the interwar period. In the introduction of a study of the Second Department, it was written that social intelligence “has informants everywhere, and in large numbers”, distributed “in the state and public life of a given country, so that their work can take place without special efforts, [...] by natural means, simply by force of fact”. This study pointed this out particularly in respect to German and Soviet intelligence in Poland. In the German case, it wrote that the activists of the German minority in Poland “do everything, be it military, political and diplomatic intelligence or economic intelligence,” to which covert actions were added which also utilized Ukrainians and Belarusians hostile to Poland. In the Soviet case, the possibilities offered by members of the communist party were evident when it came to “typical social intelligence, carried out by the masses, connected by ideological considerations”.⁷ Literature on the subject also mentions how German Americans were used by the intelligence services of the Third Reich.⁸

A phenomenon similar to the abovementioned cases was the practices of the special services of the Polish underground during the Second World War. The head of branch II of the Polish Home Army (the ZWZ/AK), Lieutenant Colonel Marian Drobik, viewed this as “a new concept of intelligence, based on a new

kontrwywiad wojskowy II RP Vol. 12, Warsaw 2021, 147–160; Władysław Bułhak, Thomas Wegener Friis, Wywiad społeczny w czasie wojny na przykładzie operacji Akcji Kontynentalnej MSW rządu RP na uchodźstwie i Oddziału II Sztabu Naczelnego Wodza na terenie Danii w latach 1941–1945. Aspekty teoretyczne, kulturowe i operacyjne, Warsaw 2022, <http://ohistorie.eu/2021/05/20/wywiad-spoeczny-w-czasie-wojny-na-przykladzie-operacji-akcji-kontynentalnej-msw-rzadu-rp-na-uchodzstwie-i-oddzialu-ii-sztabu-naczelnego-wodza-na-terenie-danii-w-latach-1941-1945-aspekty-teor/> (accessed 26/08/2022); Władysław Bułhak, SOASINT – Socially Assisted Intelligence. The Case of Polish Intelligence in Denmark during WWII, in “International Journal of Intelligence and Counter Intelligence” (forthcoming).

7 Engelbert Gutwenger, *Inspiration und geschichtliche Wahrheit*, Innsbruck 1962, 19; Władysław Bułhak, Raport szefa Oddziału II KG AK ppłk. dypl. Mariana Drobika “Bieżąca polityka polska a rzeczywistość” i sprawa jego aresztowania (listopad–grudzień 1943), in: Władysław Bułhak (ed.), *Wywiad i kontrwywiad Armii Krajowej*, Warsaw 2008, 20–21.

8 Cornelia Wilhelm, *Ethnic Germans as an Instrument of German Intelligence Services in the USA, 1933–45*, in: Heike Bungert, Jan G. Heitmann, Michael Wala (eds.), *Secret Intelligence in the Twentieth Century*, London 2007, 34–55.

human element, rather intelligent, although unprofessional”.⁹ The Polish SOE Agent Stanisław Jankowski (aka “Agaton”), an architect-urbanist by profession, added that their work “differed from the typical activity of intelligence, which in many cases was done by paid agents. It was based, for the vast majority, on amateurs, self-taught “civilians”. This perhaps primitivized intelligence techniques but gave the work a different moral climate.”¹⁰

The renowned Polish historian Jan E. Zamojski stated in his work on the intelligence networks in France during the Second World War that ‘intelligence has become a form of struggle against the occupying forces, a mass form, involving many thousands of people. It ceased to be a ‘service of gentlemen’ (Herrendienst). Often, intelligence agents were “random people with no predisposition or preparation”, but with “enthusiasm”, were “more or less smart”, and who had a variety of useful “abilities or qualifications”. He noted that there were differing mindsets among intelligence professionals, who were often thinking along the classical lines of “case officers” and “agents” compared to the much broader wartime approach of social intelligence.¹¹

When dealing with social intelligence during the war, it is important to take categories such as age, gender, and individual cultural capital into account. The war created a radical new situation where demands on intelligence were rising while the environment in which agents operated became extremely hostile. Abwehr and Gestapo counterintelligence caused sudden gaps in the intelligence network, and the rank and file need to be filled quickly. The need to recruit new assets was often filled by young people, including women, every so often from outside the former military and social elites. This meant that intelligence organizations needed to adapt their way of thinking and recruit outside of traditional milieus. Organisations which operated with social intelligence are today described as ‘networked’ – non-governmental, revolutionary (anti-systemic), and even terrorist.¹²

From the very beginning, a characteristic aspect of social intelligence in the Second World War was the role of women. Pre-war intelligence was regularly described as a “Herrendienst”, a vocation not only of “gentlemen” but generally dominated by men. The increasing part played by women in intelligence and other covert activities can be compared to the generally growing role of women during both World Wars, both within and beyond the Anglo-Saxon world.¹³ As far as intelligence studies are concerned, the role of women has not been subject to scientific analysis, and in particular there is a lack of work that includes a theoretical perspective on this topic.

9 Władysław Bułhak, Raport szefa Oddziału II KG AK ppłk. dypl. Mariana Drobika “Bieżąca polityka polska a rzeczywistość” i sprawa jego aresztowania (listopad-grudzień 1943), in: Władysław Bułhak (ed.), Wywiad i kontrwywiad Armii Krajowej, Warsaw 2008, 20–21.

10 Bułhak, Raport szefa Oddziału, 21.

11 Jan E. Zamojski Profesjonaliści i amatorzy. Szkic o dziejach polskiej służby wywiadowczej w Francji w latach 1940–1945 – “F2”, in: Dzieje Najnowsze 12/4 (1980), 79–80, 125.

12 Agnieszka Rothert, Emergencja złożonych i sieciowych struktur władzy, in: Janusz Ruszkowski, Luzia Wojnicz (eds.), Multi-level governance w Unii Europejskiej, Warsaw 2013, 153–154, 162; John Arquilla, David F. Ronfeldt, (eds.), Networks and Netwars: The Future of Terror, Crime, and Militancy, Santa Monica 2001, 6, 14.

13 Matthew Brown, Review Essay Women and Warfare: Recent literature and New Directions in Research, in: Feminist Review 79/1 (2005), 172–175.

An exception to this is the work of British historian Juliette Pattison, who has examined this matter from the British perspective in relation to the first half of the 20th century.¹⁴

An analysis of gender and intelligence cannot be reduced to the question of the exploitation of women as agents (à la Mata Hari). This is of course intriguing, particularly to popular works on intelligence and espionage. The roles of women go beyond these often colourful descriptions, and include an explicit interest towards the role of gender in decision-making, intelligence management and analysis, as well as specific operation. Women's roles in the construction and handling of networks are striking in the Polish-Danish case and are closely connected with the SOASINT concept.¹⁵

THE PROBLEM OF PROFESSIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The Polish intelligence professionals in Scandinavia in the interwar period were the officers of Polish military intelligence service, the Second Department of the General Staff. By the 1930s, they had already cooperated with Danish intelligence against Germany. These relations were of course disrupted by the invasion of Denmark by the Third Reich on 9 April 1940. The Polish intelligence officers working in Copenhagen under diplomatic covers needed to flee to neutral Sweden. They joined the work of the Stockholm intelligence station codenamed "PLN" (North), later renamed "SKN" (Scandinavia). Unfortunately, these activities, based on the Polish station in Stockholm, were carried out under the almost complete control of Swedish counterintelligence, which due to German pressure expelled the key personnel of the station, headed by Captain Waław Gilewicz.¹⁶

The Swedish security service carried out a well-prepared and effective "operational combination" and banished the Polish intelligence officers. This action showed the weaknesses of the professional intelligence and the use of stations, which were hardly working covertly. In a time of crisis such as war and invasion, the immanent loss of an intelligence station left the service without its basic point of operations. In addition, the officers acting as diplomats or consular officials were usually also unwilling to risk their own lives and those of their own families. Thus, the station might work well in peace but was inadequate for war.

At the end of 1940, the Polish Ministry of Interior in exile in London, headed by Stanisław Kot, gave birth to a new Polish secret organisation called Continental Action.¹⁷ The concept of Continental Action fit perfectly with the concept of social

14 Juliette Pattison, *Behind enemy lines: Gender, passing and the Special Operations Executive in the Second World War*, Manchester 2007, 66–85.

15 Władysław Bułhak, *SOASINT – Socially Assisted Intelligence* (forthcoming).

16 Józef Lewandowski, *Węzeł Stockholmski. Szwedzkie koneksje polskiego podziemia, IX 1939–VII 1942*, Uppsala 1999, 109–110, 211; Leszek Gondek, *Na tropach tajemnic 3*. Rzeszy, Warsaw 1987, 76–77.

17 Tadeusz Panecki, *Polonia zachodnioeuropejska w planach Rządu RP na emigracji (1940–1945). Akcja Kontynentalna*, Warsaw 1986; Eugeniusz S. Kruszewski, *Akcja Kontynentalna w Skandynawii 1940–1945*, Copenhagen 1993.

intelligence, and it was supposed to be an imitation of the German and previously the Spanish “fifth column”. The main actors were going to be the Polish diaspora in Europe outside of the German Reich. The idea was eagerly supported by the British, in particular by the newly created Special Operations Executive (SOE).

Minister Kot had been an opponent of the pre-war “Colonel’s regime”, the so-called “Sanation” (Sanacja). He believed that the regime retained its influence in the military and the underground Home Army. Kot was particularly suspicious of the intelligence service of the Second Department, which had been one of the pillars of power in the interwar period. In his opinion, such structures could constitute a threat to a democratic system in a future free Poland. Thus, Kot and his successor as Minister of the Interior Stanisław Mikołajczyk did everything they could to maintain control over the activities of the Continental Action and to keep it secluded from military intelligence. The officers of the Second Department furthered this division of the Polish covert activities by reacting reluctantly, or even with hostility towards the new organisation. The British understood the split between Minister Kot and the military. In the eyes of view of British counterintelligence (MI-5), the first head of the Continental Action, Jan Librach, was simply the head of the “Polish Underground Service”. In some Polish sources, Continental Action was assumed to be a “governmental political intelligence”, modelled on the “Political Intelligence Department” in the British state apparatus. There is much to suggest that it was the goal of the government in exile to create an independent political or civilian intelligence service. After the war, it could continue as a service under stronger democratic control than what had been standard practice in the year before the war.¹⁸

In the planning of Continental Action activities, organizers foresaw the relatively large and well-organised Polish community in Denmark as playing a significant role. These operations were given the code name “Felicia” by the Poles, while the British named it “Inflexion”. The primary aims were typical of civilian intelligence (social, political and economic issues), and included little military intelligence collection.¹⁹ “Felicia” began to be organized in May 1941. It operated under the direct leadership of the station chief from the Ministry of the Interior. This leadership included Mieczysław Thugutt aka “Adam”, and “Eric/Erik Larsen”, or (to the British) “John”, who was the son of Stanisław Thugutt, an outstanding Polish politician of the inter-war period. The organisation’s “liaison” to Denmark was Bolesław Rediger (“Harald”), the Polish consular attaché in Malmö. Rediger had previously worked at the Polish consulate in Copenhagen and had also been the

18 Jan Librach, Nota o “Akcji Kontynentalnej”, in: *Zeszyty Historyczne*, no. 23, 1973, 161–162; The National Archives, Kew, London (further on TNA), HS 4/149, “Kot Professor”; HS 4/149, Hugh Dalton to Winston Churchill, 12/11/1940; HS 4/149, Extract from the note on Meeting with Professor [Stanisław] Kot and [Lewis] Namier, 11/11/1940; TNA, HS 4/315, Desmond Morton to Hugh Dalton, 26/09/1940; Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum, Archival collections (further on: IPMS) A.9.V.1-1, Continental Action. Note to the minister of the interior [Władysław Banaczyk] and the minister of foreign affairs [Tadeusz Romer], London, 23/07/1943.

19 Kruszewski, *Akcja Kontynentalna w Skandynawii*, 143–151; Józef Piłsudski Institute of America (further on: IJPA), Jan Librach Archive (further on: AJL), 066/5, “Polski wysiłek wojenny” [Polish War Effort], London, 11/04/1942, 17.

organiser of the local Polish scouts. In the historical literature, he is occasionally wrongly depicted as the leader of the “Felicia” organisation due to the later leading role of his wife’s younger sister, Romana Heinze (“Sabina”). Rediger himself was not included in organisational work until the summer of 1941. He died of kidney disease in November of the same year. No earlier than January 1942 did the organisation fully begin operations; in other words, without denying the merit of Rediger’s planning, he could not have been the leader of “Felicia” with respect to actually organizing the networking and recruiting of contacts.²⁰

From its very beginning, an important connection for the organisation in Denmark was Romana Heltberg (“Helga”, “the One”), a Polish language teacher in Copenhagen. Adam Sokólski (“Klaus/Claus Jensen”, “the Tenth”), became the proper organizer of the “Felicia” network in the field. He was a scouting instructor as well as a teacher at a Polish school in Naskov on the island of Lolland, one of the main centres of Polish economic emigration. The network was effectively created in the summer of 1942, as “Klaus” made a cycling expedition around Denmark with the support of Krystyna Heltberg (the daughter of Romana Heltberg) and Barbara Mogensén, a Polish woman married to a Dane. Sokólski’s deputy was Stanisław Henschel, who was based in Copenhagen. He was a Danish citizen and former Polish legation contract worker.²¹ According to a SOE’s note of 14 January 1943, Denmark was then finally “covered by a [network] of 24 agents who send their reports to the local headquarters in Naskov,” which was under the control of Adam Sokólski.²²

THE CRISIS OF ‘FELICIA’ AND THE ROLE OF “SABINA”

In August 1942, Mieczysław Thugutt aka “Adam” was “burned” and forced to leave Sweden. This was connected with the tragic case of the Gestapo arresting the so-called “Warsaw Swedes” who were sentenced to death after smuggling out information on the ongoing genocide of the Polish Jews.²³ Captain Waclaw Gilewicz, the chief of the military intelligence station in Stockholm, described Thugutt as a

20 IPMS, A.9.III.4/14, Cipher of Stanisław Kot, minister of the interior, London, 22/07/1941; *Ibid.*, Librach to Thugutt, London, 14/11/1941; *Ibid.*, Thugutt to Librach, Stockholm, 16/03/1942; IPMS, A.9.VI.7-1, Report compiled on the basis of Rediger’s notes and Wiktor Strzelecki’s conversations with Rediger, Malmö, second half of July 1941; *Ibid.*, Gustaw Potworowski [Polish envoy to Sweden] to Kot, Stockholm, 16/05/1941; *Ibid.*, Potworowski to Kot, Stockholm, 16/05/1941; *Ibid.*, Thugutt to Librach, Stockholm, 19/01/1942; *Ibid.*, Personal characteristics of Poles in Denmark, no date; *Ibid.*, List of Polish activists in Denmark obtained by Strzelecki from Rediger, no date; IPMS, A.9.VI.7-2, Situation report “Denmark” for Minister Kot, [Malmö], 10/08/1941.

21 Wojciechowski 1989, 67, 83; George Nellemann, *For Danmarks frihed og Polens ære. Den polske modstandsbevægelse i Danmark 1940–45*, Venner 1989, 101.

22 Wojciechowski 1989, 83; TNA, HS 4/221, “The Kot organizations” memo, London, 14/01/1943.

23 IPMS, A.9.VI.7-1, Col. [Stanisław] Gano [head of the Second Bureau] to Librach, London, 13/05/1942; J. Lewandowski, *Węzeł Stockholmski*; C[raig] G[raham] McKay, *From Information to Intrigue. Studies in Secret Service Based on the Swedish Experience 1939–45*, London 1993, 90; Steffan Thorsell, *Warszawawenskama*. Stockholm 2015.

“handsome guy, without occupation, married to a wealthy Swedish woman who was older than him and had connections in the circles of the wealthy Swedish bourgeoisie”. As one can see, the attitude of the “professionals” towards the “amateurs” also included a more human dimension, lined with a sense of superiority and perhaps even contempt for existing agents aspiring to serve in “Herrendienst”.²⁴

Formally, Thugutt was replaced by Stanisław Kocan (“Ludwik”). Nevertheless, he did not hand over “Felicia” matters to his successor and did not give up the ambition to run the organisation from London. He intended to do so through Romana Heinze (“Sabina”), a young representative of the organisation in Malmö, who, quite accidentally, replaced Rediger “Harald” there after his death. “Sabina” was an ambitious unmarried young woman, only 27 at the time, known for her overly affective or expressive way of behaviour. She worked with her older sister, Maria Rediger, the widow of the prematurely deceased consul. In London, the Heinze sisters had additional support in their friend Maria Babicka, the former assistant to the poet and diplomat Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz. During the war, she worked as the influential secretary to General Władysław Sikorski, the Polish prime minister in exile. Their key contacts in occupied Denmark were Romana Heltberg (“Helga”), her daughter Krysztyna Heltberg, and Elisabeth Grunnet, the wife of the Danish political police officer Aage Grunnet. These contacts illustrate the nature of “social intelligence”, including the interrelations between covert operations and professional, social and family relations, all supplemented by a system of specific “female networking”. It was both a strength and a weakness of this form of intelligence. The problem of individual age and social position is also not without significance.²⁵

The sudden promotion of “Sabina” built on her personal connections, and likely also on her personal network. In the field, this conflicted with the ambitions of a key asset, Sokółski aka “Klaus”. The catalyst of his dissatisfaction was probably “Klaus” making the acquaintance of a fugitive from the prisoner-of-war camp, of Second Lieutenant Lucjan Masłocha, who was hiding in Denmark. When discussions started about a “more effective underground organisation”, it was implied that it should be led by “Sabina”. These disagreements led to a serious crisis in the “Felicia” organisation. It was the beginning of the end of its existence in its original form as a secret “civil” operation based on the possibilities and potential of the Polish minority in Denmark.²⁶

24 The Polish Underground Movement Study Trust Archives, London (further on: SPP), A.505, Lt. Col. Edmund Piotrowski to Col. Michał Protasewicz, [head of Sixth Bureau], Stockholm, 17/06/1943, 30; W. Grabowski, *Wprowadzenie*, in: Maria Małaśnicka-Miedzanogóra, *Róże dla Lone*, Warsaw 2015, 11.

25 IPMS, A.9.III.4/14, Thugutt to Mikołajczyk [minister of interior], Stockholm, 21/08/1942; IPMS, A.9.VI.7-1, Col. Gano to the Sixth Bureau, London, 08/11/1944; Beata Dorosz, “Anioł chopinowski” i “nienapisany wiersz”. O korespondencji Haliny i Kazimierza Wierzyńskich (tuzin listów i garść uwag), in: *Sztuka Edycji*, vol. 2, 2019, 162, footnote 13; Nellemann, *For Danmarks frihed og Polens ære*, 100; Małaśnicka-Miedzanogóra, *Róże dla Lone*, 114, 248; on Heinze family from Ostrów Wielkopolski see <http://ged.vstudio.xon.pl/indilist.php?surname=HEINZE&ged=Reszelscy%2C+Kuli%C5%84scy>), (accessed 26/04/2020).

26 Kruszewski, *Akcja Kontynentalna*, 103.

The “Felicia” crisis played out at a dramatic point of the Danish occupation when a more lenient German protectorate policy was replaced by an increasingly brutal occupation, marked by the resignation of the Danish government and the disarming of the Danish armed forces on 29 August 1943. This also meant an increasing risk of German repression of resistance and intelligence activities. Due to this crisis in September 1943, Romana and Krystyna Heltberg (“Helga”), and a month later also Adam Sokólski (“Klaus”) decided to flee to Sweden. Sokólski handed over his duties to his deputy Stanisław Henschel (“Jens Holm”) and some responsibilities to Barbara Mogensen (“Elsie Olafsson”). In Sweden, Sokólski was sent to an internment camp for a month. In early 1944, he found himself in Malmö. Here, the conflict between the two young leaders of “Felicia” escalated. “Sabina” consistently questioned the merits and competence of “Klaus” in her reports to London. She accused both “Klaus” and “Helga” of having “done very little on the ground so far”. She argued that Sokólski simply was not suitable for intelligence or covert work, and that “he is only good for doing purely cultural and educational work, but with the chance to take instructions and directives from above.” She demanded that the planned journey of “Klaus” to London be cancelled and accused him of being a “nuisance and danger” to the whole “Felicia” operation. This ended with the formal (written) withdrawal from the organisation by Sokólski and his transfer to the “SKN” station of the Second Department. It has been said that this transfer included his elevation to rank of lieutenant, which is not true. In fact, he was classified by military intelligence under the category “informant” with the number 2988 and pseudonym “Belfer”.²⁷

In the middle of 1943, Romana Heinze, undertook an advanced ‘flirtation’ (as it was written in one of the cipher messages) with representatives of the Fourth Department of Polish General Staff in Stockholm, which dealt with the lines of secret communication with occupied Poland. As a result, she gave the military officers access to key assets of “Felicia” network in Denmark in order to build the so-called “northern” courier route with the occupied country. In this way, Heinze’s position became stronger but also more complicated. Apart from acting as “Sabine”, the head of “Felicia” organisation based in Malmö, she was now also “Rysia” (literally “Lynxie”) in the alternative secret network of the Fourth Department. This, of course, considerably increased the risk of disclosure.²⁸

The risks of operating with intelligence newcomers were something which General Kazimierz Sosnkowski, who supervised the armed underground forces in the first phase of the war, had already warned Minister of the Interior Kot about in April 1941. He pointed out that the “crossing” of military stations with the activity

27 IPMS, A.9.VI.7-1, Memo by Romana Heinze, no date (in English); *Ibid.*, Heinze to Thugutt?, Malmö, 16/11/1943; *Ibid.*, Jan Gadowski to Heinze, London, 24/04/1944; Central Military Archives in Warsaw, Sixth Bureau of the Supreme Commander’s Staff (further on CAW, OVI SNW), II.52.481, List of Poles residing in Sweden, memo, London, 30/09/1946, 198; Wojciechowski, *Z dziejów polskiego ruchu oporu w Danii*, 87–89; Kruszyński, *Akcja Kontynentalna w Skandynawii*, 86.

28 SPP, A.095, Józef Przybyszewski to Lt. Col. Piotrowski, Stockholm, 12/01/1944, 66; SPP, A.505, Piotrowski to Przybyszewski, London, 05/01/1944, 9.

of the Continental Action “must entail a dangerous multiplication and confusion of contacts”. Furthermore, he explained, drawing on long experience that covert practice, that “one cannot work with one apparatus on several different networks, because in this case there is a danger of some kind of a spill over, and in addition [...] compromising not only one’s own activity but also others.” This also applied to the opposite situation where “several apparatuses” shared only one network or the same group of people. Regretfully, the predictions would prove to be right.²⁹ In Denmark, the result was a wave of arrests in the first half of March 1944. They led to the simultaneous breakdown of both the courier service to Poland and the structures originating from the former ‘Felicia’ network. However, it should be noted, the cause of the tragedy was not limited to carelessness on behalf of Heinze. The parallel infiltration of the Polish underground structures for communication with London as well as the insufficient Polish ciphers were also responsible. The result was that the members of the network of the “Northern Route” of the Fourth Department and “Felicia” were the victims. The most tragic case was Elisabeth Grunnet, the wife of the Danish policeman, who died as a result of a brutal interrogation.³⁰

THE SECOND DEPARTMENT IN DENMARK

The special character in both the Polish Intelligence work and its remembrance is Second Lieutenant Lucjan Masłocha. He was a merchant navy officer who had been mobilised in 1939 as an infantry officer. In the summer of 1943, he found himself in Denmark after escaping from the Lübeck POW camp. He hid in the local Polish community in Denmark, and, probably in the second half of October 1943, he made his way to neutral Sweden. Merely a month later, after a brief training period, he was secretly transferred back to Denmark by the military intelligence service of the Second Department. At the end of 1943, he took up a position as “head of the intelligence centre on enemy territory” in Denmark. His work was organised with the support and help of Sokólski (“Klaus”). Masłocha integrated the former “Felicia” radio communication of Barbara Mogensen. However, these activities were carried out in opposition to the head of “Felicia”, Romana Heinze (“Sabina”). For her part, she broke off relations with “Klaus” and separated her activities from the Second Department, which she suspected of plotting a “hostile takeover”.³¹

Masłocha based his network on two pillars. On the one hand were the previous members of “Felicia” given to him by Sokólski and Henschel, and on the other hand

29 Nellemann, *For Danmarks frihed og Polens ære*, 106; Leonidas Kliszewicz, *Placówki wojskowej łączności kraju z centralą w Londynie*, Vol. 5 Baza w Sztokholmie, Warsaw/London 2000, 89.

30 Kruszewski, *Akcja Kontynentalna*, 86–87.

31 IPMS, A.9.VI.7-1, Gadomski to Heinze, London, 24/04/1944; *Ibid.*, Heinze to Gadomski, Malmö, 08/05/1944; IPMS, A.9.VI.7-2; Motion by Colonel Gano, head of Second Bureau, to posthumously decorate Lucjan Masłocha with the Order of Virtuti Militari [5th Class], [London], 1945; W.S. Wojciechowski, *Z dziejów polskiego ruchu oporu w Danii*, 89–90; E. Kruszewski, *Akcja Kontynentalna w Skandynawii 1940–1945*, 107.

were Danish contacts, established, among other lines, through the Polish-Danish family of his future wife, Anna Mogensen (“Lone”). In this context, the name of the Danish underground organisation “Holger Danske” appears often in Polish files.³² The people involved with Masłocha could also be classified as social intelligence, recruited from a broader societal basis of willing activists rather than intelligence professionals. This shows how professional intelligence can adapt to the requirements of war by adapting certain elements characteristic of social intelligence. Though he had a military background, Masłocha was not a traditional intelligence officer, and his personality and mode of action were more suited to the profile of a volunteer-conspirator. However, this does not mean that his commitment and natural intelligence talents were not noticed by his superiors. On the contrary, he was highly valued by Major Witold Szymaniak, then deputy head of the “SKN” station in Stockholm.³³

Masłocha has been portrayed as the last and key leader of the organization “Felicia”. He and his wife Anna Masłocha/Mogensen (“Lone”) became symbols of Polish underground work not least due to their dramatic deaths at the hands of Danish Nazis in early January of 1945. Their execution was only few days after their wedding, which gave the story an additional tragic and romantic dimension. An inaccurate version of events has often been uncritically repeated. In fact, Masłocha was never the leader of “Felicia”, since he acted as an officer of Second Department. “Felicia” itself, on the other hand, continued to operate under the direction of “Sabina” until the end of the German occupation.³⁴

After the death of the Masłocha, his network was for some time managed by a Danish engineer, Thøger Busk, who was replaced by Second Lieutenant Michał Lisiński (“Hansen”). Lisiński was himself an interesting character who, perhaps even better than Masłocha, fit into the pattern of “social intelligence”. He came from Czarny Dunajec, a rich village in Podhale mountain region in the south of Poland. He belonged to the local elite, working as a lawyer. He was considered extremely talented and intelligent. As a young man, he had been a declared communist, active in the illegal front youth organisation “Life”. He remained a radical leftist throughout his life. During the war, he was mobilised as a cadet officer of the Polish Army. While trying to travel to the Polish army in the West, he was imprisoned by the Germans in an internment camp in Yugoslavia. From there, he came to Norway as part of the Todt Organisation to work on the construction of the Atlantic Wall. In 1944, he managed to escape from there to Sweden, where he was recruited to work for the Second Department. After training, he was appointed to succeed the murdered Masłocha. Lisiński survived at this post until the end of the German oc-

32 Kruszewski, *Akcja Kontynentalna*, 96.

33 IPMS, B.3035, Witold Szymaniak, Polish affairs 30 years ago in Sweden, Stockholm, June 1974, 4–6, 12.

34 IPMS, A.9.VI.7-1, Gadomski to Heinze, London, 24/04/1944; *Ibid.*, Heinze to Gadomski, Malmö, 08/05/1944; IPMS, A.9.VI.7-2, Request of Col. Gano, for the posthumous decoration of [Lucjan Masłocha] with the Order of Virtuti Militari [V Class], London, 1945; Wojciechowski, *Z dziejów polskiego ruchu oporu w Danii*, 89–90; Kruszewski, *Akcja Kontynentalna w Skandynawii*, p. 107.

cupation; or to be more precise, he continued his involvement in intelligence after the war for the new communist regime along with his superior, Major Szymaniak.³⁵

THE END OF “FELICIA” AND CONCLUSIONS

The break-up of “Felicia” and the dramatic fate of its members who found themselves in German hands were undoubtedly a shock to Heinze (“Sabina”). However, this tragic situation allowed her finally to reorganise, or re-establish, the network in accordance with her own ideas and concepts. This led to a parting with the concept of social intelligence and the adoption of more properly professionalized standards of intelligence methods that relied on the work of paid agents recruited from among the Danes. Heinze believed that the Continental Action network in Denmark, as organised by Sokólski, was not able to provide the information expected by the Allies. From her perspective, this was on the one hand the result of the shortcomings of its leaders on the ground, and on the other of the “inability of our people to work in an appropriate way”. In other words, the low social status and level of education of the Polish minority in Denmark made them less useful in intelligence work.³⁶

A key element and main informant of her network was the Danish ‘journalist’ and right-wing publicist Sven Dalhoff-Nielson, who was supported by his son Peter who also had journalistic ambitions. He was almost certainly already a pre-war contact of the Polish legation. Father and son were required to produce, twice a month, “insightful political and economic reports from B [Denmark], also depicting detailed relations with the occupiers – only for our information, not for publication.” Both the informants were to focus “on the political backstage and relevant motives” and to avoid “official stands”. It is possible that Dalhoff-Nielsen was a man codenamed “Petersen” in “Sabrina’s” network of agents. According to the budget prepared by her, this key informant cost the considerable amount of 800 Swedish kroner per month. This amount, in addition to the fee of the interested party himself, included the costs of his “travels, films, maps” and the payment of a network of minor informants consisting of “4 people in the shipyard of 100 kroner each”.³⁷

The last task assigned to “Felicia” was what can be described as counterintelligence. As early as mid-April 1945, the head of Continental Action, Edward J. Tomaszewski (“Nawrot”), ordered “Sabina” to follow the “underground German organisations” that were being formed in Denmark, which could be described as a “non-party diversion”, in German “R-Netz” (Rückzug-Netz, or “stay behind network”). Just a month later, on 21 May 1945, “Nawrot” informed “Sabina” that the whole organisation was dissolved in connection with the end of the war in Europe and with

35 Ibid., 106–108; AIPN 0204/277, Denunciation [regarding the Lisiński family], source “Anna”, Nowy Targ, 17/12/1952, 63–64; Ibid., Statement of [Karol Walaszek] regarding Michał Lisiński, Warsaw, 20/05/1955, 220–223; Ibid., Characteristics of Michał Lisiński, 252–253.

