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SHAPING AND DEVELOPMENT  
OF POLISH-GERMAN RELATIONS  
IN THE YEARS 1989–2005.  
AN ASSESSMENT ATTEMPT

INTRODUCTION

Speaking of Polish-German relations in the years 1989–2005 we have in mind one of the most important stages in Polish and German history. It was in those years when a radical change in the history of the two countries and in the relations between them took place. At that time, new, strong legal bases were created for Polish-German relations, thanks to which they entered into an unprecedented stage, which in the literature is called the stage of normalisation and reconciliation and shaping of peaceful and democratic rules for Polish-German relations.

The aim of this article is an attempt to present Polish-German relations in the years 1989–2005, that is, from the fall of communism in Poland and in East Germany and after the reunification of Germany in 1990 to the parliamentary election in Germany in 2005, as a result of which Angela Merkel became a new chancellor. There is no doubt that for Poland and Germany it was one of the most difficult stages in their history. It was also an exceptional time in Polish-German relations, as well as a time of great international events in Europe and the world which had a significant impact on foreign policies of both these countries and on Polish-German relations.

This article was written in a chronological-problematic arrangement and consists of two parts. The first part covers the years 1989–1998 and shows the development of the treaty bases of Polish-German relations and their normalisation and development at this time. The second part contains an analysis of Polish-German relations in 1998–2005, with particular emphasis

on their continuity and changes and their reasons. The period 1998–2005 was the time of the SPD – the Alliance 90/the Greens government coalition in Germany, and the SLD – PSL coalition in Poland.

The main thesis of the article is the observation that in the years 1989–2005 in Polish-German relations we dealt with their difficult normalisation, continuation and at the same time significant changes, not always favourable for Poland, especially in 1998–2005.

Another thesis of this article I try to advance here is that foreign policy of each country is significantly influenced by the international environment and the phenomena and processes occurring in it. The years 1989–2005, and especially the period 1998–2005, was a time of great international events in Europe and in the world that had a significant impact on the foreign policy of both countries and on Polish-German relations.

It should be emphasised that the reunification of Germany, which was significantly influenced by the overthrow of communism in Poland and the process known as the ‘Autumn of Nations 1989’ which started in Europe at that time, was, on the one hand, the consequence of overcoming the East-West conflict and the division of Europe, and, on the other hand, was associated with a change of their international environment. In contrast to the period before 1989 in terms of geopolitical situation Germany was no longer in the situation of a country divided by the line of the Cold War confrontation between the two opposing politico-military blocs, taking after the reunification a favourable central position in integrating Europe. Due to this it was able not only to overcome the existing military threat but also to move to a peaceful and beneficial cooperation with all its neighbours, to the east, including Poland, to the west, north and south.

There is also no doubt for me that the year 1998 was a turning point for unified Germany and its international policy, and especially for Eastern policy and Polish-German relations. In the subsequent parliamentary election on 27 September 1998 the CDU/CSU were defeated, which ended the sixteen-year long era of the government of ‘the chancellor of the reunification’, that is Helmut Kohl, which led to a break of the continuity in foreign policy of united Germany, based on Adenauer’s tradition of maintaining close links with Western democracies<sup>1</sup>. A year later, the reign of Boris Yeltsin

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<sup>1</sup> See more on this topic in: Cziomer, E. 2006. *Polityka zagraniczna Niemiec. Kontynuacja i zmiana po zjednoczeniu ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem polityki europejskiej i transatlantyckiej*. [German’s foreign Policy. The continuation and change after the reunification with special emphasis on European and transatlantic policy.] Warszawa: Dom Wydawniczy ELIPSA, pp. 13–55; Kiwerska, J., Tomczak, M. 2011. Problem kontynuacji i zmian

ended, who largely contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union and thus opened a way for the reunification of Germany, and was a co-founder of the independent Russian Federation. In turn, these two events connected with personnel changes, were of great importance for Polish-German relations and the Euro-Atlantic system, in particular NATO and the European Union, for the membership in which at that time Poland applied<sup>2</sup>.

The German newspaper 'Die Welt' wrote that Gerhard Schröder described Yeltsin's resignation from the function of the president of Russia as a 'chance for a new beginning', primarily for a peaceful solution to the problem of Chechnya<sup>3</sup>. Duties of the president of Russia were then taken over by Prime Minister Vladimir Putin. In German-Russian relations the mutual probing of politicians of both countries began. And although the German side was still critical of the Russian democratic deficit and the proceedings in relation to Chechnya, cautious optimism about the future prospects of cooperation could be noticed in bilateral statements, but the breaking of ice proceeded slowly<sup>4</sup>.