36 IPMS, A.9.VI.7-1, Heinze to Thugutt?, Malmö, 16/11/1943.

37 Ibid., Felicia’s monthly budget in Malmö, London, 21/02/1944.

the dramatic change in Poland's situation. Ideas of establishing a new Polish special service on the basis of Continental Action eventually lost their validity in this situation.³⁸

The history of Continental Action shows the wartime dilemma of intelligence organisations. Similarly to the regular army, it needed to increase its recruiting to new milieus. For the intelligence community, this meant involving groups which had not played a significant role earlier, including women. Furthermore, in the first years of the war, the weaknesses of peacetime intelligence work carried out from station at diplomatic representations were highlighted. In Denmark, this sort of work became impossible and in Sweden it was closely controlled by the local counterintelligence service. This forced Polish services to rethink their concept and to apply methods of social intelligence.

However useful in the short run, social intelligence also had its challenges and limitations. The quality of operational safety of "professionals" was generally much higher than that of "Felicia" amateurs. As a result, in the final period of the war after 1943, a convergence of professional and social intelligence commenced. This was perfectly observable in two mutually interacting but separate Polish networks in Denmark. In the case of the "Felicia" organisation, which was staffed and directed by typical "amateurs" including a young woman at the very top, there was eventually an evolution towards more and more professionalism. At the same time, the Second Department of the General Staff increasingly opened up to the "new type" of people characteristic of social intelligence, such as Maslocha or Lisiński. Later, these people, if they managed to survive the war, cooperated for years in the activities of Polish intelligence in exile in cooperation with the British and Swedes. However, that is a completely different story.

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38 IPMS, A.9.VI.7-1, German intelligence in Denmark, [1945?] (memo in Danish, described in English); *Ibid.*, Tomaszewski to Heinze, London, 16/04/1945; NA, KV 2/3302/1, Interrogation of Oberleutnant Robert Sauber, I. H. Abwehrstelle Hamburg, Alsgades Skole, 30/10/1945, 7–51; H. Stevnsborg, *Politiet 1938–47, Bekæmpelsen af spionage, sabotage og nedbrydende virksomhed*, Copenhagen 1991, 425, 441, 447, 506, 509–510; Grabowski, *Wprowadzenie*, 16.

REFLECTIONS ON THE COLD WAR ENCOUNTERS

Jacek Tebinka

After the Second World War, Poland and Denmark found themselves in different geopolitical situations. Denmark (with the exception of the Island of Bornholm) was saved from Red Army liberation thanks to Field Marshal Montgomery's maneuver, which involved sending Canadian paratroopers at Prime Minister Winston Churchill's request to take over Wismar. The 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion had arrived in the city in early morning of 2 May 1945 and cut the Russians off from the Jutland Peninsula. Poland, following the liberation by the Red Army and decisions of the three victorious powers, found itself with shifted borders and firmly in the Soviet Union's sphere of influence.¹

On 7 July 1945, Denmark recognized the Provisional Government of National Unity in Poland, after the United Kingdom and United States had done so. The new Polish government, created under the aegis of the Western powers and the USSR, and dominated by the communists and their allies, was to conduct free elections to the parliament but failed to do so.²

During the postwar period of 1945–1948, the paths of democratic Denmark and Poland with its imposed communist government quickly parted with the growing tensions between the Western powers and the Soviet Union. However, even by 1948 when the Cold War had begun, humanitarian aid from Danish non-governmental organizations continued to be sent to war-torn Poland. It was possible for Polish children to travel to Denmark as part of a humanitarian mission. Bogusław Cygler, future professor at the University of Gdańsk, was sent to Denmark as a child by the Danish organization Save the Children (Red Baret or Ratujsce Dzieci). While there, he received his first leather shoes after the war. This demonstrates the difference in living standards between both countries at the time.³ The Stalinist era, 1949–1953 in Poland, was the most disconsolate period in Danish-Polish relations. In these years, Poland was directly subordinate to the Soviet Union. Denmark abandoned its long tradition of neutrality and signed the North Atlantic Treaty as a founding member in 1949. The Cold War was visible in the limitation of contacts in all fields, both official and private. Nevertheless, an agreement was reached: first pro-

- 1 Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. 6: *Triumph and Tragedy*, London 1954, 447–453; on Poland see: Andrzej Paczkowski, *The Spring Will Be Ours. Poland and the Poles from Occupation to Freedom*, London 2005, 138–154.
- 2 Arnold Kłonczyński, *Nawiązanie stosunków polsko-duńskich w 1945 r. w świetle polskich dokumentów*, in: Jan Szymański (ed.): *Polska-Dania w ciągu wieków*, Gdańsk 2004, 255–268.
- 3 Bogusław Cygler, *Wspomnienia z pobytu w Danii w 1948 r.*, in: Jan Szymański (ed.): *Polska-Dania w ciągu wieków*, Gdańsk 2004, 223–230.

tocol in 1949, and the second in 1953 regarding claims and compensation for nationalized Danish property in Communist Poland.⁴

Poland lacked a land border with the West. The nearest NATO territory was the Danish Island of Bornholm, 100 km north of the Polish coast. Because of its proximity to Polish territory, throughout the Cold War period the island often appeared in various Polish jokes as a place of escape to the Western World. Sometimes the reality exceeded the imaginary. This happened in March 1953 after the death of the Soviet dictator. First, on 5 March, Lt. Franciszek Jarecki, a MiG-15bis pilot, escaped and landed on Bornholm. Another pilot, Lt. Zdzisław Jaźwiński, was successful in flying his MiG-15bis to Bornholm on 20 May. For the American and British intelligence services, this was an excellent opportunity to familiarize themselves with the design of this Soviet fighter – with the reluctant consent of the Danish authorities.⁵

IMPROVING RELATIONS

The de-Stalinization policy in Poland, which began in 1955, led to the election of Władysław Gomułka as the new leader of the communist party in October 1956, despite Moscow's opposition. The Western answer to political changes in Warsaw came at the meeting of the NATO council of ministers on 11 december 1956. The British foreign secretary, Selwyn Lloyd, announced at this session that after the failure of the Hungarian revolution, in case of another uprising in Eastern Europe, NATO military intervention should be ruled out. Lloyd said that "In the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, the best hope for Europe lies in the policy of gradual changes on the model of the Polish way." Denmark also joined in this Anglo-American policy of discreetly encouraging satellite countries to manifest independence from the Soviet Union through developing economic and cultural contacts with Western countries. From 1962 onwards, this became the policy of all of NATO. The Western powers saw Poland as the most liberal Soviet satellite, despite consecutive examples of Gomułka's dogmatism, a leader who basically wanted to stabilize the communist regime, not to reform it. The West, including Denmark, intended to develop contacts with Poland to encourage Gomułka to maintain as much independence from the Soviet Union as possible, while simultaneously trying to avoid provoking violent reactions from the Kremlin to this policy.⁶

The political changes of October 1956 or simply October '56 were an important turning point in the history of post war Danish-Polish relations. Until August 1968 they kept improving, even though they were occasionally hampered by internatio-

4 Stosunki dyplomatyczne Polski 1944–1981 r., in: Informator vol. 2.1, Warsaw 1986, 149.

5 Magda Gawinecka-Woźniak, Polska-Dania. Stosunki dwustronne w latach 1945–1968, Toruń 2015, 130–142; The National Archives, Kew (further: TNA), CAB 128/26, CC (53) 18th Conclusions, 10 III 1953; Dick van der Aart: The secret MiGs of Bornholm. The covert intelligence operation to examine the first Soviet MiG-15 fighter in the West, Netherlands 2016.

6 Jacek Tebinka, Policy of Great Britain towards Poland between 1956–1970, in: Acta Poloniae Historica vol. 93, Warsaw 2006, 148–151.

nal crises between the East and the West. Although Polish diplomacy officially supported the policy of Soviet leaders Nikita Khrushchev and Leonid Brezhnev, as from October '56 onwards they tried to develop political, economic, and cultural contacts with Denmark. This was part of a broader effort to reduce tensions in Europe on the East-West line. This policy was promoted by Copenhagen's desire to convince Warsaw that the NATO had no aggressive intentions towards the countries of the Soviet bloc. Still, Gomułka's declaration regarding the neutrality of the Baltic Sea, announced in June 1957, was encountered with skepticism in Copenhagen because it was considered "unrealistic". The Danish government reacted with caution to the proposals which threatened to weaken the military potential of their country and infringe upon cooperation with the US and West Germany. On the one hand, Denmark did opt out of certain Western policies, for instance, the country did not accept atomic warheads on their territory during peacetime – or "in the current situation" which was the official terminology. On the other hand, the Danes did not intend to take part in regional cooperation initiatives in the Baltic Sea region if they threatened Denmark's ties with the NATO.⁷

Despite the improvement in Polish-Danish relations since 1956 compared to relations during the Stalinist era, communist diplomacy was disappointed by failed attempts to weaken Denmark's links to West Germany. The Polish effort was marked with the elevation of diplomatic representation to the level of embassy on 15 August 1957. Poland immediately appointed Stanisław Wincenty Dobrowolski as ambassador, a prewar socialist and regional head of The Council to Aid Jews (*Żegota*) during the Second World War.⁸ Denmark was much slower and did not send an ambassador to Warsaw until February 1960. A sign of the development of contacts was the jump in Polish-Danish trade from 68 million zloty up to over 100 million in 1958.⁹ Yet, the Polish trade surplus decreased from 24 million zlotys to 7.4 million. The imbalance was, as in the interwar years, produced by the traditional export of coal to Denmark. It was the largest importer among the capitalist partners of Poland.¹⁰

An important element of Polish foreign policy in the years 1957–1958 was the so-called Rapacki plan. The concept put forward, with the consent of Moscow, by the Polish minister of foreign affairs, Adam Rapacki, included a proposal to create a nuclear-free zone in Central Europe on the territory of both German states, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. After Washington's formal rejection of the Polish note on Rapacki's plan on 3 May 1958, no country except Denmark raised the issue of

7 AAN, KC PZPR, XI / 500, notatka z 29 VII 1957; Henry Andreasen, *Stosunki polsko-duńskie 1953–1968*, in: Krzysztofa Ruchniewicza, Bożeny Szanyok, Jakuba Tyszkiewicza (eds.): *Wrocławskie Studia z Polityki Zagranicznej* vol. 2, Toruń 2005, 44–45; Jonathan Søborg Agger, Lasse Wolsgaard, *All Steps Necessary. Danish Nuclear Policy, 1949–1960*, in: *Contemporary European History* 15/1, 2006, 83–84.

8 Dobrowolski was commemorated as righteous among the Nations by Yad Vashem in 1979, see: Natalia Aleksyiun, *Historia Stanisława Wincentego Dobrowolskiego*, <https://sprawiedliwi.org.pl/historie-pomocy/historia-pomocy-dobrowolski-stanislaw-wincenty> (accessed 11 Aug 2022).

9 Złoty dewizowy was an artificial currency used in Communist Poland. 1\$ = 4 złoty till 1971.

10 Andreasen, *Stosunki polsko-duńskie 1953–1968*, 53; See also in this book: Paweł Jaworski, "Episodic neighbourhood? Polish-Danish relations 1918–1939", 33–45.

disengagement at the NATO ministerial session in Copenhagen on 5–7 May. In this situation, it was not surprising that the members of NATO, including Denmark, declined to participate in the initiative.¹¹

Copenhagen was one of the capitals where the behavior of communist diplomats was closely observed by their Western colleagues with the aim of spotting the differences between the satellite countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Another reason was the small possibility of selecting suitable candidates for an espionage recruitment attempt or encouraging them to defect if they had valuable information. In 1959, the behavior of the diplomats of the Polish People's Republic confirmed certain differences when compared to representatives of other Soviet bloc countries. They evidently had greater freedom to establish contacts with Western diplomats and at official receptions, Poles talked quite freely, unlike the diplomats of the Soviet Union and other satellites, who usually preferred their own group.¹²

The cultivation of good relations with Denmark did not hinder Polish intelligence in their attempts to recruit diplomats of this state as agents, as demonstrated by case of Einar Blechingberg. In 1959, the Danish diplomat was found guilty of handing over 11 documents to Poland's intelligence service during his time as counselor at the embassy in Bonn. In fact, Blechingberg, aka "Filip", collaborated much more than this. He was sentenced to eight years in prison. This case, however, did not adversely affect the further development of mutual relations. In May 1959, an exchange of naval visits took place for the first time between communist Poland and Denmark.¹³

The invitation of the Danish minister of foreign affairs, social democrat politician Jens Otto Krag, to visit Poland coincided with the outbreak of the second Berlin crisis. Thus, he delayed his trip to Warsaw and finally visited Poland between 8 and 13 September 1959. He was the first foreign minister of a country belonging to NATO, to officially visit the Soviet satellite country. Krag was received by Prime Minister Józef Cyrankiewicz and visited the former Nazi German concentration camp Auschwitz. The same place would be avoided for visits in the next decade by some of his western colleagues so as not to give the impression that they supported the anti-West German propaganda of Polish authorities.¹⁴

Krag conducted conversations with Rapacki, who described the "German issue as the most important" in Polish foreign policy. While warning against West German territorial revisionism, the Polish minister said that unification of Germany would only be possible in the atmosphere of international détente. Krag appreciated

11 Piotr Wandycz, Adam Rapacki and the Search for European Security, in: Gordon A. Craig, Francis L. Loewenheim (eds.), *The Diplomats 1939–1979*, Princeton 1994, 289–317.

12 TNA, FO 371/142800, ND 10335/3, R. Barclay to T. Brimelow 13 V 1959.

13 Danmark under den kolde krig. Den sikkerhedspolitiske situation 1945–1991 vol. 1, Copenhagen 2005, 466–469; Gawinecka-Woźniak, *Polska-Dania*, 166–169; Przemysław Gasztold, "Polish Military Intelligence in Denmark in the 1950s and 1960s", 131–144.

14 Andreasen, *Stosunki polsko-duńskie 1953–1968*, 48–49; Poul Villaume, *Anticipating Détente. Denmark, NATO, and the struggle an all-European conference in Long 1970s*, in: Poul Villaume, Rasmus Mariager, Helle Porsdam (eds.), *The "Long 1970s". Human Right, East-West détente, and Transnational Relations*, London 2016, 125–141, here 127.

the “constructive contribution of Poland” in the improvement of East-West relations, but he did not intend to break NATO’s solidarity with West Germany. Rapacki pointed out to the Danish guest the threat posed by German policy in the matter of the Polish western border and the atomic ambitions of Bonn. Krag downplayed Warsaw’s fears, recalling the regulation of the German-Danish border dispute as if it were a matter comparable to the revisionist policy of the West Germany concerning one third of Poland’s territory. Both ministers agreed on the need to avoid provocative military maneuvers in the Baltic Sea.¹⁵

In discussion of bilateral relations, a consensus existed to develop both economic and cultural exchange. Moreover, Krag expressed readiness to consider the issue of concluding a cultural agreement proposed by Polish diplomats. However, the Danish minister refused to include any mention of the Rapacki plan in the final communiqué, fearing that it could be used in the Polish People’s Republic’s diplomacy for propaganda purposes. The Danish delegation also got the impression that the Poles wanted to announce the visit as a success, therefore they did not criticize the views expressed in public by Krag on the peaceful intentions of the Western alliance. In the final communiqué both ministers announced the preparation of air transport and cultural cooperation agreements.¹⁶

Krag regarded the visit to Poland as a success and a report on the talks with Poles was passed on to NATO allies. After the visit, the Polish Foreign Ministry was less satisfied because officials were aware that Krag’s visit did not create any greater hope of convergence of views on issues of international policy dividing the two power blocs. Ambassador Dobrowolski described it as an unrealistic goal of Soviet policy to “detach” Denmark and Norway from NATO. Nevertheless, Warsaw received the promise of Danish support for the membership of the Polish People’s Republic in the UN Security Council.¹⁷

Regardless of the reluctance of the Danish foreign minister to support the disarmament initiatives of Polish diplomacy, Krag’s visit opened the way for the development of political contacts between the two countries in the next decade. Rapacki visited Denmark from 7–12 June 1960, less than a month after the four great powers’ leaders failed to negotiate an end to the Berlin crisis at a meeting in Paris.

Two months earlier, ambassador Dobrowolski had asked Warsaw to send food products, excepting Polish vodka, for a reception on the minister’s arrival, referring to his embassy a “poor institution” which could not afford to import the necessary products. Despite these problems, Rapacki’s visit turned out to be a success, especially in the aspect of bilateral relations. He was received by King Frederik IX, as well as Prime Minister Viggo Kampmann. Rapacki delivered a lecture at the invitation of the Danish students’ association on the foreign policy of the Polish People’s

15 Archiwum Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych RP, Warszawa (further: AMSZ), z. 8, w. 77, t. 1080, notatki z rozmów Rapackiego z Kragiem 8 i 9 X 1958.

16 Andreassen, *Stosunki polsko-duńskie 1953–1968*, 48–49; AMSZ, z. 8, w. 77, t. 1080, notatki z rozmów Rapackiego z Kragiem 8 i 9 X 1958; “Zbiór Dokumentów”, 1960, nr 6, 1016–1018.

17 AMSZ, z. 8, w. 77, t. 1080, notatka S. W. Dobrowolskiego z 13 VIII 1959; Piotr Długołęcki (ed.), *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne* (further: PDD) 1959, Warsaw 2011, Ocena duńskiego Min.S.Z. Kraga 18 IX 1959.

Republic. During the visit, an agreement on cultural cooperation was signed on 8 June. In the following decades, every few years Denmark and Poland would negotiate an implementing protocol based on this agreement.¹⁸

Rapacki tried to avoid troublesome topics, though he did not fail to mention the importance of the German problem in Poland's security and to condemn West German revanchism. He criticized the US statement on U-2 flights. However, he avoided calling this espionage. In a joint communiqué, Krag and Rapacki expressed sorrow at the collapse of the meeting of four powers at the Paris summit and their hope that further talks would take place. The head of Polish diplomacy was satisfied with the visit, both in terms of propaganda and in terms of bilateral relations. He was disappointed only by Krag's cautious stance on the German question. Rapacki immediately informed the Soviet Embassy about the talks, which positively assessed his visit. He also met with the ambassador of the People's Republic of China but limited the coverage of these talks to matters of interest to Beijing.¹⁹

During Rapacki's visit in Denmark, the country was a member of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). Its founders, apart from Denmark, were Britain, Sweden, Norway, Austria, Switzerland, and Portugal. EFTA had less ambitious integration plans than the European Communities. The latter organization was the subject of Gomułka's concern, especially since West Germany was a founding member. Polish diplomacy was afraid that the participation of Denmark in EFTA would give this country a privileged position regarding access to the British bacon market. This threat, though it was downplayed by the Foreign Office in talks with the Poles, proved to be real, because, in exchange for access of British industrial products to the Danish market, London had agreed to abolish customs duty on Danish bacon and canned ham on 1 July 1961. However, Danish membership of EFTA did not prevent an intensifying of Polish-Danish political contacts in the 1960s, including prime ministers' visits.²⁰

THE DÉTENTE YEARS

The first serious crisis in Danish-Polish political relations was caused by the participation of communist Poland in the invasion of Warsaw Pact member Czechoslovakia on 21 August 1968 with the aim of crushing the Prague Spring. Political dialogue with communist states whose troops participated in this military intervention was broken off by NATO. Still, the Danish foreign minister, Povel Hartling, saw "no

- 18 AMSZ, z. 8, w. 80, t. 1124, S.W. Dobrowolski to Majchrak 12 IV 1960. Rapacki received from his office 150% of the allowances for a trip to Copenhagen with no limit for hotel accommodation. The minister was protected by six Danish policemen who received albums and bottles of vodka from him.
- 19 AMSZ, z. 8, w. 80, t. 1124, protokół z rozmowy Rapackiego z Kragiem 8 VI 1960; Rapacki do Winiewicz 10 VI 1960; TNA, FO 371/151429, ND 10335/3, Selby to Lloyd 15 VI 1960.
- 20 TNA, FO 371/143224, NP 1051/38, Brimelow's minute 23 X 1959. Prime Minister Krag visited Poland 3–7 I 1967. Polish Prime Minister Józef Cyrankiewicz paid visit to Denmark 10–13 VI 1968 meeting with new Danish Prime Minister Hilmar Baunsgaard from Social Liberal Party.

alternative to the continuation of détente”.²¹ The crisis led to a suspension of political contacts on the ministerial level with the Western countries for almost a year. Yet, the NATO countries were determined not to break trade relations with Poland. In the case of Polish-Danish relations, political visits at the ministerial level were resumed in March 1970.²²

The decade of détente in East-West relations brought about a further improvement in Polish-Danish relations. For Poland, the most remarkable change was the political dialogue with West Germany in 1970. Poland's agreement with West Germany on the normalization of relations in December 1970 removed the problem of the Polish Western frontier and the anti-German rhetoric from relations with Denmark. There was also one historical aspect related to Denmark in the Polish-German negotiations. Chief West German negotiator was Georg Ferdinand Duckwitz, a diplomat who helped to save Danish Jews in 1943 by warning Danes about impending deportation. The treaty of Warsaw led to both an increased détente and development of bilateral relations. However, this did not mean a sudden acceleration of Polish-Danish contacts. The first meeting of foreign ministers in the 1970s took place in April 1972, when the social democrat, Knud Børge Andersen, visited Poland.²³

The 1970s were period of concordial relationships between Warsaw and Copenhagen characterized by the process of “building bridges” and by top-level visits. Poland was Denmark's largest trading partner among the countries of the Soviet Bloc. Even Denmark's gaining membership in the EEC in 1973 did not stop the positive development of trade. Yet, accession of Denmark to the EEC caused concern in Warsaw, mainly because this strengthened the western alliance. Denmark, as a bacon producer, was one of Poland's rivals in the British market, and Danish bacon was gradually replacing Polish bacon. From 1973 onwards, there was also a change in the decision-making process in Danish foreign policy. Copenhagen had to come to many decisions within the European Nine. This became evident, for instance in the discussion of human rights in the CSCE process.²⁴

Not all issues in Polish-Danish relations were solved in the détente era, for instance, the dispute over the issue of the delimitation of territorial waters between Bornholm and the Polish coast (the so-called “gray zone”). The negotiations started in 1972 but did not come to an agreement. It was not until 19 November 2018 that an agreement was reached between the Republic of Poland and the Kingdom of Denmark, when Poland gave Denmark 80% of the disputed area. It was the longest-lasting dispute over maritime borders in the Baltic Sea.²⁵

- 21 Thomas Wegener Friis: Dänemark – NATO-Horchposten zur Ostsee, in: Peter Ruggenthaler, Stefan Karner, Nata Tomlina, Alexander Tschbarjan, Günter Bischof, Viktor Ischenko, Michail Prozumenskikov Oldrich Tuma, Manfred Wilke (eds.), Prager Frühling. Das Internationale Krisenjahr 1968, Wien 2008, 617–631, here 621.
- 22 Włodzimierz Borodziej (ed.), PDD 1972, Warsaw 2005, 203–204.
- 23 Piotr M. Majewski (ed.), PDD 1973, Warsaw 2006, 209.
- 24 Which has been described well by Paweł Jaworski in: Wanda Jarząbek, Paweł Jaworski, Jacek Tebinka, Jakub Tyszkiewicz (eds.), Prawa człowieka w polityce demokracji zachodnich wobec Polski w latach 1975–1981, Warsaw 2018, 253–277; Majewski, PDD 1973, 210.d.
- 25 Tomasz Górski, Delimitacja obszarów morskich między Polską i Danią, in: Prawo Morskie vol. 21 (2005), 75–87.

The détente also did not solve the fundamental issues of the Cold War or put an end to active war planning in the Baltic Sea area. During the Cold War, ordinary Poles and Danes did not know much about the military plans of the Warsaw Pact, which contained the idea of “liberation” of the Jutland Peninsula by the Polish Army.²⁶ In the event of an armed conflict with NATO, the Polish Army was supposed to lead the front operation along the Baltic Sea. It was predicted that Polish units would conquer Denmark, northern Germany and northern Holland within 10–15 days. The military planners in Moscow and Warsaw completely ignored the fact that Poles held positive perceptions of Denmark and Danes.²⁷

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

Danish diplomats were surprised by the wave of strikes in Poland in July and August of 1980, which led to an agreement between the communist government and the workers to allow the establishment of the Solidarity Free Trade Union.²⁸ The fear of provoking the Kremlin with open support for the Solidarity Revolution and political changes in Poland was characteristic of Danish and Western policy until 13 December 1981. Copenhagen repeated that Polish matters should be resolved by Poles themselves without the interference of external forces. Denmark, like Western European countries, feared that a crisis in Europe, started by the sudden decomposition of the communist system in Poland, could lead to the military intervention of the Warsaw Pact countries and uncontrolled mass migration from Eastern Europe.²⁹

A goal of both countries throughout the Cold War was to reduce the threat of nuclear confrontation. From 1956 onwards, Scandinavia became one of those places where Polish diplomacy sought support in this question, both among the neutral countries Sweden and Finland, and NATO members: Denmark and Norway. The martial law in Poland in December 1981 significantly hindered the further pursuit of this policy. Denmark participated in the NATO and European Communities policies towards communist Poland which demanded the release of political prisoners and the re-establishment of a dialogue with both Solidarity and the Church. However, Denmark as a “bridge building” nation did not play a prominent role in the sanctions policy. The resumption of contacts and normalization took place in 1987, when the communist regime in Poland started slow political reforms and found itself on the way to decomposition.³⁰

26 See also in this book: Dieter H. Kollmer, Władysław Bułhak, Thomas Wegener Friis, “Poles, Danes, Soviets, and Germans. Cold War frontlines in the Baltic Sea.”, 115–129.

27 Jerzy Kajetanowicz, *Wojsko Polskie w systemie bezpieczeństwa państwa 1945–2010*, Częstochowa 2013, 27–29; 45–48.

28 See also in this book: Thomas Wegener Friis, Władysław Bułhak, “Denmark and Solidarność”, 161–175.

29 Piotr Długołęcki (ed.), *PDD 1980 lipiec – grudzień*, Warsaw 2020, 915–917; Piotr Długołęcki (ed.), *PDD 1981 styczeń – czerwiec*, Warsaw 2021, 287–288; 392–394.

30 Paweł Ceranka, *Reakcje państw zachodnich na wprowadzenie stanu wojennego w Polsce*, in: *Sprawy Międzynarodowe*, nr 1 (2009), 105–112; Declaration. on Events in Poland, 11 I 1982,

The role of Communist Poland was sometimes paradoxically much stronger in the Soviet bloc than democratic Denmark's role in NATO. On one hand, Warsaw used this position to suggest to Moscow in 1968 to invade Czechoslovakia, but on the other, it, with Romania, had earlier prevented the expansion of the Warsaw Pact into Asia. Edward Gierek, Gomułka's successor as a communist leader in Poland (1970–1980), unsuccessfully tried in 1980 to mediate by inviting French President Giscard d'Estaing and Brezhnev to Warsaw after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

The Danish historian Henry Andreasen very adequately described the role of the two countries in the Cold War: "Denmark and Poland in both blocks were peripheral countries, but at the same time they were at the forefront of a possible political and/or military conflict in Europe".³¹ Poland occupied a key place in the Warsaw Pact as was demonstrated by the events of 1989. However, as the Cuban crisis showed in 1962, the faith of Poland and Denmark as both small and medium players, regardless of whether they were democracies or dictatorships, depended on the wisdom of leaders in Moscow and Washington respectively. When it was necessary to make immediate decisions, both superpowers did not have time to consult the allies.

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<http://www.nato.int> (accessed 01 July 2022); Press Release Council of European Communities 26 I 1982, <http://aei.pitt.edu/4450/> (accessed 1 July 2022).

31 Andreasen, *Stosunki polsko-duńskie 1953–1968*, 41.

POLES, DANES, SOVIETS, AND GERMANS Cold War Frontlines in the Baltic Sea

Dieter H. Kollmer / Władysław Bulhak / Thomas Wegener Friis

Military planning during the Cold War created a unique chapter in Danish-Polish relations. Historically, Poland and Denmark rarely found themselves on opposing sides in times of war.¹ The division of Europe after the Second World War, and the foundation of the so-called Polish People's Republic (PRL) abruptly changed this centuries-old status quo. By 1949, Denmark had already sought refuge in NATO, and in 1955, communist Poland helped to launch the Warsaw Pact. Establishing these two antagonistic systems created a potential frontline across Northern Europe from Brunsbüttel in the West, past Hamburg along the Inner-German border, and across the Baltic Sea up to Bornholm (around about 500 Kilometers). In case of a conflict, Danish and West German troops would have faced Polish, East German, and Soviet adversaries. Denmark was at risk of becoming a battlefield in the initial phase of a war, and the Polish armed forces were to play a key role in both the preparation and the execution of this plan.² This article examines the common history and ideas behind the Polish and Danish/West German plans to either invade or defend the territory between the Baltic and North Sea.

Denmark and the adherent German province of Schleswig-Holstein were considered to be of great importance to Eastern and Western military planners. In 1972, the commander-in-chief of the Warsaw Pact, Marshal Ivan Yakubovsky, recognized that the possession of the Baltic Approaches was one of the most important operations to the outcome of the war in the Central European Theatre.³ Accordingly, his NATO counterpart US-General Bernhard Rogers, Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR, 1979–1987), specified from the Western perspective a few years later:

Denmark, with its geostrategic position overlooking the Baltic approaches, links the Northern and Central Region of the Allied Command Europe (ACE), it forms a barrier across the axes along which Warsaw Pact (WP) naval and air power could be projected toward the United Kingdom, South Norway, the Northern Sea flank of the central region, and the sea lines of communications (SLOCs) in the North Sea. Denmark has the potential to control WP access to its maritime support facilities in the Baltic. Additionally, Bornholm provides a unique intelligence and early warning facility for the alliance.⁴

- 1 Knud J. V. Jespsen, Ole F. Frantzen, Michael H. Clemmesen, Gunnar Lind, Kurt Villads Jensen, Thomas Wegener Friis, *Danmarks Krigshistorie 700–2010*, Copenhagen 2010.
- 2 See: Zbigniew Moszumański, *Die Polnische Küstenfront auf dem westlichen Kriegsschauplatz*, in: Rüdiger Wenzke (ed.): *Die Streitkräfte der DDR und Polens in der Operatiionsplannug des Warschauer Paktes*, Potsdam 2010, 71–83.
- 3 Carl Axel Gemzell, *DDR och Norden – den militära dimensionen*, in: Andreas Linderoth, Thomas Wegener Friis (eds.): *DDR & Norden*, Odense 2005, 79–112, here 86.
- 4 NATO-Archive, DPC-D(86)10, *NATO Defence Planning 1981–1988. Overall appreciation*, 24.1.1986, p. 15–16.

POLAND AND THE COASTAL FRONT

In the first decade of the Cold War, the operation against Denmark and Northern Germany was largely a Soviet campaign. Soviet armed forces dominated the territory of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and had a substantial number of troops stationed in the Polish People's Republic. The strongest and largest contingent of Soviet forces was their first echelon in East Germany, the so-called "Group of Soviet Armed Forces in Germany" (Группа советских войск в Германии, GSVG). Facing Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein were the GSVG divisions in the northern GDR districts of Rostock, Schwerin, and Neubrandenburg, in particular the 2nd Guards' Tank Army (2-я гвардейская танковая армия) in Schwerin, Neustrelitz, and Perleberg. Following the foundation of the GDR in 1949, East German paramilitary and military units of the so-called Barracked People's Police (Kasernierte Volkspolizei, KVP) were established to support the GSVD.⁵

In the early years of military development in the GDR, the island of Rügen played a prominent role. This quite large island in the Baltic Sea was chosen to house secret military structures because of its strategically favourable location. After the official founding of the East German army, the National People's Army (Nationale Volksarmee, NVA), in 1956, the island's coastal site Prora was particularly significant as a base for the 8th Motorized Rifle Division (Motorisierte Schützendivision, MSD), although its headquarters were in Schwerin. More than 10,000 soldiers constantly lived and trained on the island. In addition to units of land forces, port facilities for the so-called People's Navy (Volksmarine) and Warsaw Pact logistics were constructed in Mukran and Dranske/Bug.⁶

When planning for the event of a war, the Warsaw Pact always assumed an attack by the "Imperialist West", since their Marxist-Leninist world view supposed by definition that NATO states wanted to achieve world domination aggressively. Consequently, a preventive attack on the territory of the Western alliance would have been a "just war" in their own perception. From the early 1960's onwards, the Warsaw Pact's "answer" followed this logic and remained stable for decades to come. Upon an alleged NATO assault, the 8th MSD of the NVA together with the 94th Guards MSD of the GSVD would have attacked Schleswig-Holstein, paving the way for the so-called Polish or Coastal Front. Within two days after the beginning of a war, Polish forces planned to arrive at the theatre of war (TOW). The detailed planning left little consideration for the population in the areas to be occupied. Including Hamburg, there were almost six million civilians on the Jutland Peninsula. A recent analysis has shown that the movement of fleeing civilians away

5 Torsten Diedrich Rüdiger Wenzke, *Die getarnte Armee – Geschichte der Kasernierten Volkspolizei 1952–1956*, Berlin 2001; Olaf Kersten, Hans-Georg Löffler, Reinhard Parchmann, Siegfried Stoof, *Garnisonen der NVA und GSTD. Zur Nutzung der Militärischen Standorte von 1871 bis 2010*, Berlin 2011, 75.

6 Rüdiger Wenzke, *Militärische Kräfte und Standorte der NVA im Norden der DDR: Bedeutung und Kalkül für den Kriegsfall*, in: Aaron Jessen, Elmar Moldenhauer, Karsten Biermann (eds.), *Grenzen überwinden. Schleswig-Holstein, Dänemark und die DDR*, Husum 2016, 91–110, here 95.

from the combat probably would have clogged the roads in such a way that a rapid advance would have been made impossible.⁷

The way the armed forces of the Polish People's Republic approached the operational Coastal Front Planning was long and complicated. From 1945 to 1950, the Polish so-called "democratic" Army was rebuilt. Initially, it consisted of a colourful mixture of people with quite different backgrounds, experiences, and military competencies. Hence, the Army did not develop a coherent plan for drawing up its tasks and objectives in the event of a war. In these years, strategic and operational planning was a prerogative of the dominating Soviet big brother. This overall situation was the result of various factors stemming from the fact that the country was left in a complicated social, geopolitical, and economic situation after the Second World War. Thus, the new Polish armed forces generally lacked funding and planning capabilities. Moreover, the Soviet side had little respect for their Polish allies and therefore envisaged them as only taking a supporting role. However, the main reason for the difficulties in developing an adequate war plan was the fundamental divergence between the goals of responsible politicians and the military in Poland and in the Soviet Union. The Poles wanted to plan a defence along the border at the Oder and Lusatian Neisse rivers, the leading industrial centres, as well as of the long Baltic Sea coast against a feared new German menace. In contrast, the Red Army's preferred war scenario was a great offensive aimed at occupying Western Europe.⁸

From 1949 until 1956, Soviet officers and military "advisors" led by the marshal of Poland and the Soviet Union, Konstantin Rokossovsky, who was also then Polish minister of defence and deputy prime minister, directly took over the command of the Polish armed forces and obtained the control of all decisions concerning Polish military planning and budgetary spending.⁹ A side effect of this humiliating situation was the partial disclosure of the tasks envisaged for Polish military units in the Soviet Union's general plan for an offensive against the West. In May 1950, field communication and staff exercises took place during which, for the first time, the Soviet plot for the wartime mission of the Polish Army was practiced. During this exercise practically all important elements, even if only in a slimmed down form, were implemented and later exploited in subsequent plans for the Polish Army in the Western Theatre of War.¹⁰

7 Siegfried Lautsch, *Kriegsschauplatz Deutschland. Erfahrungen und Erkenntnisse eines NVA-Offiziers*, Potsdam 2013, 135.

8 Władysław Bułhak, *Polnische Kriegsplanung im Baltikum während des Kalten Krieges, 1961–1991*, in: Stefan Creuzberger, Thomas Wegener Friis (eds.), *Mecklenburg-Vorpommern im Kalten Krieg*, Rostock 2023 (forthcoming); Jerzy Kajetanowicz, *Wojsko Polskie w koncepcjach bezpieczeństwa militarnego państwa w latach 1945–1989*, in: *Przegląd Historyczno-Wojkowy* 14/65 2/244 (2013), 73–78.

9 See e.g.: Edward J. Nalepa, *Oficerowie Armii Radzieckiej w Wojsku Polskim 1943–1968*, Warsaw 1995; Mariusz L. Krogulski, *Okupacja w imię sojuszu. Armia Radziecka w Polsce w 1944–1956*, Warsaw 2000.

10 Paweł Piotrowski, *Front Polski – próba wyjaśnienia zagadnienia*, in: *Wrocławskie Studia z Historii Najnowszej* 6 (1999), 223–224.

In a nutshell, the Soviet Union planned to create a separate Coastal Front with two Polish land armies and one air force division composed of the best units of the Pomeranian and Silesian military districts. The third army mobilised in the Warsaw Military District would constitute the reserve for the Front. According to the practised plan, these troops were to first repel (within a few days) an enemy landing in the vicinity of Kołobrzeg (the former German Kolberg) and then to counterattack towards Hamburg and the Kiel-Canal from the Schwerin-Wismar area in Soviet-controlled East Germany. In addition, one division of the Front was tasked with seizing the island of Bornholm while supported by the Soviet Baltic Fleet. The planned average advance rate was about 20 km per day, consequently assuming that Coastal Front divisions would reach the German-Danish border within 7–8 days. In the second phase of the operation, the same Front was meant to capture the Jutland peninsula and the Danish islands, including the capital Copenhagen, within 11 days. In Soviet terms, the main objective of this campaign was “the liberation of Denmark”.¹¹

It remains uncertain whether this plan became the primary basis for Soviet planning regarding the use of Polish units in a possible armed conflict in Europe from 1950–1956. Alternatively, the Polish armed forces could have been integrated into the larger Central Front. It would have been commanded by the same Marshal Rokossovsky and included all Soviet troops stationed in Poland and East Germany. This scenario did not exclude a situation where Polish armies operated on the northern flank of the larger front and focused on seizing Denmark. However, this would have created logistical problems for the Polish units. Therefore, it was not the most likely variant of Soviet military plans.¹²

At the end of 1956, due to a political crisis in Poland, the leadership of the communist party changed. Without consultation with Moscow, this shift brought the alleged reform communist Władysław Gomułka to power and almost resulted in an armed Soviet intervention. Soviet officers, including Marshal Rokossovsky, were forced to leave the country, taking with them essential documentation related to higher-level military planning. Consequently, from that moment on the Soviet General Staff in Moscow did not fully trust their Polish ally, not only in political matters but also regarding purely military issues. At the time, the high echelons of the Polish army did indeed lack competence in operational planning. Furthermore, they had only a limited understanding of the thrust of Soviet planning. The staff exercises conducted in 1959, which were unmistakably defensive, revealed this.¹³

The new Polish government did not intend to leave the military structures of the Warsaw Pact, such as with France in NATO. On the contrary, as proof of the country's sovereignty and relevance within the Eastern Bloc, Gomułka and his generals insisted on active participation in joint operations against the West in the frontline

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

13 Jarosław Pałka, *The Third World War as Envisaged by Polish Generals at the Turn of the 1950s and the 1960s*, in: *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 124/1 (2017), 113–116; Jacek Jędrzyński, *Początki i założenia studiów operacyjnych Zachodniego Teatru Działań Wojennych w Siłach Zbrojnych PRL*, in: *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość* 2/34 (2019) 433.

of attacking troops. However, it was important for the Polish leadership to establish a separate Polish Front, commanded by Polish officers. With great reluctance, the Soviet side eventually agreed to Polish demands. The next major Polish staff exercise, code-named “Burza” (Tempest), was organised in October 1961. It was based on assumptions related to the future operational plan of the Polish Front (code-named “OP-61”). In this exercise scenario, the advance rate of Polish troops in the counter-offensive phase increased to an impressive 100 km per day. This exceptional increase was justified by the massive use of operational and tactical rockets along with nuclear warheads. In later years, this development was also referred to as the beginning of the “rocketisation” phase in the history of the Polish Army.¹⁴

In this context, several detailed plans were made by the Warsaw Pact for using the Polish Front, which later was renamed the Coastal Front.¹⁵ The basic tenets of all these plans were derived from the Soviet projections of an overall offensive war strategy in Europe, including the massive use of nuclear weapons. The acceleration of this development had been made necessary by two successive major international crises: the Berlin crisis and the Cuban crisis. The first of these significant operational plans dates back to June of 1961, when the Polish side finally received the relevant directives from the commander-in-chief of the United Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact countries, Marshall Andrei Grechko, which later evolved into the above-mentioned “OP-61” plan.¹⁶

The most important premises of the OP-plan arising from these directives were the following:

“1) The Operational Forces of the Polish People’s Republic constitute a higher operational formation named ‘Polish Front’, forming part of the United Armed Forces operating in the Western European Theatre of War.

2) The Polish Front is operating in the northern, coastal operational direction with the task of breaking up the north wing of the NATO coalition pact forces in Europe, capturing the northern part of the FRG, the Jutland peninsula and the Danish islands and Dutch territory to create the conditions for the United Baltic Fleet to sail out into the North Sea and east Denmark and the Netherlands outside the pale of the war.

- 14 Ibid., 444; For detailed description of the scenario of exercise “Burza” see: Pałka, *The Third World War as Envisaged*, 117–131; Robert Rochowicz, *Rakiety operacyjne i taktyczne w Siłach Zbrojnych PRL*, in: *Poligon 1/62* (2018), 56–69; Julian Babula, *Wojsko Polskie 1945–1989. Próba analizy operacyjnej*, Warsaw 1998, 51.
- 15 In Polish and Russian military nomenclature, the term “front” means the equivalent of a Western army group. In the case of the operational formations discussed here, the terms “Morski” (verbatim “Maritime”), “Pomorski” (verbatim “Pomeranian”), “Nadmorski” (verbatim “Coastal”), “Lubuski” (verbatim “Lubusz”), and Polski (verbatim “Polish”) were used. The terms “Polish” and “Nadmorski” (Coastal) were formal from 1961 to 1965 and since 1965, respectively. The Russian side used the word “Приморски”. After the completion of this book, a comprehensive work on the subject was published (Jarosław Pałka, *Polskie Wojska Operacyjne w Układzie Warszawskim*, Warsaw: IPN 2022).
- 16 Archive of the Institute of National Remembrance (further on: AIPN) 02958/162, The main thrust of the Polish Front regrouping plan, 28 June 1963, 60; see also: Jerzy Kajetanowicz, *Polska w Układzie Warszawskim – realizacja zobowiązań*, in: *Przegląd Wschodnioeuropejski* 12/2 (2021), 300.

- 3) The staging area of the Polish Front troops for operations is the northern part (north of Berlin) of the territory of the German Democratic Republic.
- 4) The war starts unexpectedly, or the directive to begin regrouping without a formal declaration of war is delivered as a matter of urgency and found the armies of the Polish Front in the state that existed at the time, without partial mobilisation or pre-mobilisation undertakings.
- 5) The transition to offensive operations from the staging area is carried out on D3 [on the third day after the start of regrouping] with the forces of that part of the Polish Front troops, which has by then reached the ordered staging area [the tactical units of the first echelon of the armies].
- 6) The beginning of regrouping troops remaining in a state of constant combat readiness in peacetime is at the same time the beginning of mobilisation of all tactical units and divisions comprising the Polish Front. The regrouping of these troops takes place after they have reached mobilisation readiness, i.e. during an offensive operation and their introduction into battle – as they approach the front line.¹⁷

The detailed plan for the Polish Front operation, code-named ‘OP-61’ and initially drawn up in Russian, was approved on 29 July 1961 by the prime minister of the government of the Polish People’s Republic, Józef Cyrankiewicz, as chairman of the Committee for the Defence of the Country.¹⁸ The primary assignments projected for the Poles during the Warsaw Pact operations against the West were described as follows:

The Polish Front, according to a particular directive of the High Command by D2–D3 [the second and third day of the operation], regroup its troops on GDR territory to the area of Wismar, Hagenow, Perleberg, Neustrelitz with the task to be ready to proceed to the attack in the directions: Neumünster, Flensburg, Soltau, Lingen, [to] destroy the opposing enemy grouping, on [days] D4–5 to proceed in the Jutland direction to the German-Danish border and in the Hague direction to the German-Dutch border. In order to capture the straits zone and east Denmark outside the pale of the war, the landing of the 6th Airborne Division on the island of Zeeland should be carried out. Then develop an assault north of the Jutland peninsula and on the Hague direction to capture on [day] D8–10 the whole of the Jutland peninsula, the Danish islands and the straits zone and Dutch territory.¹⁹

From the beginning of their efforts, the Polish staff officers and planners were aware of the fundamental logistical problems involved in implementing the operations described above. These were characterised in the “Polish Front regrouping Plan” in the following way:

The [peacetime] deployment of troops at considerable distances from the staging area (...);

the dispersed deployment of some tactical units (...);

the deployment of troops over the whole territory of the country causing the necessity of regrouping not only in the direction to the Front but also parallel [to the Front], which, in conditions of the simultaneous and intensive march of allied troops, requires efficient management of the movement of troops.²⁰

17 AIPN 02958/162, The main thrust of the Polish Front regrouping plan, 1964, 60–61.

18 Ibid., Polish Front offensive operation plan (map), 29 July 1961, 218.

19 Ibid., Legend to the operation plan (map), 29 July 1961, 186.

20 Ibid., The main thrust of the Polish Front regrouping plan, 150.

Moreover, virtually the entire advance of Polish troops had to take place at a fast pace (at an average of 20 kilometers per hour), under cover of night, and without using railroads.²¹ Additionally, on the first day of regrouping (D1), Polish Front formations had to evade units of the Soviet Army's Northern Group of Forces stationed in Western Poland, as well as the Soviet reserves on the second and third days (D2–3). These forces were supposed to be the first to cross the Oder River in the crucial Kolbaskowo-Schwedt area, since they had to advance directly afterwards in the direction of Neubrandenburg, Neustrelitz, Templin, and Pasewalk. This, however, would have made it difficult if not impossible for the Polish Front to reach its staging area in the given time.²²

The following three scenarios, which were elaborated in 1965, 1970, and 1976 respectively, were in their most essential aspects developments of the original 1961 plan with only minor corrections and additions. As the furthest target of the Polish offensive, instead of the Dutch city of The Hague, the French port of Calais appeared almost incidentally in 1965. However, this idea was abandoned in the plan of 1976, which called for the Polish Front's march to the West to stop at the Belgian border with France. Thus, from 1965 to 1976 northern Belgium was added to the list of targets of the Polish offensive. Even though the planners in Warsaw expected a consecutive increase of strength and combat capability of NATO forces to a certain extent, the panacea for this evolving problem seemed to be the increasing availability of nuclear weapons at all strategic, operational, and tactical levels. Considering this, the responsible officers decided to slightly reduce the assumed pace of the Polish offensive, which was still accounted for at a highly optimistic speed. In the blueprints of 1965 and 1970, it ranged from 65 km per day in the first days of the operation to the original figure of 80–100 km in the following days, while in the plan for 1976 it was lowered to a figure of 45–55 km per day. The projected speed mentioned in the last of the approved plans in 1986 was probably the most realistic, with an advance rate of 30–35 km per day. Finally, this approach added a new mindset, as it also considered strategic defensive actions alongside a strategic offensive against the Western Alliance. This would have included defence lines on Polish territory, which were further developed in elaborations conducted in the late 1980s. These later ideas were never implemented.²³

21 Ibid., 64–65, 122.

22 Ibid., Legend to the operation plan (map), 29 July 1961, 186–187.

23 AIPN 02958/164, Plan for the offensive operation of the Coastal Front, 24 April 1965, 1–75 (with maps); AIPN 02958/166, Plan for the offensive operation of the Coastal Front, 20 October 1970, pp. 1–88 (with maps); AIPN 02958/168, Operational plan for using detached forces of the Polish Army in time of war as part of the joined armed forces of the Warsaw Pact countries (with maps), Warsaw, 18 November 1976, pp. 1–74; Władysław Bułhak, *Polnische Kriegsplanung im Baltikum während des Kalten Krieges, 1961–1991*, in: Stefan Creuzberger, Thomas Wegener Friis (eds.), *Mecklenburg-Vorpommern im Kalten Krieg*, Rostock 2023 (forthcoming).

CREATING A WESTERN DEFENCE

A key factor in early Western planning for the Western Baltic area was the question of the West German rearmament since Denmark on its own would not have had a chance withstanding a Soviet or, later, a Polish-led invasion. Before West Germany entered the military stage, the defence of the crucial Jutland Peninsula was in the hands of Western occupational forces in Schleswig-Holstein. These comprised forces from Denmark, Norway, and Great Britain. When the British occupation ended, around 8.000 soldiers from these three nations were stationed there. After the withdrawal of the Norwegian troops, the so-called “Jutland Covering Force” was formed in 1953 under the leadership of the commander of the “Danish Command in Germany”, which in the Allied military structures was subordinate to the “Western Land Command” (WLC) in Aarhus.²⁴ The Danish forces in Northern Germany would not have been able to withstand any Warsaw Pact offensive. Instead, these forces would have either damaged or destroyed the crossings of the Eider River and the Kiel-Canal, retreated North into Denmark without engaging the enemy to finally reunite with mobilized Danish units.²⁵ Overall, the situation for Denmark and the surrounding areas would have been grim. Still, in 1956, Eastern estimates concluded that Danish armed forces were of “no particular importance” and Denmark would not be able “to engage in modern warfare.”²⁶

Both Danes and West Germans were painfully aware of the weaknesses of the NATO Defence of Denmark and Northern Germany. By 1953, the head-to-be of the Bundeswehr, General Adolf Heusinger, had already made his disapproval of the failing engagement of Great Britain in the defence of this region known. Heusinger predicted that Western forces would be unable to defend Europe from the Adriatic to the Baltic, and thus these flanks would be of particular importance. If a Soviet invasion at the flanks was not prioritized, Scandinavia, Austria, and the Netherlands would fall and with the consequence, the allied forces in France, Belgium, and even in Britain would have been at risk.²⁷

The game changer on the Western side was West Germany’s accession to NATO in May 1955 and the establishment of the first Bundeswehr units in Schleswig-Holstein during the spring of 1957. By the summer of 1958, most Allied troops had left the Danish-German borderlands. At the same time, the Bundeswehr – with the Military District Command I (Wehrbereichskommando) in Kiel – took sole responsibility for the defence of this area, which remained a trouble spot for the Western Alliance throughout the Cold War.²⁸ With the “Oslo Agreement” of 22 November

24 Dieter H. Kollmer, *Aus Besatzern wurden Verbündete. Die norwegische “Tysklandsbrigaden” (1947–1953)*, in: *Militärgeschichte. Zeitschrift für historische Bildung*, 1 (2018), 18–21.

25 Peter Hertel Rasmussen, *Den danske Tysklandsbrigade 1947–1958*, Odense 2019, 364–365.

26 Thomas Wegener Friis, *Den nye nabo. DDRs forhold til Danmark 1949–1960*. Copenhagen 2001, 126.

27 Georg Meyer, *Adolf Heusinger. Dienst eines Deutschen Soldaten 1915–964*, Hamburg 2001, 488.

28 Leonie Hieck, *Die Bundeswehr im Spannungsfeld von Bundespolitik und Landespolitik. Die Aufstellung der Streitkräfte in Schleswig-Holstein*, Bielefeld 2021, 92.

1961, all NATO units between Hamburg and the Skagerrak were placed under the newly created command area Baltic Approaches (BALTAP) that was established in Karup, North Jutland under the command of a Danish three star flag officer. This made it possible to lead the defence of Schleswig-Holstein, Denmark, and the Baltic Sea exits from a single position. Additionally, this ended the existing division of German naval forces between the NATO command areas of Northern and Central Europe. This restructuring led to the establishment of four new headquarters: for the Ground Forces in Jutland (LANDJUT), in Rendsburg, for the Ground Forces on Zealand (LANDZEALAND) in Copenhagen, and for the Air Force Baltic Approaches (AIRBALTAP) and the Naval Forces Baltic Approaches (NAVBALTAP) each in Karup. Despite all subsequent national structural changes, this structure existed until the end of the Cold War. During all those years, BALTAP was part of the NATO High Command AFNORTH, which was responsible for the security of the alliance between the Elbe and the North Cape and was led by a British admiral or general from the headquarters in Oslo.²⁹

The operational objective in the BALTAP region was the defence of the Jutland peninsula. The LANDJUT corps, set up for this purpose in the summer of 1962, had a special position within NATO. It was the only multinational corps with an international staff and the only one to be financed directly by NATO until 1994. This was an investment that paid off in the long run, since the multinational cooperation practiced daily in the equally mixed staff of HQ LANDJUT, in Rendsburg, became the rolemodel for later multinational staffs and units.³⁰

The large LANDJUT corps had the task of stopping any attacking enemy forces in their advance to the north-west until British, American, and Dutch reinforcements could arrive by air and sea to repulse the attacker. For this purpose, the Commanding General of the Corps LANDJUT (COMLANDJUT) had the West German 6th Mechanized Infantry Division (Panzergrenadierdivision, PzGrenDiv) from Neumünster, the Danish Jutland Division from Fredericia, and Homeland Defence Brigade 51 (Heimatschutzbrigade) from Eutin at his disposal. With these approximately 70,000 soldiers he was tasked to secure, as part of NATO's forward defence, the inner-German border between the Elbe and Lübeck as well as the coastline against amphibious landings. Moreover, they were supposed to stop the attacking enemy forces east of the Hamburg-Lübeck motorway.³¹ To bolster the Western defence, the US Army established Special Ammunition Storages (SAS) in the early 1960s in Kellinghusen as well as in 1973 in Meyn. These facilities were under the control of the 294th US Artillery Group, placed in Itzehoe and Flensburg-Weiche.³²

29 Dieter H. Kollmer: Der "Flugzeugträger" Schleswig-Holstein. Die Rolle Schleswig-Holsteins in den Verteidigungsplanungen der NATO während des Kalten Krieges, in: Aaron Jessen, Elmar Moldenhauer, Karsten Biermann (eds.), Grenzen überwinden. Schleswig-Holstein, Dänemark & die DDR, Husum 2016, 71–83, here 74.

30 Manfred Gerber: Korps Landjut, in: Wehrtechnischer Report 11 (1996), 18–21, here 21.

31 Dieter H. Kollmer, Schleswig-Holstein – "Flugzeugträger" im Kalten Krieg, in: Militärgeschichte. Zeitschrift für historische Bildung, 3 (2016), 10–13.

32 Winfried Brandes, Wilhelm Georg Petersen: 7570 Tage Mitten im Kalten Krieg. Die Geschichte der Nachschubkompanie Sonderwaffen 611 (LJ) 1971–1993, Flensburg 2019, 48;

From the late 1950s onwards, the Danish armed forces were equipped with “Nike” and “Honest John” rockets capable of carrying nuclear charges.³³ Warsaw Pact analysts projected by 1968 the Western use of 6 to 10 warheads initially for the defence of the Danish Islands, 30–40 on day one on the main front in Jutland, and 15–26 in the days to follow. Whereas the initial figure remained the same in the 1970s, the number of nuclear weapons to be used in Jutland/Schleswig-Holstein rose to 65–95 by the end of day one, and to 40–57 in the following days.³⁴ Due to the spatial confinement of the operation area, a massive deployment of these weapon systems – which was demonstrably planned – would have fundamentally affected the operations.

Although already stationed in a comparatively small area, the approach towards defence forces posed a serious problem. On one hand, the 6th PzGrenDiv was deployed in the planned battle zone or only a few kilometres away. But on the other hand, the deployment of the Jutland Division had to be planned very precisely and carried out in time and simultaneously so that the forces could have had the needed impact in the theatre of war as early as possible, in the face of their sometimes more than 400 km long marching distance.³⁵ The former COMLANDJUT, General Günter Kießling, described another serious problem in the defence of Schleswig-Holstein:

There is probably no other area from the North Cape to Turkey in which the principle of forward defence is as clear as in Schleswig-Holstein. Hamburg, one of the largest and most important western European cities, can only be prevented from being attacked by the enemy if its defence is successfully carried out as far forward as possible, meaning along the Inner-German border. [...] The width of the area to be defended is only about 65 km from Lübeck to Lauenburg.³⁶

Allied reinforcements were a factor which could have decided the success or failure of the defence of territories around the Baltic Approaches. Though the Danes and West-Germans would take the first blow, it was imperative for the British and American forces to reach the combat zone in time, and for their air forces to use the Jutland peninsula’s potential as an “unsinkable aircraft carrier” which might have threatened Poland’s, the GDR’s, and the Soviet’s Baltic domain. Since the 1960s, the US Army had trained annually on how to bring large reinforcements to Europe. These were the so-called “Reforger” exercises (short for Return of Forces to Germany). Though comprehensive studies on allied reinforcement in the Western Baltic area have not been made yet for the duration of the Cold War, some numbers are accessible. In the 1980s, NATO planned an airforce reinforcement of eight Ameri-

https://www.usarmygermany.com/Sont.htm?https&&www.usarmygermany.com/Units/Ordnance/USAREUR_294th%20USAAG.htm (accessed 1 Aug 2022).

33 Ved forenede kræfter. Forsvarets øverste ledelse, Copenhagen 2000, 98.

34 Thomas Wegener Friis: Dänemarks Vorbereitungen auf einen möglichen heißen Krieg im Kalten Krieg, in: Militärgeschichtliche Zeitschrift, 2 (2020), 434–460, here 453–454.

35 Jyske Divisions opgraver i krig og fred, in: E. A. Knudsen, J. Grunnet (eds.): Jyske Division 1952–1992, Fredericia 1992, 10–11.

36 Günter Kießling, Die Verteidigung Schleswig-Holsteins: Ein Beispiel für die NATO Verteidigung der Flexible Response, in: Hans-Adolf Jacobsen (ed.), Heere International: Militärpolitik, Strategie, Technologie, Wehrgeschichte, Vol. 2, Bonn 1983, 127–136, here 129.

can and British squadrons and approximately 12–24 planes. On the ground, Denmark was to receive reinforcement from NATO's Allied Mobile Force (AMF). In the time leading up to war, this would allow the country to benefit from an additional 30,000 US Marines with 110 tanks and 100 helicopters. The former head of the Danish reserve "Jutland Battle Group" even suggested in his memoirs that a prolonged crisis of several months would have allowed the 9th US Infantry Division to reinforce the Baltic Approaches. That NATO considered a defence of this area possible is likely, since in the 1980s it planned to extend the stockpile of ammunition for the US Airforce to last from 7 days to 30 days' worth of fighting.³⁷

The military strength of LANDJUT was rated as high by the troops of the Warsaw Pact. Despite this, the defence planning of the multinational army corps was vastly dependent on functioning cooperation with the air and naval forces of AIR-BALTAP and NAVBALTAP. Therefore they had to ensure the protection of the "wet flank" along the Baltic Sea coast and air sovereignty over the defence area.

THE RIGHT FLANK OF THE WARSAW PACT: THE BALTIC SEA

To the Warsaw Pact forces, the naval operation in the Baltic was of decisive importance. They were to open the "door" to the Atlantic. Accordingly, in the planning of an armed conflict, the United Baltic Fleets of the Warsaw Pact (VOF) were to complement the land operations of the Polish front. Their task was first of all to ward off possible surprise attacks by the enemy from the sea and from the air in the area leading up to the straits between Denmark and the German Baltic Sea coast.³⁸

The People's Navy of the GDR played an initial role in this. Its task was to maintain naval supremacy in the Bay of Mecklenburg and the Arkona Sea until the main forces of the VOF arrived. Air support was to be provided by the 16th Soviet Air Army stationed in the GDR and the air force of the NVA with a total of over 900 aircraft. However, the aerial support would have been a problem in the case of war because it would depend on the situation at the main front. It would have been likely that the advance of this first aerial echelon would act as the air defence of the GDR and Poland.³⁹

The main forces of the VOF consisting of the Polish Navy and the Soviet Baltic Fleet should have followed up by occupying the approaches to the North Sea and at the same time incapacitate NATO naval units. According to the 1986 variant of the

- 37 Thomas Wegener Friis, Władysław Bułhak, Dieter H. Kollmer: With the back to the (Atlantic) wall. Denmark during the Cold War, in: Jens Andersen, Chrestina Dahl, Henrik Gjøde Nielsen, Knud Knudsen (eds.): *The Atlantic Wall in regional, national and international perspective*, Aalborg 2019, 199–228; 210–211.
- 38 Torsten Diedrich, *Grenzen überwinden – "Tür" öffnen. Die Jütländischen Operationen und der Warschauer Pakt*, in: Aaron Jessen, Elmar Moldenhauer, Karsten Biermann (eds.), *Grenzen überwinden. Schleswig-Holstein, Dänemark und die DDR*, Husum 2016, 111–132, here 121–122.
- 39 Torsten Diedrich: *Die DDR-Marine in den Vereinten Seestreitkräften des Warschauer Paktes und das Operationsgebiet Ostsee*, in: Thomas Wegener Friis, Michael F. Scholz (eds.), *Ostsee. Kriegsschauplatz und Handelsregion*, Visby 2013, 193–207, here 205.

Polish naval plan, within seven to eight days the fleets would reach the Kullen-Samsø-Fredericia line. An integrated part of this plan were the landing operations on Danish islands which would also support the main land operations in Jutland. To reach their goals, the Polish navy would utilize its 3rd flotilla, 8th and 9th Coastal defence flotillas, and 7th Fighter-Bomber Regiment. Their first task was to blind the Danish forces and reduce their means of forward defence. This would have been put into action with strikes against airfields and SIGINT installations on the nearby Island of Bornholm as well as against any detected Danish submarines.⁴⁰ This corresponded well with the plans of the East German military intelligence to support the Polish front. It operated with so-called “Primary Targets” (Erstrang-Objekte), which the Warsaw Pact forces should identify and eradicate within 60 to 90 minutes of the outbreak of war. Corresponding to Polish deliberations, these included Danish missile boats, the Danish and West German submarines, as well as the radar stations in Denmark.⁴¹

To support the following actions, strikes would have been conducted against the Danish airfields of Værløse and Kastrup, the Early Warning Stations in Skovhuse and Multebjerg, the radar stations on Møn and in Gedser, as well as all “Hawk” batteries on the Danish islands. Opposing NATO naval forces should have been eliminated at the entrance to the Baltic straits, thereby paving the way for a swift landing operation by the 7th Polish Landing Division in the Køge bay, located in the vicinity of Copenhagen.⁴²

These plans were by no means news to the Danish Intelligence Services.⁴³ Throughout the Cold War, Polish and Warsaw Pact planning was quite stable, both in its aims and means. Furthermore, Danish Military intelligence was known for its SIGINT capabilities and was even able to recruit at least one high-ranking Polish officer.⁴⁴ The Danish fleets primarily aimed to block the Baltic straits of Øresund and the Great Belt as well as to prevent the pending Polish invasion either with conventional or tactical nuclear missiles, in close cooperation with their larger partner, West Germany.⁴⁵ Despite the fact that the Jutland operation would have been the main effort against Denmark on the coastal front, the sea landing has drawn the most attention in Danish post-Cold War historiography and particularly in popular imagery. The reason for this is most likely the proximity of the Danish capital to the landing sites and the imagined consequences of the war for Copenhagen’s population.

40 Czesław Szafran: Die Seekriegsflotte der Volksrepublik Polen in der Vereinten Ostseeflotte des Warschauer Vertrages. Ein Bündnis in Krieg und Frieden, in: Rüdiger Wenzke: Die Streitkräfte der DDR und Polens in der Operationsplanung des Warschauer Paktes, Potsdam 2010, 85–95, here 92.

41 Thomas Wegener Friis, *Den Usynlige Front. DDRs militære spionage i Danmark under Den Kolde Krig*, Copenhagen 2005, 273.

42 Szafran, *Die Seekriegsflotte der Volksrepublik*, 85–95, here 93.

43 See for instance the comprehensive Threat Analysis from the 1988 by the Danish Defense Intelligence Service: “Truslen mod Danmark”. Copenhagen 1988.

44 Christoph Franceschini, Thomas Wegener Friis, Erich Schmidt-Eenboom, *Spionage unter Freunden. Partnerdienstbeziehungen und Westaufklärung der Organisation und des BND*, Berlin 2017, 226.

45 Peter Bogasson, *Søværnet under den Kolde Krig. Politik, strategi og taktik*, Copenhagen 2016, 279.

The main task of NAVBALTAP and its subordinated naval forces was the protection of the Baltic Sea exits in the direction of the North Sea, since a breakthrough of the VOF from the Baltic Sea would have threatened the western alliance's sea connections across the Atlantic. Against this background, large parts of the Baltic Sea were planned to be mined. Added to this was the protection of the East coast of Schleswig-Holstein by naval security forces against amphibious landings by enemy units in the back of LANDJUT units which would probably also have been directed against comparatively defenceless air bases and naval installations important to the command.

REHEARSING THE WAR

To ensure that all forms of cooperation between the branches of the armed forces combined would have functioned well in the event of war, exercises were regularly carried out in which the ground, air, and naval forces of the participating nations of the Warsaw Pact took part. The Warsaw Pact Naval Forces conducted regular joint exercises starting in 1957 and, from 1963 onwards, command staff exercises.⁴⁶ Among the largest exercises were "Baikal 66", "Sever 68", and "Waffenbruderschaft 70" (Brothers of Arms).⁴⁷ In October 1970, the latter took place in the GDR and in the southwestern Baltic Sea. It was the first time all seven militaries of the Warsaw Pact took part in an exercise to train their combined efforts. A total of three armies and the united Baltic Navies VOF participated. As part of the manoeuvre, all the processes involved in a conflict with NATO were simulated.⁴⁸

In September 1980, this major manoeuvre took place again on the 25th anniversary of the Warsaw Pact. Officially, the "Brotherhoods of Arms" were presented as a success story and cooperation between the very heterogeneous armed forces of the participating nations. Nevertheless, the weaknesses of the system were also revealed. Conclusions from these were drawn in "recommendations" for joint action with new training and exercise priorities and implemented, for instance, in other naval exercises such as "Sojus 71", "Baltika 72", and "Wal 77". The biggest problem turned out to be the air support from the Warsaw Pact air forces and the total lack of NVA's naval aviation. Also because of this, the General Staff in Moscow stated that NATO had air superiority over the Baltic Sea, which could very quickly have become a threat to the Warsaw Pact's second wave of attacks.⁴⁹

On the Western Side, German, Danish, as well as American, British, and possibly Dutch forces needed to cooperate smoothly in this narrow space with limited depth. To make this possible, between 1962 and 1985 more than 500 exercises took place. The number of participants varied from 50 soldiers in staff exercises to more

46 Szafran, *Die Seekriegsflotte der Volksrepublik Polen*, 85–95, here 86.

47 Diedrich: *Grenzen überwinden – "Tür" öffnen*, 111–130 here 122.

48 Rüdiger Wenzke: *Ulbrichts Soldaten. Die Nationale Volksarmee 1956–1971*, Berlin 2013, 677.

49 BACh, DVM 10/29811: Ministerium für Nationale Verteidigung, Der Minister, Betr.: Schreiben von Armeegeneral Hoffmann an Vizeadmiral Ehm, hier: Vorschlag zur Entwicklung der Nationalen Volksarmee im Zeitraum 1976 bis 1980, 17.07.1973.

than 65,000 soldiers in the so-called joint and combined BOLD GUARD exercises, which took place every four years, primarily in Schleswig-Holstein and parts of Denmark (Northern Schleswig and Funen).⁵⁰ While the smaller exercises were mainly about coordinating and agreeing on procedures within and between different staffs at various levels, those responsible were pursuing a large number of military goals with BOLD GUARD. First of all, the mission of the corps, namely the defence of the islands of Fehmarn and Funen as well as Jutland and Schleswig-Holstein, should be trained in close cooperation with air force and navy. The interoperability between the armed forces should be increased, the cooperation with the territorial armies should be intensified and moreover the processes in logistics and wounded care should be improved. It was of particular importance to simulate extensive troop movements in the direction of the Inner-German border and to practice the intake of reinforcement forces from overseas.⁵¹ In addition to these complex “freewheeling exercises”, there were virtual exercises in which the sequences of the real processes were practiced, analysed, and evaluated. The best known of these exercises are without any doubt the WINTEX exercises, which were carried out every two years from 1968 to 1989.⁵²

Politically, the exercises were supposed to send a clear signal in the direction of the Warsaw Pact: Do not even try to attack us, because we are prepared to defend ourselves through all means. Then COMLANDJUT Lieutenant General Henning von Ondarza stated after BOLD GUARD 1986 that “the exercise was a functioning thing, with a great signal effect internally and a political signal effect externally”.⁵³ Undoubtedly, the exercises managed to send a signal to the Warsaw Pact, as the East German deputy chief of military intelligence, Major Werner Schmutzler, stated in 1966: “The aims of the exercises might vary. However, in the end all exercise served the preparation of the aggressive abilities of the NATO-forces against the socialist camp.”⁵⁴ The ideological bias of the socialist camp tried to make every step to strengthen NATO defences so that they looked like an immediate threat. Interestingly enough, Danish intelligence did not apply the same measures against the Polish and Warsaw Pact exercises. Although they undeniably served to prepare for an invasion and occupation of the country, the Danish approach was less alarmist, as it sought to establish cyclic “normal parameters” for the training of the Warsaw Pact forces in the Baltic Sea area. If the potential enemy did what they usually did, there was no reason to blow the whistle.⁵⁵ Obviously, living with an expansion-

50 Rolf Bardet: “Bold Guard”. Demonstration von Gemeinsamkeit von fünf Nationen der NATO, in: Europäische Wehrkunde 36 (1986), 658–662.

51 Bundesarchiv, BArch BH 8–6/391: 6. Panzergrenadierdivision. Bold Guard 82. Übung, Bd. 1.

52 Axel Gablik: Eine Strategie kann nicht zeitlos sein. Flexible Response und Wintex, in: Frank Nägler (ed.), Die Bundeswehr 1955 bis 2005: Rückblende, Einsichten, Perspektiven, Munich 2007, 313–328.

53 Bardet: “Bold Guard”, 658–662, here 662.

54 Bundesarchiv/Militärarchiv: DVW 1/25710: Die Aufklärung von Manövern und Übungen der NATO-Streitkräfte Zentraleuropa und Ostseeausgänge durch den militärischen Aufklärungsdienst der DDR – 25.7.1966, 35.

55 Danmark under den Kolde Krig, Vol. 1, Copenhagen 2005, 530.

ist yet predictable neighbour seems considerably easier than living in fear of your country's own ideological images of capitalists and imperialists.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In the post-Cold War years, the “revelations” of the preparations of the Coastal Front and the invasion of the Danish territory regularly surfaced in Danish media, sometimes under the notion of “Polish planning” or even “East German planning”. Both statements were, of course, wrong. This was, first of all, Warsaw Pact planning, which was led by the Soviets. Nevertheless, for both the Danish and Polish forces as well as for the adherent West and East Germans, this could have become deadly serious. The conquest of the Jutland Peninsula and the subsequent breakthrough to the North Sea were of great importance for the planning of the Warsaw Pact.

Compared to their efforts during the peaceful post-Cold War years, NATO's defence efforts for Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein were immense during the Cold War. The area north of the Elbe River represented a bridgehead to Scandinavia and was a geographic obstacle for the Warsaw Pact. If properly defended, it might even have been a danger on the flank of advancing Warsaw Pact troops. According to these conceptions, the territory between the Baltic and the North Sea would have been an “aircraft carrier” from which attacks on the advancing enemy could have been carried out time and again, spatially separated from the remaining NATO forces.

Fortunately for Denmark, Poland and the two German states, the military plans of the two alliances never came to pass. They would most likely have left the lands along the Baltic shores uninhabitable.

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POLISH MILITARY INTELLIGENCE IN DENMARK IN THE 1950s AND 1960s

Przemysław Gasztold

Polish-Danish relations during the Stalinist period were not very active. In 1949, the government in Copenhagen joined NATO and became the target of Polish propaganda, which accused it of providing the alliance with military bases on the island of Bornholm, just north of the Polish Baltic coastline.¹ However, the internal changes caused by de-Stalinization and the Polish in October 1956 made bilateral relations more dynamic, the tangible proof of which was the elevation of relations to the rank of embassies in August 1957. Stanisław Wincenty Dobrowolski was appointed the first ambassador, but the Danes were in no hurry to send his counterpart, so their ambassador did not arrive in Warsaw until February 1960. Still, Jens Otto Krag was the first foreign minister of a NATO country to officially visit Poland after the establishment of the Warsaw Pact.² In September 1959, he spent several days in Warsaw.³ His visit initiated a process of gradual improvement of mutual relations in political, economic, and cultural domains.⁴

While diplomatic relations were characterized by far-reaching distance and predictability, the intelligence rivalry between the services of Denmark and the Polish People's Republic was conducted behind the scenes. The strategic location of the Jutland Peninsula made the country an important object of interest for the communist secret services. The performances of the Polish civilian intelligence (1st Department of the Ministry of the Interior) and military intelligence (2nd Directorate of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces) provide, therefore, a good opportunity to look at the Polish-Danish relations through the prism of intelligence history. Thanks to the process of declassification of Polish intelligence files, most documents from the Cold War era are now accessible to researchers and can serve as a solid foundation for analysis of the secret part of mutual Polish-Danish relations. While both Polish civilian and military intelligence files are available for research, the focal point of this article is the performances of military intelligence. This focus is due to multiple reasons. First, these files cover the period from the

- 1 Józef Łaptos, Andrzej Mania, *Dyplomacja polska wobec zimnowojennego podziału świata* (marzec 1947 – grudzień 1955), in: Wojciech Materski, Waldemar Michowicz (eds.), *Historia polskiej dyplomacji*, Vol. 6 1944/1945–1989, Warsaw 2010, 356.
- 2 Jacek Tebinka, *Uzależnienie czy suwerenność? Odwilż październikowa w dyplomacji Polskiej Rzeczypospolitej Ludowej 1956–1961*, Warsaw 2010, 154.
- 3 Krzysztof Szczepanik, Anna Herman-Łukasik, Barbara Janicka (eds.), *Stosunki dyplomatyczne Polski. Informator*, Vol 1, Europa 1918–2006, Warsaw 2007, 123.
- 4 Magda Gawinecka-Woźniak, *Polska-Dania. Stosunki dwustronne w latach 1945–1968*, Toruń 2015, 184–188.

beginning of the Cold War and were less affected by archival destructions than the civilian ones. Second, recent research suggests that Denmark was more important from the military perspective than, for instance, for political or scientific intelligence.⁵ Polish civilian intelligence did have a keen interest in Scandinavia but considered Sweden its top priority.⁶

The main reason for the prioritization of military intelligence was that Poland played a central role when it came to Denmark and its surrounding waters. If the third World War had broken out, the Warsaw Pact “The Coastal Front” (or “Polish Front”) would have invaded Denmark as well as northern parts of West Germany and the Netherlands. As the name indicated, Polish forces were to play the main role in eliminating Denmark by massive land forces and nuclear attacks.⁷ There were different ideas of what the invasion should look like. The most ambitious plans, as envisaged by military exercises conducted in the 1960s, assumed that the Polish army would advance approximately 80–100 kilometers daily into NATO territory. A more realistic prognosis lowered the estimated speed to around 45–55 kilometers per day.⁸

According to the Polish estimate, Denmark played a significant role in NATO’s war plans despite its limited manpower and not very developed military-industrial complex. Denmark was significant due to its geographical location at the straits leading from the Baltic Sea to the North Sea. Therefore, Denmark, together with West Germany and Norway, could secure and control the Central European Theater of War (*Środkowoeuropejski Teatr Działań Wcześniejszych*) by covering its flank and closing the exit from the Baltic to the North Sea. Warsaw assessed that, in the event of war between NATO and Warsaw Pact, Danish territory would be used for European and intercontinental transit routes, for radar reconnaissance, and as a forward base against East Germany, Poland, and the Soviet Union.⁹ For the success or failure of the wartime operation, the amount of peacetime preparation could be decisive. Besides obvious factors like the shire number and weapon technology, a Danish military historian has emphasized the preparation of reinforcements, the prepa-

- 5 Thomas Wegener Friis, Astrid Carlsen, Helmut Müller-Enbergs, Przemysław Gasztold: *Sozialistische Nachrichtendienste im Norden: Totalitarismus und Demokratie 2* (2016), 189–221.
- 6 Witold Bagiński, *Wywiad cywilny Polski Ludowej w latach 1945–1961*, Vol. 1, Warsaw 2017, 14.
- 7 See more: Piotr Piotrowski, *Front Polski-próba wyjaśnienia zagadnienia*, in: Wojciech Wrzesiński (ed.), *Wrocławskie Studia z Historii Najnowszej*, Vol. 6, Wrocław 1998, 221–233; Jacek Jędrzyak, *Początki i założenia studiów operacyjnych Zachodniego Teatru Działań Wojskowych w Siłach Zbrojnych PRL*, in: *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość* 2/34 (2019), 426–455; Thomas T. Nielsen, Stig R. Svenningsen, Morten Tinning, Michael H. Clemmesen, *An operational map of the Polish Coastal Front 1970*, in: *Geoforum Perspektiv* 15/27 (2000), 48–60.
- 8 See also in this book: Dieter H. Kollmer, Władysław Bułhak, Thomas Wegener Friis, “Poles, Danes, Soviets, and Germans. Cold War frontlines in the Baltic Sea.”, 115–129.; Jarosław Pałka, *The Third World War as Envisaged by Polish Generals at the Turn of the 1950s and the 1960s*, in: *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 124/1 (English-Language) (2017), 111–133.
- 9 Archive of the Institute of National Remembrance (hereinafter: AIPN), 01334/596, Marian Rzepka, Władysław Wójcik, *Charakterystyka społeczno-polityczno-wojskowa Danii*. Biuletyn Informacyjny Zarządu Propagandy Głównego Zarządu Politycznego Wojska Polskiego, Warsaw, July 1964, 3.

ration of military structures, and military intelligence, all steps which could be taken well in advance.¹⁰ This placed a particular urgency on military intelligence in an area of strategic importance. For the Polish armed forces that took over the responsibility for the Coastal Front in the early 1960s, there was a sense of an urgent need to establish a residentura or intelligence station, to engage in collecting information, and to recruit assets.

Military intelligence in the narrow Baltic Sea area embraced the need for a long list of information requirements from daily overviews of the order of battle, to NATO exercises, to equipment, to assumed enemies' countermoves. To meet the requirements, a broad variety of collection methods had to be used, of course considering the situation developing in a negative fashion. An example of this was the exercise with the fictive Agent "Alf" in 1955. His job was not only to monitor the Western troop movements but also to be able to operate under wartime circumstances. He was to report on military supply transports and communication lines on the Danish west coast. Upon the alarming sign of the evacuation of the civilian population, "Alf" was instructed to travel north along the line including Klixbüll, Niebüll, Tønder, Ribe, Bramming, and Grindsted, where he was to monitor the communication hub until Polish forces would arrive. He would be equipped with enough cash to last half a year and a bicycle. He would cooperate with a radio telegraphist, also equipped with a bike. Warsaw also planned to send three "illegals" who were supposed to be delivered by plane and be placed behind the enemy line with the task of observing Danish moves.¹¹ Although "Alf" was not real and this identity was created only for exercise purposes, his activities mirrored the conundrum of Warsaw's intelligence plans in Denmark.

The main aim of this article is to examine the activities of Polish military intelligence in Denmark at the beginning of the Cold War. The timeframe includes the 1950s and 1960s. This was a particularly important phase as Polish intelligence needed to build up its capacities and to adapt to a situation where Poland had become increasingly responsible for this area within the Warsaw Pact. Thus, it was a dynamic period, whereas the two last decades of the Cold War included more stable scenarios. The difficulties of this period became visible in 1965 when Danish counterintelligence exposed Polish military spies and as a result the station's operation had to be significantly limited. The first part of this article presents the structure and main goals of Polish military intelligence. The second part examines Human Intelligence (HUMINT) operations aimed at recruiting Danish citizens and evaluates achievements. The analysis is based mostly on declassified intelligence files stored at the Archive of the Institute of the National Remembrance in Warsaw.

10 Thomas Wegener Friis: Dänemarks Vorbereitungen auf einen heißen Krieg im Kalten Krieg, in: *Militär-geschichtliche Zeitschrift* 2 (2020), 434–460.

11 AIPN, 2602/4030, Plan zabezpieczenia agenturalnego operacji zaczepnej frontu nadmorskiego, 1955, 4, 8.

POLISH MILITARY INTELLIGENCE IN DENMARK: STRUCTURES AND MAIN GOALS

At the turn of the 1940s and 1950s, the Polish intelligence services were under permanent reorganization. This is clearly illustrated by the period between July 1947 and June 1950. During that time civilian intelligence (the 7th Department of the Ministry of Public Security) and military intelligence (the 2nd Division of the General Staff of the Polish Army) were combined into one institution managed by General Waclaw Komar, who came from the military services. The merger took place without clear indications of work divisions and areas of responsibility between the “military” and “civilians”. It caused difficulties at the time and many challenges for researchers in reconstructing its internal structures. The merger reflected a similar solution applied in the intelligence apparatus of the Soviet Union, but it did not stand the test of time.¹² It had, however, a significant impact on the effectiveness of intelligence work.

After a period of internal transformations and organizational changes, military intelligence started to conduct more well-thought-out strategies. Available files suggest that two officers of the military intelligence, Captain Zbigniew Cybulski vel Cieszanowski (codename “Ozga”) and Lieutenant Walerian Hybsz (codename “Kosicki”), had operated in Denmark under cover as diplomats since the early 1950s.¹³ However, not until 1955 did Warsaw headquarters establish a proper station in Copenhagen. This station operated within the Military Attaché Office code-name “Olszyna” only in 1955. Beginning on 30 July 1955, Major Henryk Piotrowski (codename “Olgierd”) was the first Polish military attaché and the station chief who started work in Copenhagen. While he was an intelligence officer, he did not have any experience in the field and he did not speak Danish. Thus, he did not fulfill most of the tasks set by the headquarters in regard to preparing dead-drops or starting the vetting process of potential assets.¹⁴ Due to “health reasons” Piotrowski left the station and came back to Poland in July 1956.¹⁵ He was replaced for a month by Captain Henryk Waligóra, who served as a deputy military attaché (code-name “Franciszek”). In August 1956, Major Aleksander Majchrzak came to Copenhagen and took the post of military attaché and the chief of the station (codename “Lars”).¹⁶ Due to the lack of documents it is currently impossible to reconstruct the staff of the Copenhagen station from the late 1950s and early 1960s.

Polish military intelligence operated three kinds of stations. First, the “multi-level” stations were established in countries perceived as top priorities: the United States, Great Britain, France, West Germany, Austria, and Italy. Such stations

12 Sławomir Cenckiewicz, *Długie ramię Moskwy. Wywiad wojskowy Polski Ludowej 1943–1991 (wprowadzenie do syntezy)*, Poznań 2011, 71–73.

13 AIPN, 2602/3143, Raport, 30/08.1954, 232; AIPN, 2602/3140, Sprawozdanie “Ozgi”, 31/01/1956, 91.

14 AIPN, 2602/3415, Sprawozdanie, [1956], 19.

15 AIPN, 2602/3415, Sprawozdanie mjr Piotrowskiego, July 1956, 32.

16 AIPN, 2602/3516, Sprawozdanie mjr. Aleksandra Majchrzaka z działalności oficjalnej za okres sprawozdawczy, 24/08/1956, 56.

usually consisted of 10–12 officers who collected information on multiple levels. This included information on politics, the economy, Polish emigration, and local counter-intelligence performances. Secondly, the “one-level” stations were operated in countries of secondary importance – for example in Denmark. These usually consisted of 1–2 officers. Finally, there were also “Third World stations” which consisted of 1–2 officers equipped with means of communication and were usually established in countries where Polish political or economic interests were limited, for example in Morocco, Lebanon, Turkey, and Finland.¹⁷ Although Denmark was evaluated by Warsaw as a country of secondary importance, this did not mean that intelligence tasks were less significant, or that officers had more flexibility in executing headquarters’ orders. On the contrary, the importance of Denmark should be examined in the framework of Warsaw Pact plans. Therefore, Polish intelligence was tasked with collecting detailed data about Danish military capabilities.

The station operated under the guise of the Military Attaché Office, where the military attaché was usually the station’s chief while his deputy, an intelligence officer, helped him with secret work. Sometimes, in order to mislead the local counterintelligence, the officers were placed outside the Military Attaché Office. For example, Captain Wiesław Załuski (codename “Hański”) arrived in Copenhagen in 1964 to take the position at a Polish Airline “LOT” office.¹⁸ His supervisor was Zbigniew Nawrot (codename “Bończa”).¹⁹ Both men worked for the station while Załuski was a full-time intelligence officer and Nawrot worked as an asset and had been recruited before his arrival to Denmark. Overall, military intelligence used different posts and institutions to place its officers and assets in Denmark. The covers used by Polish spies included consuls or consular attachés, commercial attachés, and managers at the Polish Steamship Company, “LOT” airlines, or the Polish tourist company “ORBIS”.²⁰ Such institutions proved to be useful for planting assets, especially when the Military Attaché Office became the target of Danish counterintelligence. At the end of 1964, all the employees of the Polish Military Attaché Office (the military attaché and two other officers) were expelled from Denmark with *Persona Non Grata* status.²¹ Such a decision had a significant impact on the station’s performances, which were almost frozen. Not until late 1965 did the station resume its work.²²

The analysis of operational instructions allows us to reconstruct the most important tasks that Warsaw set for the Copenhagen station. The case of Lieutenant Antoni Kryś might serve as an example for what the headquarters expected from

17 AIPN, 2602/20049, Notatka uzupełniająca z narady Kierownictwa Zarządu II Sztabu Generalnego i Departamentu I MSW odbytej w dniu 7 stycznia 1966 r., 12/01/1966, 23–24.

18 AIPN, 2602/14040, Rozkaz specjalny dla kpt. Załuski Wiesława ps. “Hański”, 23/01/1964, 76.

19 AIPN, 2602/19894, Charakterystyka służbowa na Nawrot Zbigniewa, Warszawa, 2/12/1967, 55.

20 AIPN, 2602/20049, Ramowy wykaz stanowisk na placówkach PRL za granicą, w których obsadzeniu zainteresowany jest Zarząd II Sztabu Generalnego, 6/06/1966 r., 66.

21 AIPN, 2602/11748, Sprawozdanie z pracy w Attachacie Wojskowym w Kopenhadze za okres 21/02/1965–30/06/1968, 106.

22 AIPN, 2602/8120, Sprawozdanie z pracy operacyjnej rezydentury “Olszyna” za 1965, 77–79.

Poles deployed to Denmark. In July 1955, Kryś was sent to Copenhagen undercover as a head of the consular section at the Polish legation. First, he was instructed to learn Danish well enough to communicate with the locals through the end of 1955. Secondly, by March 1956 Kryś was expected to have selected at least 3–4 potential assets and to have identified two dead-drops in Copenhagen. He was also instructed to conduct constant monitoring of seaports, to collect open-source intelligence on Danish army, and to gather information about military facilities.²³ Kryś's intelligence instructions mirrored the general *modus operandi* of Polish military intelligence.²⁴ Warsaw demanded information about everything that had to do with Danish armed forces and the military-industrial complex. Sometimes, tasks were more detailed and tailored for particular officers. Captain Zbigniew Cybulski vel Cieszanowski (codename "Ozga") was instructed in 1954 to collect information about the Danish Navy, Air Forces and the island of Bornholm.²⁵

Evaluation of declassified files suggests that tasks set by Warsaw were overly ambitious, especially in the HUMINT framework, and in the end turned out to be very difficult to achieve. Warsaw emphasized the necessity of learning local languages, but the execution of this goal often left much to be desired. In the case of Kryś, after spending 2.5 years in Denmark he was able to speak Danish only on an average level. Moreover, Warsaw evaluated that he did not use all his intelligence capabilities and had no special achievements with information work. His supervisors complained that, although he was conducting many field trips, he did not use them efficiently enough to gather information about military facilities.²⁶ Such harsh evaluation was not unique and many Polish officers from the Copenhagen station were similarly assessed by their supervisors.

Some of the data collected by Polish intelligence was shared with Soviet intelligence. During systematic meetings, Polish station chiefs exchanged information with their GRU counterparts. Such exchanges were conducted orally and without disclosing the names of human sources. During mutual meetings, Polish and Soviet intelligence officers discussed the activities of Danish counterintelligence and their experiences from reconnaissance trips aimed at identifying military facilities.²⁷ For example, in 1966 station chief colonel Kazimierz Węglowski (codename "Albert") shared information on Danish military warehouses, the location of the NATO oil pipeline, and West Germany's intelligence operations in Denmark. In turn, the Soviet military attaché and GRU officer, Leonid Konovalov, informed him about US plans towards Spain as well as about Danish military facilities and Denmark's coastal artillery.²⁸

23 AIPN, 2602/4075, Rozkaz operacyjny nr 1 dla por. Kryś Antoni skierowanego do pracy na stanowisko Kierownika Wydziału Konsularnego przy Poselstwie PRL w Kopenhadze, Warszawa, 30/06/1955, 21–22.

24 AIPN, 2602/3499, Zadania wywiadowcze, March 1956, 12–16.

25 AIPN, 2602/3143, Zadania wywiadowcze, 1954, 214.

26 AIPN, 2602/4075, Notatka do sprawozdania z pracy operacyjnej kpt. Kryś, 25/04/1958, 76.

27 AIPN, 2602/8120, Notatka dotycząca nawiązania współpracy z attaché wojskowym ZSRR Leonidem Konowałowem, January 1966, 138–139.

28 AIPN, 2602/8120, Notatka dotycząca współpracy z Leonid Konowałow za 1. Kwartał 1966, 127.

Most of the data was collected through open-source information. For example, the station collected documents about Danish legal regulations on permanent and temporary residence.²⁹ Polish spies also followed both the local and national press and translated articles which dealt with the Danish military.³⁰ Warsaw sometimes complained about the quality of such reports. In 1963, headquarters underlined that some of the translated articles contained a lot of linguistic errors, proving a poor knowledge of Danish and a “lack of knowledge even of such simple names as: sub-machine gun, or a machine gun”.³¹ However, it was difficult to find much valuable information using only OSINT techniques. Therefore, officers from the station had to systematically leave their desks and offices to travel around Denmark to identify military facilities. Some of these reconnaissance trips were conducted under the guise of family trips. For example, in August 1966, Major Mieczysław Beldowicz (codename “Tadeusz”) visited the Jutland Peninsula with his family and collected data on military units in Nymindegab.³² He did not spot any surveillance, but other reports show that during such field trips Polish officers were often followed by a local counterintelligence and could not freely take pictures of recognized military bases or other buildings that belonged to Danish army.³³ It was a constant challenge to avoid surveillance, especially when officers were tasked with finding and describing dead-drops as well as places for secret meetings. In case of Copenhagen, most of the dead-drops were established in city parks.³⁴ Some of them were probably never used, because having dead-drops was just a first step. It was more important to have someone who would leave a message there, and that task posed a real challenge for Polish military intelligence.

“BETA”, “BRET”, AND THE OTHERS: POLISH HUMINT OPERATIONS

Available documents allow us to reconstruct to some extent the activities of Polish intelligence after the Second World War. However, details remain scarce, and it is often difficult to identify the real names of the assets. It is possible to establish that in the late 1940s, Polish civilian intelligence handled three assets in Denmark: “Spadek”, “Jeleń” (Anna Munch-Møller born Henriksen) and “Friend” (Asger Munch-Møller). The first was recruited in May 1948 and was used mainly to provide information about Polish émigré circles. He was a secretary of the Polish Refugee Council in Sweden (*Rada Uchodźstwa Polskiego*), so he had good knowledge about the ongoing situation within the Polish diaspora. Anna Munch-Møller was recruited in July 1947. She reported on the Danish Social Democratic Party and

29 AIPN, 2602/3107, Sytuacja agencyjna Danii, May 1951, 13–18.

30 AIPN, 2602/3143, Tłumaczenie z prasy duńskiej, 1954, 51–54.

31 AIPN, 2602/14080, Ocena otrzymanych materiałów z Danii, 15/05/1963, 118.

32 AIPN, 2602/8120, Notatka służbowa z podróży służbowej odbytej na Jutlandię, August 1966, 171.

33 AIPN, 2602/3498, Raport do “Sądowskiego”, 17/05/1956, 40.

34 AIPN, 2602/5960, Opisy i szkice dot. martwych skrzynek kontaktowych na terenie Danii, 1953–1956.

Niels Bohr Institute while Asger, her son, was tasked with gaining a position with responsibilities within the social democratic youth organization.³⁵ He did join the party but failed to gain any influence and moved from politics to the film industry. He wanted to study theater and decided in 1951 to travel to West Germany. He lived for some time in Göttingen and West Berlin, where he graduated from the Free University in 1958. During that period, he maintained a secret relationship with Polish intelligence and reported about his colleagues, mainly Jewish students. Thanks to his mother, Asger found employment at the Royal Danish Theatre and left West Germany. His new job, however, was perceived by his handler as not very important and his usefulness for secret work was now limited. Thus, Warsaw decided in 1959 to freeze all contact with "Friend". Overall, during his cooperation with Polish intelligence (between 1947 and 1958), he earned 9976 Danish Crowns and 1500 German Marks.³⁶

The case of Asger Munch-Møller is interesting because it was rare that multiple members of a family – in this case mother and a son – maintained a secret relationship with Polish intelligence and both knew about the cooperation. This case is also unique in terms of the length of cooperation. It was not very common that assets recruited in the late 1940s continued to maintain contact with Polish intelligence for more than ten years. Overall, while it's difficult to re-assess the effectiveness of "Spadek" and "Jeleń", one might conclude that in the late 1940s, Polish intelligence failed to create an efficient intelligence station in Copenhagen. Thus, in the beginning of the 1950s, Warsaw's intelligence capabilities were still limited.³⁷

One very notable example of an early Polish operational success in Denmark that eventually became an intelligence failure was the case of Einar Blechingberg. He was a Danish diplomat and was familiar with Poland because, between 1930 and 1933, he had been a secretary of the Danish embassy in Warsaw. From 1953 onwards, he worked as deputy-director of the Economic Policy Department at the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1952, he was approached by Stanisław Struś, who was a commercial attaché at the Polish legation in Copenhagen and an asset of intelligence (codename "Filip"). Blechingberg was gradually drawn into cooperation, fueled by financial motivation during the recruitment process. At the beginning, he did not want to report anything on paper and passed on only spoken information. As he got more involved with the Polish intelligence service, he started to deliver original classified documents which were copied by his handler. Although Warsaw evaluated the files as very valuable, Blechingberg was assessed as a not very disciplined source. He had an alcohol abuse problem and did not follow security procedures. In July 1956, he was sent to the Danish commercial office in Bonn where he was still handled by Polish intelligence. Finally, in May 1958, he was ar-

35 Andrzej Paczkowski (ed), *Wywiad polski w roku 1949. Sprawozdanie z działalności*, Warsaw 2009, 179–182.

36 AIPN, 003195/948/CD, Notatka służbowa w sprawie zamrożenia od 11/10/1958 r. kontaktu z agentem "Friend" oraz przyszłych jego perspektyw po linii pionu "N" w Danii, Warszawa, 1/1/1959, 40–45.

37 Witold Bagiński, *Wywiad cywilny Polski Ludowej w latach 1945–1961*, Vol. 1, Warsaw 2017, 186.

rested and later sentenced to eight years in prison.³⁸ Copies of the documents which he provided to Polish intelligence were declassified and are now available for researchers.³⁹

The case of Blechingberg proved to some extent that civilian intelligence conducted more effective HUMINT policy than its military counterpart, which faced serious challenges in this field. Indeed, it was difficult for the military officers to select and recruit prospective sources among Danish citizens. There were several reasons which may explain the poor HUMINT results of the Copenhagen station. First, the officers complained that they were too busy to conduct proper intelligence. In 1956, the chief of station "Lars" for example, argued that all his subordinates were overwhelmed by official duties.⁴⁰ Second, language became the major obstacle in performing fruitful HUMINT operations. Most of the officers did not know Danish, or knew only the basics, which made it impossible to forge a strong relationship with local people. And third, cultural challenges made the operational work difficult, as for example Captain Zbigniew Cybulski vel Cieszanowski (aka "Ozga") complained while working undercover as a head of consular department at the Polish legation that Danes "do not take casual acquaintances seriously" which complicated friendly relations.⁴¹ Polish officers also rarely took part in cultural life, which is why they only seldom met new people. In 1955, "Ozga" reported that, despite his almost three-year stay in Denmark, he had never been to the theater or the cinema because he could not afford to visit such places.⁴²

Polish diplomats and spies often did meet a special group within Danish society, namely people with communist beliefs and sympathies. Although Polish intelligence officers maintained some contacts with the Communist Party of Denmark, they were under orders from Warsaw to use such relationships only for getting to know local people. It was generally forbidden to utilize contacts with communists for intelligence purposes.⁴³ Headquarters clearly reiterated that if Danish counterintelligence detected any secret links between the Danish Communist Party (the DKP) and Polish intelligence station, it would have dire consequences for the local communist movement.⁴⁴

Since recruitment of Danes turned out to be too difficult, the Copenhagen station resorted to using Poles who had Danish citizenship or who might obtain it soon. Warsaw sometimes tried to approach Danes living in Poland in order to use them as assets after their return to Denmark. From the early 1950s onwards, Warsaw headquarters put much emphasis on finding HUMINT sources that might be placed on the Isle of Bornholm. Due to its central location in the western Baltic Sea, the island played an important role for communication as well as for military reasons, because it could have been used as a military base, especially to launch an attack to the

38 Ibid., 327–328.

39 AIPN, 01973/1 vol. 1–2, Documents from Einar Blechingberg.

40 AIPN, 2602/3498, Pismo "Larsa" do "Lecha" nr 21/56, 11/11/1956, 77.

41 AIPN, 2602/3140, Sprawozdanie "Ozgi", 31/01/1956, 95.

42 AIPN, 2602/3140, Raport "Ozgi", 14/04/1955, 44.

43 Ibid.

44 AIPN, 2602/3140, Pismo do "Ozgi", 15/02/1955, 11.

south.⁴⁵ This is why Polish military intelligence collected detailed information about Bornholm's military facilities and planned to have assets on the ground. Analysis of available documents suggests that Warsaw tried to deploy sources there, but with little success. The two cases of "Granat" and "Niels" demonstrate how the Polish service approached the infiltration of the island.

In October 1948, Kazimierz Grzegorek (codename "Granat") was recruited by Polish military intelligence. He worked as a sailor on a Danish ship and provided his handlers with information about seaports in Denmark and Sweden. In November 1950, he came back to Poland, where he was trained in basic intelligence techniques. He was then sent to Denmark as an "illegal" which meant he was handled directly by Warsaw headquarters without any contacts with the Copenhagen station. He was tasked to settle in Bornholm and to legalize his stay there. After his arrival in Denmark, he became reluctant to maintain relations with Polish intelligence. In September 1952, Warsaw even sent an officer to find Grzegorek, but he failed to locate his whereabouts. Thus, headquarters concluded that "Granat" had broken off his cooperation with Polish intelligence or might have been even recruited by Danish services.⁴⁶ According to Polish civilian counterintelligence, the 2nd Department of the Ministry of the Interior, such a scenario was quite plausible because Danish intelligence often tried to recruit Polish sailors and later use them for gathering information about communist countries.⁴⁷

In August 1952, Polish military intelligence recruited Jørgen Jørgensen and gave him the codename "Niels". The recruitment was conducted on ideological grounds.⁴⁸ During the Second World War he had been forced to work for Germans as a driver in Vilnius, but he soon defected and, although he did not know the language, he joined a Polish army unit in the Soviet forces. He was assigned to a vehicle repair detail with which he arrived in Gdańsk in 1945 with the rank of corporal. Upon demobilization, he settled in Gdańsk, worked in different companies as a driver, and married a German woman, Gertrude Kopp.⁴⁹ They both had Danish passports, and therefore Polish intelligence planned to use "Niels" as a "sleeper" who would be sent to Denmark. He was supposed to spend around one year in Copenhagen and then was instructed to move with his family to Bornholm. He was tasked to find accommodation, to establish dead-drops, and to collect information about military facilities.⁵⁰ However, his file ends in 1953 which is why it is unlikely that the plan was executed.

In 1961, the Copenhagen station selected Kazimiera Winnicka (born in 1941) as a potential asset after she visited the consular section of the Polish embassy. She

45 AIPN, 2603/2433, Opis wojskowo-geograficzny wyspy Bornholm – opracowanie Zarządu II Sztabu Generalnego Wojska Polskiego, 1952, 3.

46 AIPN, 2602/3412, Projekt przedsięwzięć w stosunku do agenta "GRANAT", Warsaw, 21/11/1955, 157–158.

47 AIPN, 01299/193, Kontrywywiadowcza charakterystyka Danii – opracowanie Departamentu II MSW, Warsaw, February 1960, 12

48 AIPN, 2602/3065, Raport z przebiegu werbunku ob. Duńskiego Jorgensen Jorgen, 3/09/1952, 8.

49 AIPN, 2602/3065, Wniosek o zwerbowanie, 15/07/1952, 2–3.

50 AIPN, 2602/3065, Plan wykorzystania agenta "NIELS", 18/05/1953, 13–14.

was chosen for a further and detailed vetting because she had married a Danish citizen of Polish origin, Zygmunt Winnicki, in 1960. They lived together in the village Æbelnæs where they owned a small farm.⁵¹ Though she did not have access to any classified data, headquarters assessed that she might be a prospective source in the future.⁵² Warsaw, for example, considered using her as a member of a sabotage group or using her house as either a safe house or a secret warehouse.⁵³ After a detailed screening, she was finally recruited (codename “Beta”) in November 1964 during a family visit in Poland. “Patriotism” was stated as the main motivation for the recruitment.⁵⁴ Warsaw instructed her to obtain Danish citizenship within 1–2 years, to limit contacts with Polish diplomatic missions, and to collect information about local military facilities.⁵⁵ Her Polish handler provided her with 450 Danish Crowns as advance payment for her reports and provided her with funds to reimburse her future visit to Poland.⁵⁶

After several meetings, Warsaw realized that “Beta” did have not any intelligence capabilities and that there was no indication that she would get them in the future. When she sold the house and moved to provincial town of Næstved, the idea of using her house for intelligence purposes was also abandoned. Her husband worked in glasswork while Kazimiera took care of raising their children. Her handler got the impression that despite lacking of any intelligence perspectives, she still aspired to cooperate with Polish services. Therefore, Warsaw decided to use her as *adresówka*, which meant that her address was used by Polish intelligence for receiving secret correspondence from other countries.⁵⁷ In 1971, Warsaw evaluated her as “patriotic” and as a loyal asset whose main goal was to observe troop movements and to aid Polish spies in case of a future war. She was also instructed to join Danish Territorial Defence and report on her unit.⁵⁸

In 1972, “Beta” was asked to collect information about a Danish soldier who rented a room from her. She did not execute this task because the man soon moved out of the apartment. She finally joined Danish Territorial Defence in 1975. This was also the last time she had contact with Polish intelligence. Between 1975 and 1984, her case was dormant. During her visit to Poland in 1984, Warsaw wanted to re-establish contact, but the meeting was cancelled. Instead, the service decided to close the case in the wake of the democratic revolution in 1989. Her intelligence evaluation states that although during her cooperation with Polish intelligence she passed along some information about Danish military, her reports were of very poor quality. Polish officers, familiar with the case, suggested that at

51 AIPN, 2602/28105, Wniosek o zawierbowanie Winnickiej Kazimiery, 8/02/1962, 86–88.

52 AIPN, 2602/28105, Raport ze spotkania z kandydatką Winnicka Kazimiera, 21/05/1963, 111–115.

53 AIPN, 2602/28105, Notatka służbowa dot. spotkania z agentką “Beta”, 20/07/1968, 183.

54 AIPN, 2602/28105, Notatka dot. Werbunku Winnickiej Kazimiery, 19/11/1964, 123–124.

55 AIPN, 2602/28105, Instrukcja dla ob. Winnickiej Kazimiery ps. “BETA”, 27/11/1964, 128.

56 AIPN, 2602/28105, Notatka dot. zapoznania się agentki “Beta” z instrukcją specjalną, 27/11/1964, 126.

57 AIPN, 2602/28105, Notatka służbowa ze spotkania z agentką “Beta” w dniach 15 i 16.07.70 r., 27/07/1970, 190.

58 AIPN, 2602/28105, Analiza za rok 1970 oraz zamierzenia na 1971 rok – agentka “Beta”, 18/02/1971, 196.

the end she did everything she could to cease the relationship. Moreover, a too-long break in mutual contact did not give any chance for a continuation of cooperation.⁵⁹

Although “Beta” could not be counted as a big achievement of Polish HUMINT, there was the case of the agent “Bret”. Bogdan Wierzba, aka “Bret”, was one of the most important sources for Polish military intelligence in Denmark.⁶⁰ In 1962, headquarters selected him after his screening as a potential asset because he was dating a Danish woman and because he had visited Copenhagen for a scholarship.⁶¹ He had studied history and graduated from Mikołaj Kopernik University in Toruń. “Bret” was well educated and spoke several foreign languages including Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, and Russian. After his wedding in 1963, he returned to Denmark and found a job at the Second World War Resistance Museum in Copenhagen. He was approached by Colonel Kazimierz Zagólski in April 1963 while visiting the Polish embassy and agreed to cooperate as an “unaware asset” which meant that it was not a formal recruitment, and Zagólski had not revealed his position as an intelligence officer. Wierzba’s operational capabilities, as in the case of “Beta”, were limited but he passed on some information about military facilities used by Nazi Germany in the territory of occupied Denmark during the Second World War.⁶² He had access to such documents because of his work at the museum.⁶³ Finally, on 30 September 1964, Bogdan Wierzba was recruited in a safe house in Warsaw by Major Mieczysław Beldowicz (aka “Tadeusz”), an intelligence officer at the Copenhagen station between 1965 and 1968. The recruitment was based on the grounds of “patriotism”, which means that Wierzba agreed without any coercion to cooperate with Polish military intelligence and that his commitment was confirmed by a hand-signed declaration.⁶⁴ The usefulness of “Bret” was appreciated particularly for his role as a “marching agent” (*agent marszowy*) on the isle of Zealand; this category of HUMINT was commonly used by Warsaw Pact countries and referred to assets who would provide up-to-date information about the movements of troops, navy, and air forces as well as the dislocation of military units and facilities.⁶⁵

Throughout several meetings, “Bret” was briefed about his assignment, instructed how to maintain secret communication channels, and informed about the

59 AIPN, 2602/28105, Wniosek o zrezygnowanie z agentki Kazimiery Winnickiej ps. “Beta”, 21/06/1989, 232–234.

60 His case was described by the Danish media, however without revealing all his personal details: Dan Bjerregaard, Jeppe Findalen, Topspion afsløret: Arbejdede for Danmarks fjender i øst, 7/07/2020, <https://ekstrabladet.dk/nyheder/samfund/topspion-afsloeret-arbejdede-for-danmarks-fjender-i-oest/7941644> (accessed: 23 April 2022).

61 AIPN, 2602/19905, Wyciąg z załącznika nr 8 do pisma 01/00668/63 dot. Wierzba Bogdan, 20/04/1963, 31.

62 AIPN, 2602/19905, Wniosek werbunkowy na ob. Wierzba Bogdana, 23/09/1964, 59–60.

63 AIPN, 2602/11906, Materiały archiwalne od Wierzby, 1963, 1–5.

64 AIPN, 2602/19905, Deklaracja, 30/09/1964, 65.

65 AIPN, 2602/19905, Pismo dot. werbunku Bogdana Wierzby, 1/10/1964, 62–63; Thomas Wegener Friis: Den usynlige front. DDR’s militære spionage i Danmark under den Kolde Krig, Copenhagen 2005, 205.

main and auxiliary places to meet with his handler.⁶⁶ The main goals for Wierzba were to obtain Danish citizenship and to permanently stay in Denmark. In order not to spur unnecessary attention, "Bret" was instructed to strictly follow security procedures and to break any contact with the Polish diplomatic mission as well as to limit his trips to Poland. Furthermore, he was instructed to broaden his circle of friends and colleagues among Danes to utilize them as future "unaware assets" on political, economic, and military issues.⁶⁷ His detailed instructions included military facilities in the region of Roskilde, a railway communication junction in Ringsted, liquid fuel warehouses in Glostrup, as well as the organization and equipment of a military unit located in Territorial Defence (Hjemmeværnet).⁶⁸

From 1966 until his retirement, "Bret" worked at the state and university library in Aarhus.⁶⁹ He soon acquired Danish citizenship, which meant that he might be mobilized for territorial defence units. The last meeting between Wierzba and his Polish handler took place in July 1980. Overall, between 1966 and 1980 he met with them 20 times and passed information over a dozen times using different dead-drops.⁷⁰ During his entire period of cooperation he provided data about Danish territorial defence, internal army regulations and manuals, as well as copies of military journals which were not available through normal distribution.⁷¹ In 1978, he was evaluated as "disciplined and loyal". His main tasks were scheduled for future tension in the international arena and included observing of troops' movements and navy ships in Aarhus seaport as well as monitoring the process of mobilization. He was also supposed to report about recognized symptoms and preparations for a war in Denmark. In case of an outbreak of war, he would have been equipped with a remote radio station and 6,000 USD in cash.⁷² In 1988, Warsaw re-evaluated his case and, despite the pause since 1980, considered re-establishing a secret relationship with "Bret" in 1989.⁷³ It seems, however, that the fall of communism thwarted this plan and Wierzba's files were moved to the archive.

"Bret" did not have any access to restricted data, nor did he work in an institution important to state security. Nevertheless, his job at the library enabled him to collect semi-open information for Polish intelligence that was assessed as average. He was instructed to report systematically just to keep him busy and to tie him to his Polish handlers. His true potential would have been played out during a military conflict and possible invasion of Warsaw Pact troops of Denmark. "Bret" was among the few sources Polish military intelligence had in Denmark in the 1960s and this reflected his value to Warsaw.

66 AIPN, 2602/19905, Notatka dotycząca przeinstruowania agenta "Bret" i zapoznania go z instrukcją specjalną, 8/10/1964, 93–94.

67 AIPN, 2602/19905, Instrukcja specjalna dla ob. Wierzba Bogdana ps. "Bret", 2/10/1964, 82–83.

68 AIPN, 2602/19905, Zadania, 2/10/1964, 85.

69 AIPN, 2602/19905, Notatka dot. spotkania z Bretem, 1967, 107.

70 AIPN, 2602/19907, Agent "Bret" – łączność z agentem, wykaz spotkań, wymian i korespondencji otrzymanej na listówki, 7–9.

71 AIPN, 2602/19907, Agent "Bret" – wykaz materiałów otrzymanych o agenta, 12–13.

72 AIPN, 2602/19905, Karta mobilizacyjna, 21/03/1978, 339–340.

73 AIPN, 2602/19907, Dane o agencji za rok 1988, 233.

CONCLUSIONS

Analysis of the Polish military intelligence performances in Denmark brings several conclusions. First, the Copenhagen station was mainly tasked with the collection of information about Danish military sector and such goals derived from Warsaw Pact war plans. In case of an outbreak of war, the country would be invaded by advancing Polish troops. In order to prepare a successful assault, Warsaw demanded from the station all data which might come in handy in preparing the offensive. Thus, Polish officers collected information through open-source data and conducted field trips aimed at recognizing military facilities. Second, examinations of the declassified files suggests that the station encountered many challenges in organizing its operational work. The spies working undercover as diplomats were overwhelmed by official duties and complained that they did not have enough time for secret work. Moreover, they lacked sufficient knowledge of the Danish language, which severely limited their abilities to perform efficient OSINT and HUMINT.

Finally, the cases of “Bret” and “Beta” demonstrate how significant challenges affected Polish military intelligence when conducting an effective HUMINT policy in Denmark. It was nearly impossible for Polish officers to recruit a native Dane who would have access to restricted military data. In order to fulfill their designated tasks set by headquarters, the Copenhagen station, however, tried to acquire assets among Poles living in Denmark because it was easier to approach them and use some leverage, for example by promising to facilitate visa procedures. Such “favours” were quite important because most of the Poles living in Denmark still had relatives in Poland whom they wanted to visit. “Bret” and “Beta” should, however, not be underestimated. Their main goals would have been revealed during a future war. They would have reported on the movements of troops and they might have been used as auxiliary assets during the invasion of Denmark. Both kept rather low profiles that kept them off the radar of Danish counterintelligence.

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POLISH-DANISH CULTURAL EXCHANGE DURING THE COLD WAR

Marianne Rostgaard

The Cold War was a many-faceted struggle between the world's two superpowers in which ideological competition between societal models was at the core of the conflict. Both the US and the USSR used public or cultural diplomacy including cultural exchange programmes to propagate the values of their own societies. Cultural exchange thus, like any other kind of activity or interaction across the East-West divide, became a highly politicized in-between area.

This short article, based on a paper presented at the conference "Just across the Sea" commemorating 100 years of Polish-Danish diplomatic relations, will focus on the politics of cultural exchange, including its means and its ends. To place the Danish-Polish cultural exchange in its proper context, and to discuss whether Danish cultural Cold War diplomacy differed from that of other countries, I will start with a brief outline of the politics of Cold War cultural diplomacy. The following analysis will examine why Danish governments were interested in contact with Eastern European countries and why the Polish People's Republic (PRL) became a favourite partner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark and the Danish Youth Council, at least among the Eastern European countries in the period around 1965–1978. In conclusion, I will explain why cultural diplomacy and cultural exchange is important, to whom and in what ways.

The article draws on the view of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark and of some of the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) which took part in the actual exchange activities.

THE POLITICS OF CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

Cultural diplomacy researchers often use public and cultural diplomacy as interchangeable terms.¹ However, there is a terminological difference: whereas public diplomacy activities often have the state or a state agency as an originator, rendering public diplomacy one among multiple instruments in foreign policy, cultural diplomacy generally involves non-governmental organisations or even performing artists or other agents involved in the actual exchange activities. Although it was often the case in Eastern Europe during communism, artists, performers and acti-

1 Definitions of public diplomacy, including arts diplomacy, cultural exchange programs, etc. to be found in: Nancy Snow, Philip M. Taylor (eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, Routledge 2009.

vists are still not part of the state apparatus in the West. This asymmetry caused difficulties relating to cross-bloc cultural diplomacy and cultural exchange activities in the Cold War era. Nevertheless, it should be stressed that cultural diplomacy is not reducible to attempts at political propaganda or manipulation by way of particular states because it always also involves non-state actors or people-to-people contact.²

Traditional diplomacy is about state-to-state relations. In public diplomacy, a state (or proxy) will aim to speak directly to and build relations with the public or people in a foreign country. This is also true of cultural diplomacy, though not necessarily through public events. Success in either cultural or public diplomacy is moreover related to the concept of soft power – the kind of appeal that a country has abroad.

To speak more or less directly to the Western public and influence its opinion, the USSR created a number of front organisations with loyalists from the local communist party as core members. In response, the Americans founded the Congress for Cultural Freedom as a counter front organisation.³ Another preferred Soviet approach was artistic diplomacy, i.e. sending opera and ballet companies, symphony orchestras, and the like on tour to display the abundance of Russian/Soviet culture. The Americans similarly sent orchestras to the Soviet Union and Europe to demonstrate American high culture and to disprove the stereotype that Americans were only interested in entertainment and commercial culture.⁴

Another contested field was scientific and scholarly exchange. The US invited talented youth from Europe and other parts of the world to American universities. The USSR likewise invited students, though mainly from third world countries, to attend the universities in Leningrad and Moscow. The aim of this exchange activity was to promote meaningful impressions and to foster friendships with the future elite of the sender country.⁵ In this way, cultural diplomacy and exchange evolved into a kind of arms race between the US and the USSR.

Free and uncensored information in which Americans could speak directly to a Soviet audience was an American top priority. This was also a matter of principle. The most famous example of this kind of cultural diplomacy is perhaps the American exhibition in Moscow in 1959, featuring the so-called “kitchen debate” between Vice President Nixon and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev. To the Americans, the staging of the exhibition was a great victory in itself, for it meant an opportunity speak without censorship to the Soviet citizens. The American way of life with its material wealth was an essential argument for why liberal democracy, defined by its civil rights and liberties, was a superior societal model compared to the

2 Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, Mark C. Donfried (eds.), *Searching for a Cultural Diplomacy*, New York 2010.

3 Frances Stonor Saunders, *Who paid the piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War*, London 2000.

4 See Yale Richmond, *Cultural Exchange & the Cold War. Raising the Iron Curtain*, Philadelphia 2003, 123–127.

5 *Ibid.*, 21–76; Yale Richmond took an active part in cultural exchange as an American foreign service officer during the Cold War.

Soviet system. The American faith in their way of life was not without reason. British historian Susan Reid, however, evaluated the reception of the American exhibition by the Soviet citizens. She paints a different picture of the Soviet reception than the Americans would have expected.⁶ In fact, her reading of the feedback provided by the Soviet audience shows them to be rather unimpressed by American consumer goods. Some exhibition visitors simply denounced the displays as propaganda; others, who had expected to be educated about American technology and scientific progress, were disappointed. The Soviets generally preferred educational exhibitions and information to spectacles and shows of superfluous, commercial goods. They tended to categorize what they saw as propaganda and to dismiss consumer goods as gadgets for the wealthy few, not for ordinary people.⁷ Reid's analyses of the Soviet reception of the American exhibition shows that messages are decoded according to the prior understanding and culture of the receiving public. It is important to bear in mind that public diplomacy (or propaganda) does not always have the intended effect; although the Americans were allowed to speak directly to a Soviet public, the reception of those efforts was embedded in Russian/Soviet culture and perception.

Cultural diplomacy and exchange played an important role in the Soviet doctrine of "peaceful coexistence." The Soviet Union therefore took a number of initiatives from 1956 onwards to strengthen cultural exchange activities. The Eastern European countries followed suit.⁸ In response to this "cultural offensive", a number of NATO member countries called a meeting in 1960 to coordinate Western initiatives and share experiences regarding cultural diplomacy vis-à-vis the Eastern bloc countries. The British initiative was backed by the Americans. An unofficial NATO forum, "The working group on cultural relations with the Eastern bloc countries," was created; Denmark was invited to participate from 1963 onwards. The Americans originally sought to promote their more aggressive approach to cultural exchange in the working group. Towards this end, they wanted the working group to issue binding decisions for the member countries. In the context of this article, it is worth noting that the majority of the European countries (including Denmark) were skeptical of the American approach to cultural diplomacy and gradually developed alternatives to exchanges across the East-West divide.⁹ It is of course also important to bear in mind that small countries like Denmark did not command the resources that were available to countries like Britain or France or certainly the US. This forced them to devise different methods of cultural diplomacy.

6 Susan E. Reid, *Who will Beat Whom? Soviet Popular Reception of the American National Exhibition in Moscow 1959*, in: *Kritika* 9 (2008), 855–904; Tomas Tolvaisas, *Cold War "Bridge-building": US Exchange Exhibits and Their reception in the Soviet Union 1959–1967*, in: *Journal of Cold War Studies* 12/4 (2010), 3–31.

7 Reid, *Who Will Beat Whom?*, 895.

8 Nigel Gould-Davies, *The Logic of Soviet Cultural Diplomacy*, in: *Diplomatic History* 27/2 (2003), 193–214; Anikó Macher, *Hungarian Cultural Diplomacy, 1957–1963. Echoes of Western Cultural Activity in a Communist Country*, in: Gienow-Hecht and Donfried (eds.), *Searching for a Cultural Diplomacy*, New York 2010, 75–108.

9 Marianne Rostgaard, *Dansk kulturdiplomati over for østblokken*, *Historisk Tidsskrift* 111/2 (2011), 479–506.

THE WHYS AND HOWS OF DANISH-POLISH CULTURAL EXCHANGE DURING THE COLD WAR

The story of Danish-Polish cultural dialogue during the Cold War started in the late 1950s. At the time, Danish foreign office diplomats faced a dilemma. On the one hand, the only way to sustain contact with the citizens of Eastern bloc countries was through state-regulated exchange programs that, however, did not allow for normal people-to-people contact. On the other hand, foreign office diplomats and civil society activists wanted to break the virtual monopoly that communist parties and friendship societies had on cultural relations with the Eastern bloc countries. Initially, Danish diplomats were skeptical about the usefulness of the official East-West cultural agreements. Their misgivings were caused by the bilateral agreements on cultural exchange in the late 1950s originally suggested by the Soviet Union. Gradually however, Danish diplomats developed a more positive view on the potential of cultural agreements.

In its own national interest as a potential front-line state in a war, Denmark took a keen interest in lessening tensions on the European continent, and, whenever possible, tried to act as a bridge-builder between East and West. This was not in opposition to its role as a staunch member of NATO, but a necessary supplement to that role. Both the Danish prime minister for most of the 1960s, Jens Otto Krag, and the minister of foreign affairs, Per Hækkerup, visited the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries several times from the 1940s onwards. In the wake of a tour to Prague, Beograd, and Warsaw in 1965, Per Hækkerup formulated a so-called 'wedge-strategy'. The policy was intended to gradually widen the split or at least preserve the status quo by strengthening ties with Eastern European countries interested in a cross-bloc dialogue and in following a more independent course in foreign policy.¹⁰ Per Hækkerup noted that a couple of Eastern European countries were inclined to follow a more independent foreign policy, including Poland. In the mid-1960s, the Danish government thus undertook diplomatic initiatives to strengthen ties with Eastern Europe. Cultural exchange became part of this new policy.

During the Cold War, Denmark's most important foreign partners were the other Scandinavian and Western European countries as well as the US. For Danish diplomats, consulting with Norway (sometimes also Sweden) and Britain in foreign policy decision processes was routine. Although it was firmly rooted in the Western alliance system, Denmark never lost its interest in Central and Eastern Europe after 1945.

Denmark's hope of diversifying its trading partners during the 1950s and 1960s was staked on increasing trade with the Socialist countries and the Soviet Union. This decreased its dependence on Great Britain, in particular, both as an export

10 Thorsten Borring Olesen, *Poul Villaume, I blokodelingens tegn*, Copenhagen 2005, 581–583; Poul Villaume, *Anticipating European Détente: Denmark, NATO and the Struggle for an All-European Security Conference in the 'Long 1970s'*, in: Poul Villaume, Rasmus Mariager, Helle Porsdam (eds.), *The 'Long 1970s': Human Rights, East-West Détente and Transnational Relations*, Routledge, 2016, 125–144.

market and for importing coal. One of the alternatives to British coal was Polish coal.¹¹ Besides trade, European security was the most important reason why Denmark's Ministry of Foreign Affairs wanted to maintain good bilateral relations with the PRL. The subjects with the highest priority varied over the course of four decades. In any case, the third subject on the agenda when ministers of foreign affairs or prime ministers from Denmark and Poland met was always cultural exchange. This was not necessarily because cultural exchange in itself was perceived as a matter of great importance by the diplomats and politicians but because it served other useful purposes.

Poland initiated the cultural exchange agreement between Denmark and the PRL in 1960. The first formal Danish cultural exchange agreement signed with an Eastern bloc country was soon followed by an agreement with the Soviet Union in 1962¹² and a revival of an old agreement with Czechoslovakia (originally signed in 1937). Other Warsaw Pact countries came knocking in the mid-1960s, which prompted the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to pen a strategy for cultural exchange with the "Eastern bloc countries" or the "countries in Eastern Europe". Danish diplomats used both geographical terms, where the first reflected the presence of the Soviet Union.

In 1965, seen from the point of view of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the primary purpose of cultural exchange was to weather the Cold War. It was to remind people in Western as well as Eastern Europe that Europeans had a common past, and one day might again have a common future.¹³ Any contact was deemed better than none at all; cultural exchange was understood as a way of keeping a line of communication open. The main goal was to strengthen cultural ties within Europe and thus facilitate direct contact between Polish and Danish scholars. Poland was recognized as part of a European cultural community, as a contributor to a European cultural heritage of music, literature, art, and science. Promoting knowledge of another country's contributions to this common European culture was believed to be a way to educate and to increase understanding between peoples. Danish foreign office diplomats as well as non-governmental activists often referred to "Europe" as a way to establish common ground in exchange activities with their Polish counterparts, and to highlight what should be promoted as part of a country's original contributions to a shared heritage. Traditional cultural diplomacy with a focus on famous authors, composers, etc. (from H.C. Andersen to F. Chopin) was thus the starting point of Danish-Polish cultural exchange, and remained central throughout the Cold War, although less so in the 1970s and 1980s.

11 Per Boje, Marianne Rostgaard, Mogens Rüdiger, *Handelspolitikken som kamplads under Den Kolde Krig*, Aalborg 2012.

12 As part of an official state visit by the Danish prime minister to the Soviet Union in 1956, a limited number of specific cultural exchange activities were agreed upon. It may thus be argued that the first Danish cultural exchange agreement with an Eastern bloc country was signed in 1956. It was, however, not a general agreement, therefore the agreement with Poland signed in 1960 is considered the first official Danish cultural exchange agreement with an Eastern bloc country during the Cold War.

13 Brief, *Orientering fra Politisk-Juridisk Afdeling* 3 August 1965. Danish National Archives, Udenrigsministeriet (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), gruppeordnede sager, 1945–1972, 41.C.143.

In 1969, the head of the Danish delegation to NATO's annual East-West Contacts Working Group meeting, took the opportunity to formulate a number of key points regarding East-West exchange in his summary of the meeting. He remarked that the Eastern Europeans participating in cultural diplomacy were generally staunch supporters of socialist regimes, whereas "the brain people" – technicians and other kinds of professionals – appeared much more open to new ideas. The ministry also noted positively that there was an interest in youth exchange from young people on both sides of the divide in Europe. Discussions at the annual meetings of the working group for cultural exchange galvanized the decision to formulate a new strategy for cultural exchange.¹⁴ The new strategy was to emphasize what the ministry termed "socio-cultural exchange" and "people-to-people contact." The new strategy downplayed traditional arts diplomacy and prioritized exchanges in areas related to common societal challenges such as urbanization, city planning, and environmental issues. It was noted that both Denmark and the PRL had seen, among other things, migration from the countryside to the cities and the rise of new suburban housing developments. It was thought that common societal questions could serve as a starting point for a dialogue, whereas vital differences between the Western and Eastern societies could be pointed out. The suggestion of the ministry was to strengthen exchanges among the youth and professionals within a broad range of areas. The new set of priorities was also viewed as a way to integrate cultural diplomacy into a broader framework, for instance by combining these efforts with trade exhibitions. In this way, scarce resources could be utilized in a more efficient manner.¹⁵

DANISH-POLISH YOUTH EXCHANGE

The Danish-Polish youth leader seminars provide an example of non-traditional cultural exchange. They were part of a grass-roots initiative, with the cultural exchange agreement between Denmark and Poland serving as a kind of framework. The first seminar was organised in 1965 at Magleås Folk High School in Denmark. From 1965–1969, a group of Polish and Danish youth (30–40 people in all) met each year for a two week summer course. No seminar was held in 1970, but activities were resumed in 1971, albeit in a different form. The event was called "The youth leader seminars."¹⁶ They were initiated by the Danish Youth Council and Danes engaged in the folk high school movement. The organizer of the first seminar

14 Summaries from the yearly meetings in NATO's East-West Contacts Working Group in 1969 and 1970 Danish National Archives, Udenrigsministeriet (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), gruppeordnede sager, 1945–1972, 41.C.143.

15 Rostgaard, *Dansk kulturdiplomati*, over for Østblokken ca. 1960–1972, *Historisk Tidsskrift*, bd. 111,2, Copenhagen 2011, 497–500.

16 For a longer version of the story of the Danish-Polish Youth leader seminars see: Marianne Rostgaard, *Challenging Old Cold War Stereotypes: The Case of Danish-Polish Youth Exchange and the European Détente, 1965–75*, in: Simo Mikkonen, Pia Koivunen (eds.), *Beyond the Divide. Entangled histories of Cold War Europe*, New York 2015, 44–62.

was a teacher at Krogerup Folk High School, and all the seminars in Denmark used folk high schools as their venue. The idea behind the youth leader seminars was to meet and discuss themes of current interest and shared relevance in an open atmosphere. The aim was not necessarily consensus. (The Danish organisers explicitly dissociated themselves from issuing any kind of communiqué or common statements from the seminars). Instead, the focus was on exchanging views and enhancing one's own understanding of why people thought differently. The Danish Youth Council viewed the youth leader seminars as a way to break down "old Cold War stereotypes". They deliberately aimed to create a forum for a mutual exchange of viewpoints, in obvious contrast to the youth festivals arranged by communist youth organizations (which they deemed quasi-authoritarian). The Danish Youth Council wanted instead to create what they termed "a real dialogue," a forum for debate free from "tedious repetition of official standpoints". They specifically proposed focusing on practical solutions to common challenges, instead of differences in ideologies and political systems, as a starting point for debates.

The youth leader seminars were a high-level exchange that parted from traditional cultural exchange insofar as the participants from the political youth organizations, which often chaired the Danish Youth Council, took a keen interest in politics. The Polish counterpart of the Danish Youth Council was OKWOM (Ogólnopolski Komitet Współpracy Organizacji Młodzieżowych; All-Polish Committee for Cooperation of Youth Organisations, from 1973 supplanted by FSZMP, Federacja Socjalistycznych Związków Młodzieży Polskiej; Federation of the Socialist Unions of the Polish Youth). One recurrent theme in the seminars was relations with the West Germany and the possible recognition of the Oder-Neisse borderline between West Germany and PRL. The Poles sought to persuade the Danes that this would be a just and wise policy that would create peace in Europe. They appeared to have considered the Young Social Democrats and other youth politicians as a possible conduit to the mother parties and thus Danish parliament. A number of the leading members of the Danish Youth Council also later made a career in the Danish parliament and became ministers.¹⁷ In this way, then, the Poles were right to view them as a channel of influence, at least in the long run. When it came to the Oder-Neisse border, though, the Poles met little resistance. The Danish Young Social Democrats argued that people in government in West Germany were slowly recognizing the Oder-Neisse border, and that Danish politicians in general were in favour of the Oder-Neisse border, even though they did not say so publicly (as of 1967).¹⁸ The Danes, in turn, tried to convince the Poles that West Germany was not governed by

17 The social democrats K.B Andersen (minister of foreign affairs of Denmark 1971–1973 and 1975–78), Dorte Bennedsen (minister of ecclesiastical affairs 1971–73 and minister of education 1979–82) and Ole Løvig Simonsen (member of the Danish parliament) at different points in time all served as board members or chairmen of The Danish Youth Council.

18 For a longer version of this part of the story of the Danish-Polish Youth leader seminars see: Marianne Rostgaard, *Changing the European 'Front System': The case of Danish-Polish Youth exchange 1965–85* in: Poul Villaume, Rasmus Mariager, Helle Porsdam (eds.), *The 'Long 1970s': Human Rights, East-West Détente and Transnational Relations*, Routledge 2016, 107–123.

fascists and revanchists and, moreover, that German rearmament did not constitute a threat.

Another political debate concerned the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. By coincidence, the youth leader seminar took place at the same time as the invasion (August 1968). According to the Danish summary of the seminar, an open debate of the invasion evolved rather spontaneously.¹⁹

In the official program, the headings of the seminars were typically neutral like "The contribution of young people to peace in Europe". Peace (with Europe) was a common denominator. Interestingly, the minutes and summaries of the seminars in Danish archives suggest that the discussions did develop into a real dialogue. The seminars thus seem to have fulfilled one of their primary aims: to create a forum for an open exchange of views.

Not all youth leaders participating in the seminars were aspiring politicians. The participants of course reflected the breadth of the Danish Youth Council, including youth organisations such as Boy and Girl Scouts, sports federations, and the like. The cultural exchange agreement seems to have allowed the Polish scouting organisation (ZHP) to team up with KFUK (Y.W.C.A) instead of their traditional partner organisation DKU (Danish Young Communists). KFUK (Y.W.C.A.) was a member of the Danish scouting organization and as such a member of the Danish Youth Council. While the Polish authorities were worried about ZHP's link to KFUK, the relationship was tolerated in the mid-1970s, probably because it was established through the Danish Youth Council.²⁰

Apart from providing a forum for the open discussion of issues of common political interest, the seminars also simply created a chance to travel. Participants were able to see each other's countries, an opportunity most Polish youth would not have had without a cultural exchange agreement. Insights gained into another nation's culture involved learning something about the nation's history and cultural heritage, which, in turn, promoted understanding.

Besides the youth leader seminars, the Danish Youth Council served as an umbrella organization for organizing exchange activities in general. These included a visit by Polish engineering students to the Danish Technical University (DTH) in 1969, but also scout camps and different kinds of sports, games, etc. One of the obstacles for expanding exchange activities was of course language. The young Poles invited to Denmark were required to speak either English, German, Danish or another Scandinavian language. In some cases, the Danes who spoke Polish (or the Poles who spoke Danish) appear to have acted as interpreters. Without a common language, dialogue was of course challenging. As one of the Danes (from a Girl Scouts' organisation) remarked in an evaluation of the experience of the youth exchange: "Poland is different." Fundamentally, what this young Danish woman meant to say was that Poland differed from her imagined stereotype. She learned that Poland had its own history and culture, and that the countries in Eastern Europe were as different from each other as the countries in Western Europe. In fact, she

19 DUF's (Danish Youth Council's) archive, box 148, folder: The 1968 youth leader seminar. Danish National Archives.

20 YMCA and YWCA were delegalized in Poland in 1949 and re-established only in 1990.

likely realized that there was no such thing as a stereotypical Eastern bloc country.²¹ Judging from the scarce documentation, it seems like the Polish Girls Scouts appreciated the more relaxed atmosphere of Danish scouting camps (as opposed to Poland's military tradition of organizing scouting activities).²² If this was a common outcome, it signals that another important goal of the exchange activities had been reached, namely enhancing understanding among nations and gaining insight into how things may be organized differently in other countries.

THE ZENITH OF EXCHANGE ACTIVITIES IN THE 1970s

The Polish-Danish cultural exchange agreement was renewed and extended within the framework of a new exchange agreement in 1972. The occasion for this agreement was a meeting between the two countries' ministers of foreign affairs to discuss the upcoming CSCE conference (which took place in Helsinki in 1975 – preparations started in 1971). The minutes from the ministers' meeting show that both officials valued the youth leader seminars. The growth and success of the exchange activities in previous years served as an argument to renew and boost related activities.

The main issue on the agenda for the meeting in 1972 was European security. However, the minutes highlight how cultural exchange – if deemed successful – might become a steppingstone for cooperation in other fields of diplomacy. The ministers agreed to consult with each other further in the run-up process to what became the Helsinki conference and to broaden people-to-people contacts in the coming years.²³

Exchange activities flourished in the early 1970s. On the Danish side, this nurtured the hope of a general opening of the iron curtain and relatively free relations, organized on a people-to-people (via organizations) basis. Activities still rested on practical questions or common interests: Danish and Polish architects visited the suburbs of Copenhagen and Warsaw to discuss city planning; students from agricultural colleges met to examine farming issues; musicians and people from experimental theaters met to collaborate. It seems that the artists involved in exchange activities in the 1970s, Danes and Poles alike, were often from alternative or under-

21 Interview with Elisabeth Fabricius, Danish Girl Scouts Union, in "Førerbladet" (Magazine) (clippings from Danish newspapers and magazines, DUFs (Danish Youth Council's) archive, box 148, Danish National Archives.

22 Rostgaard, *Challenging old cold war stereotypes*, 53.

23 Minutes from meeting between the Polish (Stefan Olszowski) and Danish (K.B. Andersen) ministers of foreign affairs, 11 April 1972 in Warsaw. Stefan Olszowski in 1972 had very high expectations regarding enhanced contacts between Denmark and Poland and valued the Danish-Polish youth exchange. See also report from the Danish Embassy in Warsaw, 29 February 1972. Udenrigsministeriet: Depecher, Warszawa, 1848–1988 kasse 447 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, reports from the Embassy in Warsaw 1848–1988, box 447), Danish National Archives. Both Stefan Olszowski and K.B. Andersen had earlier in their careers been involved in youth exchange, K.B. Andersen as one of the founding fathers of the Danish Youth Council in 1945.

ground milieu. Delegations of Danish and Polish journalists also visited each other, along with scholars, scientists, librarians, and other professionals.²⁴

Based on these developments, the Danish government argued, e.g. in NATO forums, that the Polish-Danish exchange program in the 1970s showed how a gradual transformation allowing to freer movement of information, people, and ideas was possible.²⁵

DISCONTINUITIES OF CONTACT

History, of course, is not linear. At the end of the 1970s, the interest in cultural exchange waned again. Available Danish sources suggest that this was due to a decreased Polish interest in contacts with Denmark and Scandinavia, apart from in trade. The main reason appears to have been the mounting financial problems and social unrest in Poland. From around 1978–79, the Polish government became preoccupied with interior politics at the expense of building long-term external relationships and taking an interest in common European problems.²⁶

The history of Danish-Polish youth exchange is therefore a story of discontinuity. The actual partners of the Danish Youth Council, for instance, changed over time, and personal discontinuities affected the relations. In 1970, the change in government in Poland (from Gomulka to Gierek) affected a temporary halt to exchange activities. There was popular unrest, a general uncertainty about the future, and concern with issues not related specifically to cultural exchange. Though activities resumed, the cultural exchange activities dwindled more permanently in the late 1970s, and came to a standstill due to the imposition of martial law in Poland in the years 1981–83. Official relations were resumed in 1984, but activities were few. What may be termed unofficial contacts, however, continued even in 1981 and 1982. Members of the Danish Youth Council argued, as they had done previously,

24 See Kulturministeriet, journalsager, *Kulturaftaler/samarbejde med Polen 1973–1988*, kasse 15–17 (Danish Ministry of Culture, *Cultural relations with Poland 1973–1988*, boxes 15–17) and Udenrigsministeriet, journalsager, 1973–1988, 42. *Dan–Polen*, kasse 284–286 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 42. *Denmark–Poland*, boxes 284–286), both Danish National Archives.

25 In 1970–71, as a run up to the preparatory meetings for the Helsinki conference, it was debated at NATO meetings whether cultural exchange contributed to the end goal: Free movement of people, ideas and information. The Danish delegation pointed to Danish experience and the Danish-Polish Youth exchange as an argument for enhancement of cultural relations as a way to create at least a freer movement of people, ideas and information. The story about how the Danish-Polish youth exchange became part of an argument in NATO about the potential of cultural exchange is told in more detail in: Rostgaard, *Changing the European 'Front System'*, 113–116.

26 See reports from the Danish Embassy in Warsaw 1978, 1979 and 1980. Until 1978 it was a staple of these reports to talk about enhancing contacts and the good relations witnessed by the cultural exchange programs. Nothing of the sort is mentioned in the reports referred to above. Udenrigsministeriet: *Depecher, Warszawa, 1848–1988* kasse 506 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, reports from the Embassy in Warsaw 1848–1988, box 506), Danish National Archives.

that superpower politics should not be allowed to dismantle people-to-people contacts and tried to keep contact lines open.²⁷

In 1983, the Danish ambassador to Poland reported that the Polish system in general considered contacts with the peaceable Scandinavian countries to be less controversial and less threatening than contacts with people from other West-European states. He recommended again utilizing opportunities to expand people-to-people contacts between Denmark and Poland. Contacts, including on an official level, thus resumed in 1984. In the 1980s, the aim of cultural exchange was the same as it had been since 1972: To promote people-to-people contact with the least possible interference from state authorities. Once again, cultural exchange activities seemed to have gained importance in the mid-1980s as a way to keep contacts alive in times when other forms of diplomatic relations were strained.²⁸

LESSONS LEARNED FROM DANISH-POLISH CULTURAL EXCHANGE DURING THE COLD WAR?

From the early 1960s onwards, the records consistently show a Polish interest in Denmark and the other Scandinavian countries as model societies, a veritable “third way” between East and West. Moreover, Poland and Denmark had a common interest in European security. They were effectively junior partners within their respective camps. While Denmark is a significantly smaller country than Poland, their more peripheral standing created possibilities and room for maneuvering in international politics in the decade from the mid-1960s to the end of the 1970s. Denmark and Poland both wanted to strengthen the CSCE process, and they each benefitted from strengthening contacts and mutual relations.

One lesson to be learned from this cross-border history is that people-to-people contact (as part of a cultural exchange program, with organized interaction, and designed to promote something about another nation’s culture) increases international understanding. What the actual reason for the interaction is is perhaps less important. Whether it’s scouting, football tournaments, music festivals, or student exchange, there must be a possibility of interacting and learning. Personally, visiting a foreign country is critical for promoting greater understanding, especially if there is a chance in dialogue and there is room for informal interactions. Seen from the Danish side, the end goal of cultural exchange was always unhindered people-to-people contact without the interference of a state power. If this could not be

27 See *DU bladet* (journal for members of the Danish Youth Council), no. 6, 1981 and *DU bladet* editorial no. 3, 1983 (“Øst-vest samarbejde er også ungdommens sag”) mentioning that the Danish Youth Council has recently visited Poland and that contacts will be resumed (after a temporary stop since summer 1982).

28 See reports from the Danish Embassy in Warsaw, 7 April 1983 and report, 19 February 1985. *Udenrigsministeriet, Journalsager 1973–88*, 41. Dan-Pol, pakke 4 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, reports from the Embassy in Warsaw), Danish National Archives.

accomplished, the aim of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark was to make the Polish government agree to organization-to-organization exchange with the least possible interference from the authorities, knowing well that Polish organizations were not associations of free people. As the examples mentioned in this article show, real dialogue and mutual exchanges were more or less possible.

A second lesson is that cultural exchange programs can serve as icebreakers or possibly lightning rods. They can survive even in troubled times when relations may be souring for other reasons. It is always easier to resume an exchange than to have to start over from scratch. Therefore, although cultural exchange is not high politics and is often regarded as an area of modest significance (compared e.g. to security and trade), it may also persist in a challenging political climate, as long as it is regarded as a realm to some degree outside of foreign international politics as such.

A final lesson concerns the importance of creating mutual understanding as a precondition for establishing common ground. During the Cold War, part of the significance of Danish-Polish cultural exchange was to remind us Europeans that we share a common past.

For good or bad, we also share a common future. Dialogue about it, including the ways in which our national cultures are different, is therefore likely a precondition for greater unity going forward.

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A PERSONAL ACCOUNT OF SCHOLARSHIP THROUGH THE IRON CURTAIN

Svend Gottschalk Rasmussen

This article is, for the most part, based on my experiences from my time at the Adam Mickiewicz University (UAM) in Poznań in the so-called Polish People's Republic. I worked as an assistant in the Scandinavian department, a part of the Institute of German Philology from 1980 until 1982. Subsequently, I was appointed as a Danish lecturer at UAM in 1982 and worked in this capacity until 1988. For Scandinavian studies, the 1980s was a transformational time. Students were keenly interested in the neighboring Nordic countries, which for them constituted the most accessible part of the Western world. Over this period, the Scandinavian department expanded and was established as an independent scientific unit with its own chair, the Katedra Skandynawistyki (Chair of Scandinavian Studies).¹ Politically, it was also a challenging time as the communist regime was stuck in a decade-long political and economic crisis which was only resolved shortly after I left the country.

In Poznań, Scandinavian studies had been a tradition since the interwar period, when language studies in Swedish and Danish were established. The idea was that a native speaker in Danish and Swedish (later on Norwegian and Finnish) would provide practical language lessons. The first Danish lecturer in Poznań was Ingeborg Stemann, who worked there 1921–1925.² The Second World War put a temporary end to Scandinavian studies, and the subject was not revived until 1953, when Dr. Mieczysław Kobylański restarted Swedish instruction at the end of the Stalinist period.³ Dr. Kobylański described the immense contrast between the dark communist times, when the regime used terror against normal citizens, and the good cheer during Swedish lessons at the university, where students would sing “Flickorna i Smaaland (“The Girls in Smaaland”), a nostalgic song about Swedish girls picking flowers under the birches.

This period of thaw and Władysław Gomułka's rise to power as first secretary of the ruling communist party (PZPR) in 1956 marked a turning point in the relations between Poland and Western countries. In the West – as well as in the Nordic countries – there was a desire to weaken the influence of the Soviet Union, and the Poles saw the possibility of renewing contacts to people across the Cold War divide. This also had consequences for the micro-cosmos of Scandinavian studies. In June 1960, the first cultural agreement between Poland and Denmark was signed in Den-

1 <https://ks.amu.edu.pl/strona-glowna/o-katedrze/historia> (accessed 26 October 2020)

2 Helge Larsen, Ingeborg Stemann, in: Dansk Biografisk Lexikon, https://biografiskleksikon.lex.dk/Ingeborg_Stemann (accessed 26 October 2020).

3 <https://ks.amu.edu.pl/strona-glowna/o-katedrze/historia> (accessed 26 October 2020)

mark by the foreign ministers, Adam Rapacki and Jens Otto Krag.⁴ Cultural agreements with other Scandinavian countries followed, creating the basis for the development of further contacts and Scandinavian studies in Poznań. The key developments occurred as follows:

1962: Establishment of Norwegian lectureship at UAM in Poznań (qualification of Master of Arts still not possible)

1967: Establishment of Danish lectureship at UAM in Poznań (qualification of Master of Arts still not possible)

1974: Establishment of Master of Arts program in Swedish and Norwegian within the framework of the Institute of Germanic Philology

1975: Establishment of Master of Arts program in Danish and Finnish within the framework of the Institute of Germanic Philology

By 1975, Adam Mickiewicz University was the only university in Eastern Europe to have four separate Scandinavian philology programs.⁵

The following account about working as a Danish lecturer is largely based on my own experiences from my stay in Poznań in 1980–1988. According to the cultural agreement, the Danish lecturer was nominated by the Danish Ministry of Education and the Danish Department at UAM. Frequently, the lecturer – also according to the cultural agreement – would nominate a Danish assistant, who would help with the often tiresome job of teaching the Polish students Danish language. Thus, there were normally two Danish native speakers working at the university in Poznań. The most important task was to help students develop a high degree of fluency in the Danish language. Literature and grammar were taught by excellent Polish lecturers or professors. Every year the Danish Ministry of Education provided an additional subsidy so that Danish books could be bought in Denmark and given to the Danish department. Furthermore, the department received a Danish newspaper daily, which was not the communist paper. These small Danish subsidies were vital, since the Polish Złoty was inconvertible and the department did not have access to hard Western currency. Furthermore, the cultural agreement made it possible to invite leading specialists in Danish language and literature to Poznań, where they would give lectures to students and staff. While there were no obvious restrictions concerning the selection of themes or texts, I avoided overtly political Cold War subjects. Otherwise, my colleagues and I acted as if the Cold War did not exist. The Danish-Polish cultural agreement was designed to spread the knowledge of Danish language and culture to Poland; at the same time, however, the principle of reciprocity was important. Poland thus likewise sent a native speaker to the Polish studies department in Denmark to work on spreading knowledge about Poland. It is also worth mentioning that the Nordic Council financed a video collection for the Scandinavian department. It was a wonderful opportunity to show films and

4 Henry Andreassen: *Współpraca polsko-duńska po 1945 r. – wybrane przykłady*, in: Jan Szymański (ed.): *Polska-Dania w ciągu wieków*, Gdańsk 2004, 317–320.

5 Eugeniusz Rajnik: *Forschung und Lehre am Institut für Skandinavistik und Baltologie der Adam Mickiewicz-Universität Poznań (1984–2004)*, in: *Folia Scandinavica Posnaniensia*, vol. 8 Poznań 2004, 9.

television programs to the students, who had no other exposure to serious Danish films or TV programs.

As Scandinavian studies was a small program, Scandinavian philology programs could only admit new students every second year. Thus, the Danish lecturers had to teach two groups: for instance, a 1st year group and a 3rd year group, each consisting of approximately 12–13 students. There were also state-financed scholarships that we could award to the students so that they could come to Denmark and take a language course for one month. The Danish lecturer, in consultation with his Polish colleagues, was responsible for determining which student could go to Denmark. Some longer term scholarships were also given to Polish researchers in the Danish department. Beyond the cultural agreement, some folk high schools invited our students to take courses in Denmark. Contacts between Poland and Denmark flourished thanks to the work of the Danish philology program. Many of these contacts were in fact quite spontaneous and were not initiated by the Danish lecturer. Every effort was made to create a specific “Danish” atmosphere in the Danish department and, more broadly, a “Scandinavian” atmosphere in Scandinavian studies. The tradition of an annual Scandinavian evening, where the students from every philology program gave performances, was established.

During the Cold War, and especially after the introduction of martial law on the 13 December 1981, you had to accept certain restrictions as a Danish lecturer. The West and the East – and, accordingly, Denmark and Poland – were political enemies. I felt that I had to be extremely careful about getting involved in anything political. I did not want to give the communist regime any pretext for shutting down Danish philology. In a way, the Polish researchers’ work on Danish grammar, literature and history was in my hands. To prevent them from being robbed of the possibility to continue that work, I did not participate in any political demonstrations in the streets. I also did not export materials to Denmark from the underground solidarity movement.

I never doubted that the secret police was keeping an eye on me. I had also had certain experiences from earlier scholarships in the Soviet Union. This was, in fact, confirmed several years ago when I received my own file from the archives of the secret police in IPN (The Institute of National Remembrance). In 1999, a law was passed that permitted every citizen to access his own file in the archives of the secret police in IPN.⁶ In my file, there were 160 pages on my life in the Polish People’s Republic. On p. 18, I read:

[...] from the operational knowledge we have about our enemy’s working methods, it appears, that this category of foreigners (*foreign lecturers – SGR*) is actively used by secret services to conduct hostile activities against the Polish People’s Republic.⁷

6 Dziennik Gazeta Prawna, 27 May 2010, *Każdy, kto nie był agentem, może od dzisiaj otrzymać akta z IPN*, <https://www.gazetaprawna.pl/wiadomosci/artykuly/424419,kazdy-kto-nie-byl-agentem-moze-od-dzisiaj-otrzymac-akta-z-ipn.html> (accessed 30 October 2020).

7 My file in IPN has the following signature (Sygnatura archiwalna): IPN Po 08/2003, p. 18: “[...] z posiadanej wiedzy operacyjnej o metodach pracy przeciwnika wynika, że ta kategoria cudzoziemców jest aktywnie wykorzystywana przez służby specjalne do prowadzenia wrogiej działalności przeciwko PRL.”

It is conceivable that certain colleagues or students passed on information about me to the police. The fact that the Poles had to apply to the police for a foreign passport created interdependence. In return for the passport, the police could demand information. Of course, the secret police wanted to find out about my contacts, lifestyle, personal interests and even bad habits, if any.

When I read my file I learned that I gave higher marks to attractive females. I also read the following:

S. Rasmussen is among students known as a person who will not refuse an invitation to take part in a student party, very often strongly liquefied with alcohol. He leads a life of dissipation [...] ⁸

I can easily imagine that a student might be forced by a police officer to deliver information about the lecturer in exchange for a passport. Of course, I attended parties, but I was not a drunkard; I also did not take looks into account when grading my female students. As a lecturer, you had to tolerate being shadowed by the secret police. At that time, there was also a lack of supplies in the shops, which gave you a chance to learn how to bribe, for instance when you wanted to buy petrol for your car. Nevertheless, my position as a foreign lecturer in Poland was a privileged one. I could easily go to Denmark. I had hard currency and could buy whatever I wanted in the dollar shops. On the other hand, I was never contacted by Western secret services in order to spy for them. At least, I was not aware of any such efforts – though I may have been too naive to recognize them.

In conclusion, I can say that the cultural agreements between Denmark (and other Scandinavian countries) and Poland were immensely important for building bridges between the countries during a very difficult time in a very divided Europe. As for myself, I might have found another type of employment, but this was a unique experience. Moreover, if you wanted to learn Slavonic languages, you had to be willing to live in societies with governments you didn't like.

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8 “S. Rasmussen znany jest wśród studentów z tego, iż nie odmawia zaproszenia do udziału w imprezie studenckiej często mocno “zakrapianej” alkoholem. Prowadzi hulawczy tryb życia [...]” My file in IPN has the following signature (Sygnatura archiwalna): IPN Po 08/2003, 31.

DENMARK AND SOLIDARNOŚĆ

Thomas Wegener Friis / Władysław Bulhak

On 1 January 1981, the Danish social democratic prime minister, Anker Jørgensen, warned about growing anxiety in Denmark concerning developments in the so-called Polish People's Republic (PRL). He expressed his fear that it would make "Détente more difficult or even impossible". He worried about the "risk of war in international politics". The prime minister concluded: "It is of paramount importance that we use every possibility to continue the talks between East and West."¹ In retrospect, one might misunderstand and believe that Jørgensen was talking about the introduction of the martial law and General Jaruzelski's military dictatorship. However, in January 1981, this tragedy was still almost one year into the future, so what Jørgensen was referring to was the civic protests and the establishment of the free trade union Solidarność. Considering that he was also the head of the Social Democrat Party and a former trade unionist, his caution demonstrated how the Cold War logic had become part of the Danish-Polish relationship. The communist leaders might have been crooks, and the cry for freedom in neighboring Poland may have been legitimate, but Solidarność disturbed the Cold War equilibrium which the Danish government under the label of "Détente" had longed for. Negotiations with the communist regimes of Eastern Europe were seen as a tool for stabilizing the divided continent and preventing war. Thus, free trade unions and democratic demands were rocking the boat dangerously. The careful handling of the Polish crisis followed a pattern that started from the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. The main fear of the Danish government was neither war nor the freedom of the Czechs and Slovaks, but rather that the problems of Eastern Europe could derail the political process of the early Détente. The priority at that time was the dialogue with Brezhnev, Ulbricht, Kadar, and Gomulka.²

The changing Danish governments were strong proponents of Détente since they assumed that only political cooperation with communist regimes could lead to a better security situation in Europe.³ Moreover, Détente was important to Denmark as a small country on the frontline with little interest in high military expenses. If

- 1 New Year's speech 1 January 1981, <https://danmarkshistorien.dk/vis/materiale/statsminister-anker-joergensens-s-nytaarstale-1-januar-1981> (accessed 1/07/2022).
- 2 Thomas Wegener Friis, Dänemark – NATO-Horchposten zur Ostsee, in: Stefan Karner, Natalja Georgievna Tomilina, Alexander Tschubarjan, Viktor Vladimirovich Iščenko, Michail Prozumenshikow, Peter Ruggenthaler, Oldřich Tůma, Manfred Wilke (eds.), Prager Frühling: Das internationale Krisenjahr 1968, vol. 1 Beiträge. Köln, 2008, 617–631.
- 3 Thorsten Borring Olesen, Poul Villaume, I blokopdelingens tegn. Dansk Udenrigspolitik historie 1045–1972. Copenhagen 2005, 748; Nicolaj Petersen, Europæisk og globalt engagement. Dansk Udenrigspolitik historie 1973–2003. Copenhagen 2004, 614.

negotiations with the communist dictators would ease the repression and improve the human rights of the peoples of Eastern Europe, that was fine; however, this was not the primary objective.

In the 1970s, the hopes and expectations of the Danish politicians seemed to come true. The Helsinki accords and the CSCE process were ideal from a Western perspective. They reduced tensions in Europe and solved long-standing issues like the German division and the post-war borders. The SALT agreement, the ABM Treaty, as well as the talks on conventional arms reduction promised an end to the arms race. People in the West began to speak of the Cold War in the past tense. Danish media even started to write in friendly tones about the communist police states.⁴

By the end of the 1970s, this optimism had faded. The Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact had not spent the prior decade reducing their military might, in fact quite the opposite had happened. In the Baltic Area, the strategic situation was at an all-time high from a communist perspective.⁵ Moreover, dark clouds were showing on the horizon in international relations. The invasion of Afghanistan and NATO's double-track decision of 1979 were two bad omens in the eyes of the Danish government.⁶

Part of the CSCE process had been about human rights, the so-called Basket III. On the surface, this suited Western countries well since human rights principles went hand in hand with Western democracy. Furthermore, Basket III made it clear that Helsinki was not a moral sell-out, where the price for European stability was acceptance of the oppression of people behind the Iron Curtain. One could argue that the West had not forgotten their European brothers when they made deals with the communist regimes.⁷ However, the Western countries did not agree on what aspect of the CSCE process to emphasize, whether this should be human rights or friendly terms with the communist leadership. From 1977 onwards, American President Jimmy Carter and later Ronald Reagan took a strong stance on the human rights issue with the Soviet Union and its satellites. This was a road some European governments, including the Danish government, were not too keen on following since it could disturb the process of *Détente*.⁸

These predicaments and internal disagreements became visible during the Polish crisis. It challenged the West since *Solidarność* supported Western ideals about freedom and democracy while tilting the apparent stability of the East-West rela-

4 Thomas Wegener Friis, Jesper Christian Majbom Henriksen, Jesper Thestrup Henriksen, Marius Hansen, Rune Emil Hjelmsberg Schmidt, Frank Hansen, *The Face of the Enemy? The Image of the GDR in the Danish Media*, in: Michael F. Scholz, Robert Bohn, Carina Johansson (eds.), *The image of the Baltic. A thousand years' perspective*. Visby 2012, 125–144, here 131.

5 Thomas Wegener Friis, *Den usynlige front. DDR's militærspionage i Danmark under den Kolde Krig*, Copenhagen 2005, 165; See also: Rüdiger Wenzke, *Die Streitkräfte der DDR und Polens in der Operationsplanung des Warschauer Paktes*. Potsdam 2010.

6 *Danmark under den Kolde Krig*, vol. 3. Copenhagen 2005, 205.

7 *Danmark under den Kolde Krig*, vol. 4. Copenhagen 2005, 32.

8 Angela Romano, *The main task of the European political cooperation*, in: Poul Villaume, Odd Arne Westad (eds.), *Perforating the Iron Curtain. European Détente, Transatlantic relations and the Cold War, 1965–1985*, Copenhagen 2010, 137.

tions. The following article will look closer at the reactions of three groups within Danish society: the government, the trade unions, and the communists. These groups were all faced with the question of how to respond to the appearance of Solidarność and afterwards with martial law.

THE DANISH GOVERNMENT

When Polish workers founded Solidarność in September 1980, the Danish government was a Social Democratic minority government, led by Anker Jørgensen. He was formerly a semiskilled worker and had worked his way to the political top within the unions, making the leap from the head of the union of semiskilled workers to the prime minister's office in 1973. If anything, this background meant he may have sympathized with the workers' demands in Gdańsk and other industrial centers in the PRL. Years after, when asked about this, he stated:

"I thought [...] the workers were right in their rebellion against the authorities", and "in my time as a prime minister we did a lot to persuade the Soviet, Polish and East German leaders that it was of paramount importance to uphold human rights." About his efforts, he remembered, "When asked by the support committees for Solidarność or the Unions, I came as a speaker every time."⁹

Despite the Danish prime minister's personal preferences in retrospect, his government did not side with Solidarność in 1980, neither in their dealings with the Polish government nor when it acted on the international stage. The fundamental standpoint of the government was that the crisis was an inner Polish question, and the West should show restraint. This was the position Denmark presented in NATO, in the ECC, and vis-a-vis the Polish communist government. In February 1981, Jørgensen emphasized to Polish Foreign Minister Józef Czyrek that Denmark did not see the conflict with Solidarność as a political question, but merely as an economic and social challenge, as in many other countries. In this way, he signaled to the communist regime that Denmark understood the difficult position of the ruling so-called Polish United Workers Party (PZPR).¹⁰ Therefore, it is not surprising that Minister Czyrek summarized his visit to Copenhagen with the conclusion: "Denmark proved to be a well-chosen and receptive partner to our arguments".¹¹ A little earlier, the extremely moderate Danish position at the NATO session had also not escaped the attention of Polish Communist diplomats.¹²

In a later meeting at the UN in September 1981, Foreign Minister Kjeld Olesen assured Czyrek that he thought Solidarność went too far in its demands and com-

9 Radek Krajewicz, Jens Mørch, *Balladen i Gdańsk – vejen til et nyt Europa*, Copenhagen 2005, 216–217.

10 Nicolaj Petersen, *Europæisk og globalt engagement. Dansk Udenrigspolitik historie 1973–2003*, Copenhagen 2004, 234.

11 Piotr Długołęcki (ed.), *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne 1981, styczeń-czerwiec*, Warsaw 2019, 228.

12 *Ibid.*, 3.

mended the Polish government for their efforts to stabilize the situation.¹³ In a closed session of the Danish parliament's committee on foreign policy, Prime Minister Jørgensen backed the position of his foreign minister.¹⁴ Years later, Kjeld Olesen explained his position by stating that he was uneasy with the pro-activist Western line, the open "cheering for Solidarność", and their calls for regime change.¹⁵ This corresponds to Olesen's stance at a press conference in New York after his talks with Czyrek. The Danish foreign minister appealed to Solidarność supporters in the West to show responsibility and restraint.¹⁶

The Danish foreign minister's support of the communist regime in Poland and his distancing from Solidarność was duly noted in Moscow. A few days after his press conference in New York, the Soviet media published articles claiming that even Western political leaders were now turning their backs on Solidarność.¹⁷ The government's attitude attracted not only the Soviet media but also the Eastern European diplomacy and intelligence services. For instance, agents of the East German Ministry of State Security were able to obtain several pieces of information on the Danish policy towards Poland.¹⁸ In particular, the agent "Herbert", who was a part of the intelligence residentura at the Copenhagen embassy, was able to gain information on the Danish leadership and the Social Democratic party. However, this information was evaluated to only be of medium relevance, contrary to the high-value information from the top agent "Gerald" in the West German intelligence service, which likely also contained Danish intelligence information. All intercepted documents were shared with the Soviet Union and kept the communist regimes updated on the hesitant policy of the Danish government.

The right-wing opposition in the Danish parliament differed from Jørgensen's Social Democrats, but also shared a moderate position. This became evident in a general debate in Parliament about "current issues" of the Danish foreign policy on 21 November 1980. Though Poland was not the only or even most important question in the debate, several spokespersons addressed the Polish situation. The government was represented by Foreign Minister Olesen and Foreign Policy Spokes-

13 Petersen, *Europæisk og globalt engagement*, 235.

14 Danmark under den Kolde Krig, vol. 3, Copenhagen 2005, 231.

15 Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS), Interview with former Foreign Minister Kjeld Olesen, 3/11/2004.

16 Petersen, *Europæisk og globalt engagement*, 235.

17 Erik Lund (ed), *Avisårbogen 1981*, Odense 1982, 93; "Sovjet hylder Kjeld Olsen. Sovjetisk presse fremhæver udenrigsministerens udtalelser om Solidaritet.", *Berlingske Tidende*, 27/9/1981.

18 Bundesarchiv Stasi-Unterlagen (BStU): Agent Gerald (XV/378/68), "Einschätzungen westlicher Geheimdienste zur Situation in der VR Polen" (10/10/1980), "KDZE, zum Thema Polen Geheime AA-Korrespondenz" (5/1/1981), Agent Herbert (XV/1619/75), "Haltung des Parteivorstandes der SP Dänemarks zu den Vorgängen in der SPD, zum NATO Raketenbeschluss, zu den Erklärungen der Neuen USA Administration und zur Lage in Polen" (18/2/1981), "Zur Haltung der dänischen Regierung und der SPD Führung, der Politik der Reagan Administration sowie Situation in der VR Polen" (1/4/1981), "Haltung Dänemarks zur Situation in der VR Polen" (5/5/1981), Agent Lenz (XV/6991/75), "Einschätzung des Dänischen Außenministeriums zur Situation in Polen vom Februar 1981", Agent Hempel (XV/1914/73), "US Haltung zur VR Polen".

man Lasse Budtz. Both stressed that the development in Poland was an internal matter and that the Poles needed no interference “either from the one side or the other”. Furthermore, the foreign minister stressed, “there is no reasonable alternative to a continuation of Détente.”¹⁹ This confirmed the dogma of Denmark’s Cold War policy. Negotiations with the communist leaders remained more important than anything else because this was thought to contribute to security and stability.

This fundamental precondition for Danish foreign policy was shared by large parts of the opposition even when they disagreed on how to handle the Polish crisis. The analysis of Henning Christophersen, the chairman of the prominent liberal opposition party Venstre, of the situation in Poland and other Soviet-dominated countries was that the problem was a lack of personal freedom as well as the socio-economic crisis. Christophersen’s solution was somewhat of a paradox. He urged the government to engage in continuous dialogue and to support more substantial Western European aid for Nicolae Ceaușescu’s Romania and Todor Zhivkov’s Bulgaria. However, Christophersen did not explain how intensifying economic assistance to two of the region’s most reckless rulers would generate reform in Eastern Europe.²⁰ The leading opposition politician neither suggested concrete steps in regards to Poland, nor did he agitate for Western support for Solidarność. The most likely explanation for this was that he agreed with the government’s priority of stability first and regime change second if practicable.

Only one opposition foreign policy spokesperson, Arne Melchior from the small protest party Centrum Demokraterne (Centere Democrats), took a radically different line from the government and the leading opposition parties. However, this party was known for its wholehearted support of NATO and pro-American attitude, rare positions in 1980s Denmark. He discarded the whole concept of the Polish crisis as an internal Polish matter since it was under a repressive regime, and it made no sense to speak of internal issues or decisions. Instead, he urged the government along with the West to interfere.²¹ Opinions like this were in the minority and did not affect mainstream politics. It is worth noticing that the representatives of the small social liberal party Radikale Venstre, the traditional kingmaker party in Denmark, thought that the events in Poland around Solidarność would not have been worth mentioning had this not been happening so close to Denmark.²²

It is striking that the Danish parliament debate was more concerned about the new American president, Ronald Regan, than with the communist regime in neighboring Poland. An example of this was the chairman of the Socialist People’s Party, Gert Petersen, who formulated his wish in a debate on Danish foreign and interior policy in June 1981 for the “deepening of the socialist democratization” in Poland. He viewed hardliners in Moscow as the most significant risk to this. However, he argued that it was the West who provoked the hardliners. He then spoke about the threats to peace coming from NATO and Ronald Regan.²³

19 Folketingstidende, Forhandlingerne i Folketingsåret 1980–1981 II, Copenhagen 1982, 2704.

20 Ibid., 2724.

21 Ibid., 2754.

22 Ibid., 2746.

23 Folketingstidende. Forhandlingerne i Folketingsåret 1980–1981 IV, Copenhagen 1982, 12642.

After the imposition of martial law in Poland, the Danish government only condemned martial law hesitantly and without much elan. Prime Minister Jørgensen waited until 14 December with his reaction: "It is a serious situation, and I cannot foresee what will happen. I do not have sufficient background as of the movement." Foreign Minister Olesen expressed his hopes "that Poland would soon return to normal, and that the Polish production would get going".²⁴ This cannot be characterized as a strong reaction to martial law from the Danish government. Olesen followed up with a statement on 17 December in which he warned everybody against interfering in internal Polish matters so that the reform process could continue.²⁵ Meanwhile, the Danish media was filled to the brim with stories about the military crackdown on the population and the desperation of Polish individuals. Instead of a clear opinion on this, the foreign policy spokesperson of the Social Democratic Party launched a critique of the United States which, the spokesperson argued, should look at their authoritarian allies like El Salvador, Chile, or Turkey, before they criticized the Eastern Bloc countries for not abiding by human rights standards.²⁶

On the day after the declaration of martial law, approximately 1,500 people from extreme left-wing parties demonstrated in front of the Polish embassy.²⁷ The day after, a smaller group of about 1,000 protested in front of the LOT office in Copenhagen.²⁸ Furthermore, the unions appealed for the moral support of *Solidarność*.²⁹ Also, a group of young activists blocked the ferry to Swinoujście.³⁰

Despite the intense media coverage, the public seemed to have been divided right after the declaration of martial law on how to judge it. In an extensive opinion poll, half of the respondents thought that the new Jaruzelski regime's goal was to stop democratization in Poland. Still, one fifth believed that the military government would continue a democratization process. In response to the question, "who was to blame for the situation in Poland?", 49 percent answered with the pressure of the Soviet Union, whereas 36 percent stated that *Solidarność* went too far and provoked martial law. Interestingly the poll did not include the option that the Polish Communist regime was responsible.³¹ The survey showed that there was not a unanimous appreciation of *Solidarność* in the population, in line with the government's opinion.

On 30 December 1981, the Danish government participated in the collective condemnation of Poland's new military government with the countries of the European Community. However, the Danish government condemned the new military government in Poland along with "military governments in other countries".³² The

24 "Afventende dansk holdning til Polen", in: *Land og Folk*, 15/12/1981.

25 "Reformproces må ikke stoppe", in: *Aktuelt*, 17/12/1981.

26 "Forståelseskloften mellem Vesteuropa og USA må bearbejdes", in: *Aktuelt*, 15/12/1981.

27 "Venstrefløjten protesterer", in: *Jyllandsposten*, 14/12/1981; "VS: Fredsbevægelsen skal støtte polsk Solidaritet", in: *Information*, 14/12/1981.

28 "Protest mod kuppet: Polen kan sammenlignes med diktaturet i Chile", in: *Aktuelt*, 15/12/1981.

29 "Opfordrer til demonstrationer", in: *Aktuelt*, 16/12/1981.

30 "Færger til Polen besat", in: *Ekstra Bladet*, 15/12/1981.

31 *Ugens Gallup*, Nr. 2, Jan. 1982.

32 Petersen, *Europæisk og globalt engagement*, 235.

Polish communist diplomacy greeted the Danish position as “distinguished by a balanced reaction”.³³ The Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs especially “appreciated and acknowledged” the attitude towards the imposition of the martial law represented by two countries, namely Greece and Denmark. As one of the communist diplomats wrote on 23 December 1981, “Both of these countries take a balanced attitude towards the events in Poland, show understanding for the reasons for the introduction of martial law and treat the steps taken as our internal matter.”³⁴

In January 1982, Foreign Minister Olesen elaborated on this at a European summit, drawing a parallel between Poland and Turkey, a NATO-member state. Later the same year, this resemblance was extended to Latin America, much to the discontent of the USA.³⁵ This Danish policy tended to cancel the Cold War mechanisms and to look at friend and foe the same way, or was perhaps even harsher towards allies like the United States than towards the dictatorships in Central and Eastern Europe. The near conclusion was that the situation in Poland was not particularly special.

The parallelization was extremely visible in Prime Minister Jørgensen’s New Year’s speech, which has particular importance since these speeches are the only opportunity for the Danish prime ministers to address the whole population directly. On 1 January 1982, Jørgensen mentioned Poland, but only briefly and only after he duly condemned military dictatorships in South America and Turkey. He also condemned “the United States’ support of anti-democratic forces in a part of the world”. Only after this did he address the recent martial law with the words:

It is ok for us to fear, for instance, what is happening in Poland. Poland is our neighbor. It is a popular rebellion against a stiff and undemocratic system, which is now being repressed by martial law.³⁶

That was all the head of government had to say on the very recent crisis.

The Polish diplomats did not appreciate all Danish actions. The reception by representatives of the Danish government of Stefan Trzcziński, head of the Solidarity Information Office in the Scandinavian countries, and Denmark’s participation in preparing a resolution to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights condemning the actions of the Polish communist authorities were seen as a sign of a deliberate cooling of diplomatic relations under American pressure. However, other declarations by Denmark and Anker Jørgensen personally clarified the situation. In the eye of the Polish government Denmark was among the “realistic” Western nations with which dialogue should be maintained.³⁷

Martial law in Poland was on the agenda in June 1982 in yet another general debate on foreign policy in Parliament. The foreign minister was sorry about what had happened but showed his indomitable optimism concerning the goodwill of the

33 Długołęcki, *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne*, 546.

34 *Ibid.*, 599–606, here 601.

35 Petersen, *Europæisk og globalt engagement*, 235.

36 New Year’s speech 1/1/1982, <https://www.stm.dk/statsministeren/nytaarstaler-siden-1940/ankerjoergensens-nytaarstale-1-januar-1982/> (accessed 1/07/2022).

37 Małgorzata Ruchniewicz (ed.), *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne 1982*, Warsaw 2019, 121, 430, 519.

Eastern European regimes. He hoped that Jaruzelski would “reestablish civil rights and lead on the reform process”, and he seemed to have seen “certain signs that the East-West relations would develop positively”.³⁸ In this way, six months after the declaration of martial law, the Polish problem was quickly fading from political memory. Also, the foreign policy spokesperson Lasse Budtz first attended to more urgent questions like the war on the Falklands and the crisis in the Middle East before he briefly mentioned Poland and then went on to speak of other matters.³⁹ In other words, it was time for East-West relations to get back on track after the Polish bump on the road. Henning Christophersen from the opposition seemed to agree on that. He did not even mention martial law. Instead, he pointed to economic development in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union as the biggest challenge in the years to come. Therefore, the Eastern bloc should address their “enormous economic problems”.⁴⁰

Only two spokespersons sharply condemned martial law and pointed out the democratization perspective, namely Pelle Voigt from the Socialist People’s Party and Arne Melchior from the Centered Democrats. Since their two parties represented the two most diverging viewpoints on cooperation with the West and NATO, their condemnation took two very different starting points. Voigt criticized the brutal repression for being a hindrance to true socialistic democracy, while Melchior’s speech was a plea to take *Solidarność* up on talks with the Polish government and use the restoration of human rights as a demand for further dialogue.⁴¹

In the Parliament debate, there were no signs that the Danish government was ready to take any action, for instance, sanctions. The Social Democratic government remained in opposition to sanctions and wanted to revive the dialogue with the regime in Warsaw, as it had already declared in January 1982.⁴² Finally, in February 1982, Denmark agreed to some sanctions only because they were the general European consensus. Moreover, the Danish government had calculated that the sanctions would only have a marginal effect on Denmark since only about one percent of trade with the Soviet Union was disturbed.⁴³ Both Danish foreign intelligence and the embassy in Warsaw supported the government in its skepticism against sanctions.⁴⁴ The Danish opposition to using the economic weapon against the communist regimes was not restricted to the Polish crisis. It was the general trend throughout the Cold War and an issue in the debate between Denmark and NATO. An exception to the overall negative Danish stance to sanctions was South Africa in the 1980s.⁴⁵

38 Folketingstidende. Forhandlingerne i Folketingsåret 1981–1982 IV, Copenhagen 1983, 9116.

39 Ibid., 9123–9125.

40 Ibid., 9132.

41 Ibid., 9142.

42 Petersen, *Europæisk og globalt engagement*, 235.

43 Petersen, *Europæisk og globalt engagement*, 236.

44 Bo Hulbæk Kuntz, *Danmark og den polske krise 1980–83. En undersøgelse af danske reaktioner og vurderingen*, Odense 2022 (unpublished thesis), 66.

45 Carsten Due-Nielsen, *Handel og Sikkerhed*, in: Anders Monrad Møller (ed.), *Folk og erhverv. Tilegnet Hans Chr. Johansen*. Odense 1995, 258–270, here 268.

The Danish opposition to sanctions did not change after Anker Jørgensen, on 2 September 1982, resigned.⁴⁶ Nonetheless, the Danish political rhetoric changed when a new center-right government came to power. The change left its mark on the prestigious New Year's speech. The new conservative prime minister, Poul Schlüter, did not use the address to criticize the West or the United States. Instead, he emphasized the need for economic and military cooperation among the Western democracies. He argued that this was in Denmark's best interest and the interest of Danish political values. Then he used a direct reference to Poland: "Let us never forget that what we want and what we are struggling for is not the kind of 'peace' they know in Poland. We want both peace and freedom."⁴⁷

The interest in the Polish question dropped dramatically in the following years. Denmark was struggling with an economic crisis, and the government increased efforts to balance the Danish foreign debt and budget deficit. In the foreign policy debates, questions like the request to renew the NATO intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Europe became a hot issue, dividing Danish politics and leading to fierce discussions. The opposition even forced the center-right government to formulate opt outs to parts of NATO policy.⁴⁸ In the light of these internal struggles about foreign policy, the Polish issue became secondary.

After leaving office, Anker Jørgensen and the Social Democratic Party were free to alter their views. A couple of days after his resignation, at the Social Democrats' yearly conference, the Eastern bloc diplomats reported a change of attitude towards Poland as well as somewhat stricter rhetoric.⁴⁹ About a month later, the party demanded that the Polish government end the martial law, free all political prisoners, and initiate negotiations with Solidarność.⁵⁰ At a demonstration on the first anniversary of martial law, Jørgensen spoke at a large rally at the central square in Copenhagen, proclaiming that "freedom is not something you have but something you fight for" and pointed out that the Danes had a special obligation to the Polish people.⁵¹ The correction of the party line in the Social Democratic party meant that the party was now in line with famous trendsetters like the Sakharov Committee and Amnesty International who had been asserting pressure for the imprisoned Solidarność leader, and with the two prominent Nordic newspapers "Politiken" and "Dagens Nyheter", who on the 12th awarded Lech Wałęsa their newly founded "freedom award".⁵² It was even more important that the party was now in line with Denmark's most powerful union, which had been in symbiosis with the party for a

46 Petersen, *Europæisk og globalt engagement*, 236.

47 New years speech 1/1/1983, <https://danmarkshistorien.dk/vis/materiale/statsminister-poul-schlueters-nytaarstale-c-1-januar-1983> (accessed 1/07/2022).

48 Petersen, *Europæisk og globalt engagement*, 298–310.

49 SAPMO-Barch (Stiftungen, Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv), DY30/Vorl. SED 40758, Telegram from the GDR-embassy to the Central Committee of the SED, 6/9/1982.

50 Erik Lund (ed), *Avisårbogen 1982*, Odense 1983, 119.

51 "Vi har en pligt til at støtte", in: *Aktuelt*, 14/12/1982.

52 Lund, *Avisårbogen 1982*, 50–51; "Frihedspris til Wałęsa", in: *Politiken*, 13/12/1982.

century. Both organizations still had direct representation in each other's leading bodies in the 1980s.

TRADE UNIONS

The new unity line of the Worker's movement is easy to detect in the words of the party's foreign policy spokesperson Lasse Budtz from May 1983: "Human rights are fundamental to our foreign policy. We, therefore, continue to condemn the developments in Poland, where the free political activities and unions are continuously repressed."⁵³ The statement had a clear reference to the union to whom the shift of the Social Democratic leadership must have been a relief because it now aligned with the policy of the Danish confederation of Trade Unions (LO, Landsorganisationen). Since the middle of the 1970s, the LO had, in opposition to other similar European organizations like the West German or Norwegian confederations, refused to establish official contact with the "phony unions" of the Eastern Bloc, even though the Danes established other kinds of information relations to the Eastern Bloc countries.⁵⁴ At the end of the decade, LO chose a more active line, including, a declaration of support for the Polish Worker Defense Committee (KOR, Komitet Obrony Robotników) in 1976.⁵⁵ The LO was attentive to Poland's development and contacted people in opposition and exile.

With this background, it was not surprising that in August 1980, Thomas Nielsen, the long-lasting leader of LO, wrote to the Polish Embassy expressing support for the Polish workers' demand for independent unions. However, unlike the Swedish and Danish confederations, LO did not connect with *Solidarność* straight away.⁵⁶ Their first official contact was with Lech Wałęsa and Bronisław Geremek at the ILO conference in Geneva in June 1981. The Danish historian Bent Boel speculates that the reason for the late contact could have been reluctance in some sections of the unions who were skeptical about *Solidarność*'s relationship with the Catholic Church.⁵⁷ In discussion with Boel, the former international secretary of LO, John Svenningsen acknowledges that the ties between the Church and *Solidarność* made things difficult for Danish unionists.⁵⁸

53 Folketingstidende, Forhandlingerne i Folketingsåret 1982–1983 VIII, Copenhagen 1984, 11940.

54 John Svenningsen, LO og Solidarnosc, 1980–1989, in: *Arbejderhistorie* Nr. 1, 2008, 133.

55 Bent Boel, LO og Solidarnosc. Så nær og dog så fjern, in: *Arbejderhistorie* Nr. 2, 2007, 58–76, here 60.

56 See Pawel Jaworski, Sverige och polska Solidaritet 1980–1982, in: Andreas Linderöth (ed.), *Kriget som aldrig kom*. Karlskrona 2011, 138–155; Klaus Misgeld, Solidaritet med Solidaritet. Den svenska arbetarrörelsen och demokratirörelsen i Polen kring 1980, in: *Arbejderhistorie* Nr. 4, 2008, 24–31; Klaus Misgeld, Karl Molin, Solidarity despite reservations, in: *Baltic Worlds* Nr. 3, 2010, 10–16; Also Norwegian LO had earlier contact than the Danes: See Hallvard Kvale Svenbalrud, *Østpolitikk og alliansehensyn Polen, Solidaritet og norsk utenrikspolitikk 1980–1990*, Oslo 2007 (unpublished work), 52.

57 Boel, LO og Solidarnosc, 62.

58 Svenningsen, LO og Solidarnosc, 1980–1989, 134.

From the summer of 1980 until the meetings with Wałęsa in 1981, a couple of interesting reports refer to talks between leading Danish trade unionists and the East German embassy about the situation in neighboring Poland. In 1980 the signals to the Eastern Bloc neighbor were still mixed. The leader of the LO, Thomas Nielsen, seemed loyal to the government's policy of restraint and declared no interest in meddling with Polish internal matters.⁵⁹ A leftwing Social Democratic trade union representative had even condemned that the Polish workers were trying "to restore a capitalist situation" with their so-called "independent unions".⁶⁰ This must have been satisfying for the East Germans, who were worried about the risk to the communist regimes Solidarność constituted. However, this position did not last in the year to come. In the spring of 1981, the East German embassy had a disturbing talk with Svenningsen from LO, who openly declared the sympathy of LO for Solidarność and who denied that Polish unions were "counter-revolutionaries". Though Svenningsen also had some reservations, this argument was not going the right way from a communist perspective.⁶¹

The turning point in developing LO's relationship with Solidarność was the participation of a Danish delegation at the Solidarność conferences in September 1981. It happened at the same time as the social democratic foreign minister distanced himself from Solidarność at the UN. Thus, it marked a visible watershed in the disagreement between the two main partners in the Danish Social Democratic Labor movement. Upon returning from New York and Gdańsk, Foreign Minister Olesen warned his comrades about the severe consequences of what Solidarność was doing in Poland.⁶²

The split between the two close partners continued, as LO protested sharply against the martial law, both in public and to the Polish communist regime.⁶³ The LO was fast to express that the martial law was "a great disappointment", "a blow to the democratic development", "contrary to ILO convention", and that it made Poland equal to other "dictatorial regimes". Furthermore, the Danish Union stressed that humanitarian aid should be given "to the right people", meaning not to the regime.⁶⁴ This was quite harsh compared to the vague response of Prime Minister Jørgensen and his foreign minister. Behind the scenes, Foreign Minister Olesen continued his lines of argumentation, blaming the "extremists" of Solidarność.⁶⁵

59 SAPMO-Barch, DY 34/12971, "Gen. Botschafter Heinz Oelzner mit dem Vorsitzenden des dänischen Gewerkschaftsbundes (LO) Thomas Nielsen am 12.11.1980".

60 SAPMO-Barch, DY 34/12971, "Vermerk über ein Gespräch des Botschafter Gen. Oelzner, mit dem Vorsitzenden der Spezialarbeitergewerkschaft Dänemarks (SiD), Hardy Hansen, am 25.8.1980".

61 SAPMO-Barch, DY34/12971, "Vermerk über ein Gespräch mit den LO-Funktionären für internationale Arbeit John Svenningsen und Kjeld Åkjær am 1.12.1981 in der Botschaft der DDR", 15/12/1981.

62 Boel, LO og Solidarnosc, 65.

63 Ibid., 66.

64 "LO vil protestere over udviklingen", in: *Aktuelt*, 14/12/1981; "Militær-aktion fordømmes af LO", in: *Aktuelt*, 14/12/1981.

65 Boel, LO og Solidarnosc, 67.

And whereas LO supported Lech Wałęsa's nomination for the freedom award, the Social Democratic party did not.⁶⁶

On the central square of Copenhagen on 13 December 1982, when then ex-Prime Minister Jørgensen spoke, he demonstrated unity with the unions. Other Social Democratic leaders also spoke out for *Solidarność*, though only with the weak voice of the parliamentary opposition.⁶⁷ LO continued its support for *Solidarność* in international organizations and through humanitarian grants.⁶⁸

Some unions did not agree with the line of LO, particularly the communist or communist sympathizers unions, like the Sailors Union (*Sømændenes forbund*), which had publicly condemned both "the propaganda against the Afghan revolution" and "the divisive activities of *Solidarność*".⁶⁹

THE DANISH COMMUNIST PARTY

The Polish government has within the last year undertaken great efforts to solve Poland's crisis by political means and by uniting the nation's forces creating the foundation for socialist renewal. However, extremist forces within *Solidarność* have sought conflict. They have deliberately created anarchy under which the ordinary population suffers because it has damaged the production and the supply of goods. They put their counterrevolution beyond everything else and created a dangerous situation.⁷⁰

These were the words used by the Central Committee of the Danish Communist Party (DKP) to comment on martial law in Poland.

The role of the DKP was clear. The party did not have to waive pros or cons, at least not publicly. Although the party expressed some of the ideas shared by the other parties, strong loyalty to the Eastern Bloc made their position extreme.

The Polish crisis made the DKP face a traditional problem. Their identification with an unpopular course of the Soviet Union and its satellites made the party vulnerable to critique from its members. This had been the case during the invasion of Hungary in 1956, which ultimately led to a split within the party and the foundation of the Socialist People's Party as competition.⁷¹ The invasion of Prague in 1968 resulted in a conflict between the Politburo and the party newspaper "Land og Folk" (Country and People), although it did not cause a split. Contrary to their Swedish comrades, the Danish party did not distance itself from the Eastern Bloc.⁷² However, the invasion likely alienated the young revolutionary academics who were instead drawn to the so-called "new left".

66 *Ibid.*, 67.

67 *Ibid.*, 68.

68 *Ibid.*, 69.

69 SAPMO-Barch, DY 34/12971, "Aufnahme Dänische Seeleutengewerkschaft", 23/9/1982.

70 Arbejderbevægelsens Bibliotek og Arkiv (ABA) (Labour Movement Library and Archiv), Box 102, Declaration of the meeting of the Central Committee of the Danish Communist Party of 13/12/1981.

71 Kurt Jacobsen, Aksel Larsen. En politisk biografi. Copenhagen 1993, 549.

72 Wegener Friis, Dänemark – NATO-Horchposten zur Ostsee, 625.

The challenge of the Polish crisis followed a pattern known to the party leadership, which reacted with firm control of what was discussed and how. The coordination and presentation of the party line were in the hands of people from the party secretariat, including the chairman, Jørgen Jensen, the union secretary, Bo Rosschou, and not least the party “chief ideologist”, Ib Nørlund. The latter, besides the central position, had a big say in the international communist movement and was a member of the editorial board of *Problems of Peace and Socialism* (Проблемы мира и социализма Проблемы мира и социализма).⁷³

Both during and after the period of Polish martial law, the Danish communists kept close contact with their Polish, East German, and Soviet fraternal parties to analyze the situation correctly. On a delegation travel in September 1980, the party leadership sought to get a firsthand impression of what was going on in Poland, meeting Emil Wojtaszek from the PZPR Politburo and other high-ranking representatives from the party and party unions. The picture was quite dark as Wojtaszek described it: “it [the forced acceptance of Solidarność] was, of course, a setback – but rather a setback than a step over into the abyss – and that was where we were heading.” The party leadership ensured the Danish comrades that they were stirring free of the “anti-socialist forces” and praised Cardinal Wyszyński. Notable in the talk with the Danes was the Polish regime’s repetition that it could not accept foreign union delegation, even from the very friendly Danish communists.⁷⁴ Even though the visit did not give the Danish comrades many arguments, it gave them a bit of hope, something they were in dire need of.

The daily communist newspaper “Land og Folk” (Land and People) was their most important communication platform. Even though the paper followed the events in Poland, it had published considerably less coverage than the non-communist press.⁷⁵ The newspaper had two significant problems with its coverage. The fundamental dilemma was that workers turned their backs on the communist regime. The other problem was that the party got caught up in its own arguments. To stay loyal to the PZPR, Chairman Jørgen Jensen proclaimed the Gdańsk agreement as an achievement to socialist democracy, which made it difficult to draw an all-out negative picture.⁷⁶

The protesting workers were described as scabs, divided, or marginalized.⁷⁷ This picture was pretty much opposite to what Wojtaszek told the party delegation. The latter had very much regretted that the protesters also included “traditional fighters in the class struggle” and “loyal party supporters”.⁷⁸ In other words, the party leadership knew the workers supporting Solidarność were not just scabs. This

73 Lars Bro Nilsson, Danmark Kommunistiske Parti under den Anden Kolde Krig, in: Arbejderhistorie Nr. 2–3, 2006, 20–38.

74 ABA, DKPs arkiv box 101, “Besøg i Polen 22.–24. september 1980”.

75 Rasmus Frank, Solidaritet og den danske presse: en indholdsanalytisk og kvalitativ analyse af Berlingske Tidende, Kristeligt Dagblad og Land og Folks dækning af Solidaritetsbevægelsens tilblivelse i perioden 1. august til 31. december 1980, Odense 2007 (unpublished thesis), 31.

76 Ibid., 65.

77 Ibid., 48–52.

78 ABA, DKPs arkiv box 101, “Besøg i Polen 22.–24. september 1980”.

touched upon a fundamental problem for the communists, whose chairman, Jørgen Jensen, a member of the Politburo during the Prague Spring in 1968, already had mentioned:

There are certainly a lot of things which we have seen in the socialist countries and about which we could talk about. Things we do not like and even things we think are wrong. I have seen factories in the Soviet Union, where I have silently felt that they won't make it ten years [...]. I have seen supply systems that were slow, sad, and boring. In rural areas, supplies didn't even exist. But what would it bring us if we said that? Would that benefit our struggle for socialism?⁷⁹

This was a fundamental dilemma for the Western communists. If they told the truth about the system they wanted, the people would run away. However, the deception tactic did not help the DKP, and the Polish crisis and their blind loyalty would cost the communist party their popularity. At the elections on 8 December 1981, the party obtained 1.1 percent of the Danish votes compared to 1.9 percent in 1979 and 3.7 percent in 1977. Furthermore, the chairman, Jørgen Jensen, or “Jørgen-Watery-Porridge”, as he was called, was nominated to be the buffoon of the year by Denmark's largest tabloid newspaper.⁸⁰

On the flanks of the DKP, a variety of left extremist groups and parties thrived in the so-called new left. Some were Maoists, some were Trotskyites, some hoped for a society like Albania, and some looked to Cambodia for the answers. All in all, they made up a selection of colorful anti-parliamentarism. These aspiring revolutionaries were often critical of developments in the countries of “existing socialism” and, therefore, a constant threat to the left-wing of the communist party. This became evident in the question of how to deal with the worker's protest in Poland. Keld Albrechtsen of the Leftist Socialists party (Venstre Socialisterne), the only of the new left parties which made it into Parliament, gave this voice in the general debate in Parliament on 21 November 1980. Albrechtsen looked to Solidarność as something good and true because it represented the working class. In a Western Marxist perspective, this meant that naturally, the workers desired socialism:

The development in Poland emphasizes that there is a long way to go because in a socialist country the working class does not have to make an upheaval against the state to get the right to organize itself freely and to get democratic rights, freedom of speech etc. However, the workers' struggle in Poland can pave the way for socialism if the newly won power is used to cut down bureaucracy and assume workers' control through the means and fruits of the production.⁸¹

The loyal position of the Danish communists created a split between in the Danish left-wing at a time when they were getting closer to each other because of the alleged “struggle for peace”, which at the time was the Soviet paraphrase for the protests against the decision to renew NATO's intermediate nuclear missiles. The strong Soviet propaganda and the growth of the Western peace movement was a future promise for “unity of action of the working class” which in the Marxist per-

79 ABA, DKPs arkiv box 91, CK-møde 20.–21.4.1968, 23.

80 “Jørgen Vandgrød”, in: Ekstra Bladet. 15/12/1981.

81 Folketingstidende. Forhandlingerne i Folketingsåret 1980–1981 II, Copenhagen 1982, 2760.

spective was the political holy grail. The Polish crisis was an obvious obstacle. The differences on the Polish issue led to the split of 1 May celebrations between the Danish communists and the rest of the left-wing.⁸² The Danish communists argued against the rest of the left-wing groups and their support for Solidarność. They equated their support with the support of the unpopular figure of the Bavarian conservative prime minister, Franz Josef Strauss, and even the American president, Ronald Reagan. On 21 February 1982, at a closed internal meeting of the central committee, Chairman Jørgen Jensen fiercely attacked the Socialist People's Party and the Left Socialists by saying that they had been crazy for supporting the Polish counterrevolution and that they thereby were strengthening the Danish Conservative Party and the small Christian Peoples' Party.⁸³

CONCLUDING REMARKS

After the fall of communism in Eastern and Central Europe, the Polish crisis is often remembered as the beginning of the end of communism. And Solidarność is generally recognized in Western Europe and Denmark as an icon of freedom and a more peaceful Europe. However, during the dramatic one and a half years of 1980–1981, this was far from reality. Solidarność disturbed the “stability” of the Cold War and exposed the lack of legitimacy of the communist regime. It made Danish politicians fear for the future. They wanted to continue the dialogue with the communist regime and imagined that they would miraculously change everything by themselves. The later development showed that this was an illusion. The communist authorities were incapable of reform. They had taken their population's wealth and freedom, and they were doomed if the level of repression was eased. Solidarność turned out to be the key to the future, not to “normalization” or a continuation of the talks with the leaders of “real existing socialism”.

The Polish crisis exposed a strongly divided Danish society. It showed that it was easier to criticize the American president than the dictatorship on the other side of the Baltic Sea. The biggest losers in Danish politics were the communists, who once more bet on the wrong horse and thus never won back their political strength. They stayed loyal to the Soviet Union and its allies to the bitter end and they remained politically marginalized.

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82 Bro Nilsson, *Danmark Kommunistiske parti*, 32.

83 *Ibid.*, 33.

A FRESH BEGINNING: DANISH-POLISH MILITARY RELATIONS SINCE 1991

Niels Bo Poulsen

For most of the Cold War, Denmark and Poland's armed forces were destined to meet in battle if tensions between east and west ever boiled over into war. The very fact that the two countries have gone from enemies to close allies within a generation is indicative of why Danish-Polish military relations is a subject worth studying. Furthermore, this story is multi-faceted and characterized by the interplay of many factors. One may at first glance argue that gluing countries together in an alliance is first and foremost instigated by the existence of a joint foe. Thus, from today's vantage point, it is tempting to see the threat from a dictatorial, militaristic, and expansionist Russia as the main driver in tying the two countries together. However, the story behind the change in Danish-Polish relations, including the military aspects thereof, is far more complex. The driving forces behind it were just as much found in general trends in the global security environment and in domestic politics as in the joint perception of a threat. Initially, during the early 1990s, one can even argue that there was no perception of a unifying threat, only a shared sense of new opportunities.

This paper focuses on main trends, and many details will be left out. Furthermore, the perspective of this article is primarily that of a Danish historian, i.e. focusing on the way that developments looked from Copenhagen, based on Danish sources, rather than offering a fully balanced account. Including the Polish perspective on military cooperation between Denmark and Poland is necessary in order to get the full picture. Except for Polish contributions to the field, the current literature on Danish-Polish military cooperation is extremely limited, and there are no specialized studies exclusively dealing with this aspect of bilateral relations between our two countries.¹

THE SECURITY SITUATION IN THE BALTIC SEA AREA BY THE END OF THE COLD WAR

In order to understand Polish-Danish military cooperation during the post Cold War period, it is necessary for us to begin with the military-strategic situation in the Baltic Sea region before the collapse of the Soviet Union. During the Cold War, Poland and Denmark were military adversaries: both states were frontline states;

¹ Hans Hækkerup, På skansen: dansk forsvarspolitik fra murens fald til Kosovo, Copenhagen 2002, 22, 122, 125.

their sea and air spaces bordered each other.² Their armed forces and societies were the subject of intelligence efforts by the opposite state and operational plans addressed how to prevail in a possible war.³ During the late 1980s and early 1990s, the transition to democratic rule in Poland, the dissolution of the Warsaw pact and the collapse of the Soviet Union completely changed the security landscape of the Baltic Sea Region. Not only did these events enable Poland to pursue an independent foreign policy, but the same events also created a radically improved security situation for Denmark. A tangible threat against the Danish seashores and the Danish-German border region from the Warsaw pact had now disappeared.⁴

Somewhat paradoxically, the disappearance of a conventional and nuclear threat from the Soviet-lead Eastern Bloc, was accompanied by considerable anxiety among western foreign policy experts and politicians about what the future might bring.⁵ It was feared that the former communist countries might prove unstable and unpredictable neighbors due to economic hardship, social turmoil, domestic conflict, or even the possibility of an outright collapse. This called for a high degree of activism and engagement, yet it also invited restraint and caution, especially in order not to provoke the Soviet Union and, after 1991, Russia. Navigating the new security landscape created new political cleavages in the transatlantic community and within individual NATO member states. In this process, Denmark emerged as one of the frontrunners taking an activist stance – a position which it head-started by championing the rights of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to become independent states even before the collapse of the Soviet Union. Diplomatic relations with the Baltic states were established immediately after the failed coup attempt in the Soviet Union in August 1991. This move led to significant change in Danish-Polish relations that should be studied because it was rather bold and signified that Denmark had decisively moved away from a long tradition of a passive, neutrality-leaning foreign policy, despite its NATO membership. It is within this framework of an ‘activist’ Danish foreign policy – consistently pursued by shifting governments during the 1990s – that the Danish-Polish partnership in the field of military has to be seen.

The military cooperation between Denmark and Poland that emerged during the 1990s was affected by three additional factors:

1. The Baltic Sea and its shore states was – and still is – the defining geographical area of Danish security politics (together with the North Atlantic and Arctic due to the composite nature of the Danish realm – consisting of Denmark, the Faroe Islands, and Greenland).

2 See also in this book: Dieter H. Kollmer, Władysław Bułhak, Thomas Wegener Friis, “Poles, Danes, Soviets, and Germans. Cold War frontlines in the Baltic Sea.”, 115–129.

3 See also in this book: Przemysław Gasztold, “Polish Military Intelligence in Denmark in the 1950s and 1960s”, 131–144.

4 For an overview of how Denmark’s security situation evolved after the end of the Cold War see: Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen: *Mod skiftende fjender*, in: Hans Mortensen (ed.), *Helt forsvarligt? Danmarks militære udfordringer i en usikker fremtid*, Copenhagen 2009, 11–24.

5 Nikolaj Petersen: *Danmark Udenrigspolitik Historie Vol. 6, Europæisk og globalt engagement*, Copenhagen 2004, 442.

2. As it was a large state that played a significant role both in the Baltic Sea and in Central Europe, Poland was, from a purely security-politics view, a central actor in enhancing Denmark's security. However, the Danish objective was initially less military in nature and more based on a desire to stabilize Poland (and other former communist countries). Military cooperation took place within the greater framework of assisting Poland in creating democratic institutions, reforming its economy, and achieving socio-economic stability. Military cooperation thus went hand in hand with a broad agenda of systemic and institutional change.
3. As mentioned above, when formulating a policy to assist the former Eastern Bloc states, the Danish public and many politicians were mainly focused on the three Baltic states. This preference for Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania reflected that most Danes identified with these countries that were small like Denmark itself and that Danes held a rather rosy picture of them as being a sort of Nordic brethren. Consequently, the three Baltic countries received disproportionate amounts of Danish assistance and political attention compared to Poland.⁶
4. It should also be noted that the cooperation between Denmark and Poland took place in a multilateral context. Not only did Denmark consult closely within NATO, but the bilateral contacts to Germany were also pivotal in paving the way for many of the decisions made.

PHASES IN DANISH-POLISH MILITARY COOPERATION

Looking chronologically at Danish-Polish military cooperation, one may distinguish between four different phases:

The first phase began with the dissolution of the Warsaw pact in July 1991 and lasted until the signing of an agreement on military cooperation between Denmark and Poland in the fall of 1993. This early phase was characterized by the continued presence of former Soviet (now Russian) troops in Germany and Poland. Many governments, including the Danish, had to balance their long-term objectives against a fear of provoking Russia and weakening the process of democratization in Russia. During this phase, Danish-Polish cooperation was primarily part of the symbolic outreach of NATO to its former enemies. There were no signals about expanding NATO. This phase was characterized by symbolic goodwill-building gestures, rather than by operational cooperation. At the same time, it was unclear whether NATO, as the main European security provider, would be replaced by other institutional arrangements, such as the OSCE or the Western Union.

The civil war in Yugoslavia served as a catalyst for demonstrating that NATO was still important, and, in 1993, a new NATO tool for interacting with the former Eastern Bloc countries emerged in the form of Partnership for Peace (PfP). Formally, the PfP was not about enlargement as such, but about knitting bonds between NATO and its former adversaries. Yet soon the question of possible NATO enlarge-

6 Forsvarsministeren (ed.), *Årlig Redegørelse 1999*, Copenhagen 2000, 46–50.

ment also arose. When Russian President Yeltsin visited Poland in August 1993, he declared that he would respect Poland's decision if it wanted to join NATO. Now, military cooperation could blossom. By signing a cooperation agreement in September 1993, Denmark and Poland in earnest embarked on military cooperation.⁷

Important steps after the Danish-Polish defense agreement of 1993 included the establishment of the international brigade SHIRBRIG (Multinational Stand-by Forces High Readiness Brigade) in December 1996 for UN peacekeeping operations. Denmark and Poland were among the participating countries.⁸ Although the brigade contributed to several UN missions and to capacity building in Africa, it is probably a fair assessment to claim that the brigade for various reasons never fully realized its potential. In 2009, it was terminated.

During this period, Danish and Polish units also began to gain joint operational experience. In 1996, a Nordic-Polish peacekeeping brigade was established – NORDPOLBRI.⁹ Soon, it was deployed to the Dobož area in Bosnia-Herzegovina, thus providing troops from the participating countries with solid operational experience in a multilateral framework. In 2000, the brigade was reduced in size to a battlegroup and eventually terminated. Nevertheless, during the time it existed, the brigade played a significant role in bringing army units from the two countries closer together and contributed significantly to stabilizing the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. While cooperation was generally cordial, it was at the same time characterized by considerable challenges due to a low degree of proficiency in English among a significant number of officers and NCO's.¹⁰ In addition, other types of military cooperation emerged during the 1990s – especially between the two navies. Joint exercises, mine sweeping, port visits, and other activities became the order of the day. Exchange of personnel also started up during this phase, and this included sending a Danish army captain to the Polish general staff course in the fall of 1995.¹¹

Polish NATO-membership in 1999 signified a new (third) phase. We could term this the phase of normalization, or – more provocatively – we might even call this the phase of a mellowing relationship.¹² Although a Danish-German-Polish corps in Szczecin was established in 1999, this event to a certain extent marked the heyday of cooperation, until recently at least. The steppingstones towards the corps were military maneuvers in Szczecin between the Polish 12 Division, the German 6 Panzerbrigade Division and the Danish Jutland Division. The fact that former foes now worked together in a joint NATO unit was in many respects historic, and seen

7 Klaus Carsten Petersen, Denmark and the European Security and Defence Policy, in: Alyson J. K. Bailes, Gunila Herolf, Bengt Sundelius (eds.), *The Nordic Countries and the European Security and Defense Policy*, Stockholm 2006, 37–49, here 44.

8 Peter Viggo Jacobsen, Still punching above their weight? Nordic Cooperation in Peace Operation after the Cold War, in: *International Peacekeeping* 14/4 (2007), 458–475, here 462.

9 *Ibid.*, 467.

10 Robert Petersen, The Danish Way of War, in *Militært Tidsskrift*, 139 (2010), 267–287.

11 Karsten Eiholm Kjær, Videreuddannelse II / Ledere i Polen, in *Militært Tidsskrift*, 127 (1998); Jacek Choczynski, Tilbage, in *Militært Tidsskrift*, 128 (1999).

12 Knud J. V. Jespsen, Ole F. Frantzen, Michael H. Clemmesen, Gunnar Lind, Kurt Villads Jensen, Thomas Wegener Friis, *Danmarks Krigshistorie 700–2010*, Copenhagen 2010, 796.

from Copenhagen, Denmark had thereby contributed significantly to the integration of Polish forces into NATO's military structure.¹³

In hindsight, it may be argued that the rapidly developing cooperation during the second phase was primarily based on sharing a joint geographical position and the common goal of getting Poland to join NATO as rapidly as possible. Nevertheless, after Poland joined NATO, in the wake of 9/11, the common interests arising from a shared geographical position became less important. Now both countries faced the challenge of following the United States in its new war on terror. One option was to adjust one's armed forces to expeditionary warfare and to participate in missions abroad; another was to offer American forces base rights and to support the planned establishment of a missile shield. In both cases, a refocusing of American interests towards failed states and the Middle East/Central Asia made it tempting to pursue solutions that were first and foremost geared towards establishing a strong bilateral relationship with the United States.¹⁴ Within this context, Danish and Polish priorities sometimes converged; other times, however, they differed.

2003 in particular became a year which tested the bonds created so far. While both Denmark and Poland joined the US invasion of Iraq, Germany, the third major partner in the Danish-German-Polish corps, did not. A proposal about sending troops from the MNC-NE to Iraq thus came to nothing. Instead, both Denmark and Poland deployed national contributions, and this included seconding Danish officers to the Polish Division in Iraq. Thus, there was a real danger that the newborn corps would lose its relevance. Not desiring this, all three participating countries increased their efforts and eventually the Danish-German-Polish corps became operational and was deployed not to Iraq but to Afghanistan, where it thrice contributed to NATO's mission in 2007, 2010 and eventually 2014–2015.¹⁵ Nevertheless, between 1999 and 2005 Denmark substantially scaled down the number of officers assigned to the corps.¹⁶

This reflected that the two countries reformed their armed forces in uneven ways. In the years after 9/11, Denmark almost completely retailored its defence forces and substantially lowered its defense budget. The Danish army was increasingly geared towards contributing to missions abroad, as no military threat was identified in its own neighborhood. Poland did not share this notion, and preserved a bigger focus on territorial defence, just as Poland engaged much more than Denmark in a southeastern direction with Ukraine as the main focal point. Thus, one could argue that while close and intense cooperation with a joint goal had prevailed during the 1990s, Danish-Polish military relations cooled off somewhat during the 2000s due to different focuses.

13 Forsvarsministeren (ed.), *Årlig Redegørelse 1998*, Copenhagen 1999, 23–27.

14 Peter Viggo Rasmussen, Jens Ringsmose, *Size and reputation – why the USA has valued its 'special relationships' with Denmark and the UK differently since 9/11*, in: *Journal of Transatlantic relations* 13/2 (2015), 135–153.

15 *Officerer fra dansk-tysk-polsk korps til Afghanistan*, "BT", 2 May 2005.

16 Christian Brøndum, *NATO korps kæmper for at overleve freden i Europa*, "Berlingske Tidende", 28 October 2004.

This was abruptly ended when Russia, in the spring of 2014, invaded Ukraine and annexed Crimea. Thus, post-2014 represents a fourth phase in Danish-Polish military relations. The security concerns of the two states again became closely aligned. Russia's actions lead to a renaissance of the Danish-German-Polish corps. The new joint focus on a forward presence at the eastern frontiers of NATO resulted in a decision to prepare the corps for command of NATO's Very High Readiness Joint Task Force. In June 2016, the corps was declared ready for this task, thus being able to command NATO forces in eastern Poland and the Baltic states in case of crisis or war. In 2022, it has become evident how significant events in 2014 were. The Russian aggression against Ukraine was not an isolated event but represented the beginning of a period characterized by increasing tension, and by a variety of Russian steps – including full-scale warfare – tailor-made towards challenging and undermining the Euro-Atlantic security order and establishing Russian dominance over its immediate neighbors.

CONCLUSION

Today, thirty years after the end of the Cold War, there cannot be any doubt that Polish-Danish relations are flourishing. Trade, investments, political cooperation, cultural exchange and increased intermarriage and migration in both directions are clear signs of this.

When it comes to military cooperation, it is hard to see the present level of cooperation as representing a clear line of still more intense engagement. Rather, Russia's resurgence and fear of possible Russian aggression served as a trigger for revitalizing Danish-Polish military relations in 2014 after a period of less intense interaction. Moscow's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 took place at the time of writing this text, and how this war will end is still unclear. Although it is too early fully to appreciate the long-term consequences of the biggest and most brutal military operation in Europe since 1945, one thing seems clear – the sad war in Ukraine is bound to galvanize Danish-Polish relations in the military field and to bring the two countries even closer together.

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In 2018, after a century of bilateral relations, Poland and Denmark finally delineated their borders in the middle of the Baltic Sea. After the reestablishment of the Polish state in 1918, its ties to Denmark had been quite turbulent. The great powers established the conditions of the playing field. As small and intermediate European states, the two partners tried to keep their relationship as amicable as possible. Danish investors were active early in the establishment of the Port of Gdynia as well as road infrastructure during the interwar years.

Though WW2 dramatically reduced the number of relations, Polish Intelligence

was still active in Danish anti-Nazi resistance. During the Cold War, the so-called Polish People's Republic and the Kingdom of Denmark found themselves in opposing camps. The Polish armed forces played a decisive role in planning wartime operations against Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein. After the Cold War, the former opponents became close allies and partners in the European integration process. This book brings together prominent scholars from Denmark, Poland, and Germany to analyze diplomatic, military, intelligence, and cultural relations across the Baltic Sea from the end of WW1 to the days of NATO cooperation.

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Franz Steiner Verlag

ISBN 978-3-515-13335-7