The new German Chancellor, Social Democrat Gerhard Schröder and the new leader of Russia, post-communist Vladimir Putin, were politicians who were guided by pragmatism and talked about the supremacy of national interests over global or European ones. As a result, exceptionally partnership relations between Chancellor Schröder and President Putin were formed. They quickly found a common language, which initiated accelerated cooperation between these countries and in general between the West and Russia behind the back of Poland's leaders, which was not without significance for Polish-German relations at the time. Initial distrust and reserve of the West due to the financial crisis and the deficit of democracy in Russia, the Kosovo

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w polityce zagranicznej zjednoczonych Niemiec. [The problem of the continuation and changes in foreign policy of reunited Germany.] In: Kiwerska, J., Koszel, B., Tomczak, M., Żerko, S. *Polityka zagraniczna zjednoczonych Niemiec. [Foreign policy of reunited Germany.]* Poznań: Instytut Zachodni, pp. 20–21.

<sup>2</sup> See, among others, Holzer, J. 2012. *Europa zimnej wojny. [Europe of the Cold War.]* Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak; Genscher, H.D. 1995. *Erinnerungen.* Berlin; Gorbatschow, M. 1999. *Wie es war. Die deutsche Wiedervereinigung.* Berlin; Judt, T. 2008. *Powojnie. Historia Europy od roku 1945. [The post-war period. History of Europe after 1945.]* Poznań; Fiszer, J.M. ed. 2009. *Polska w Unii Europejskiej. Aspekty polityczne, międzynarodowe, społeczno-gospodarcze i wojskowe. [Poland in the European Union. Political, international, socio-economic and military aspects.]* Warszawa: ISP PAN.

<sup>3</sup> See Jelzins 'historische Rolle' weltweit gewürdigt. *Die Welt* 3 January 2000.

<sup>4</sup> See Kosman, M.M. 2013. *Polityka RFN wobec ZSRR/Rosji w latach 1989–2009. [The policy of the Federal Republic of Germany towards the USSR/Russia in the years 1989–2009.]* Bydgoszcz: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Kazimierza Wielkiego, pp. 334–335.

conflict and the Chechen war turned into the process of institutionalisation of political, military and economic cooperation. Of great importance for both countries, but also for Poland was military cooperation and close relations of Russia and NATO, including the openness of Russia and Germany to the extension of the structures of NATO and the European Union, thanks to which on 12 March 1999 Poland became a member of NATO, and on 1 May 2004 it was admitted to the European Union<sup>5</sup>.

Germany's role in influencing Russia's restraint in the above matters was irrefutable. An important element of cooperation in the field of security and the armed forces were plans for technical-military cooperation in the sphere of armaments, as well as joint manoeuvres or training of staff. Their symbol was the first since the interwar period joint German-Russian manoeuvres in August 2002. Moreover, the following agreements were signed: an agreement on combating crime, agreements on legal assistance in criminal matters and extradition of criminals of 2001, a protocol on cooperation of border services of February 2003 and visa facilitation for selected categories of people. And the main element of the social dialogue became the office of a coordinator for German-Russian social cooperation established at the beginning of 2003<sup>6</sup>.

In the years 2003–2005 German-Russian cooperation deepened, especially in the energy sector, the main result of which was the agreement to build the North European Gas Pipeline (Nord Stream), which aroused opposition across Europe, and not only from Poland and other Central and Eastern European countries. This agreement was presented as evidence for the fact

<sup>5</sup> See Kosman, M.M. *Polityka RFN wobec ZSRR/Rosji w latach 1989–2009...* [*The Policy of the Federal Republic of Germany towards the USSR/Russia in the years 1989–2009...*], pp. 319–15; Fiszer, J.M. 2011. Władimir Putin jako „fenomenalny” przywódca Rosji. [Vladimir Putin as a ‘phenomenal’ leader of Russia.] In: *Stosunki Międzynarodowe – Zeszyty Naukowe*, Uczelnia Vistula w Warszawie, no. 26, pp. 7–25; Kiwerska, J., Koszel, B., Tomczak, M., Żerko, S. 2011. *Polityka zagraniczna zjednoczonych Niemiec*. [*Foreign policy of reunited Germany.*] Poznań: Instytut Zachodni.

<sup>6</sup> See more on this topic of cooperation of Germany with Russia in: Kosman, M.M. *Polityka RFN wobec ZSRR/Rosji...* [*The Policy of the Federal Republic of Germany towards the USSR/Russia...*], pp. 365–385; Mischczak, K. 2012. *Polityka zagraniczna, bezpieczeństwa i obrony koalicji rządowej SPD-Sojusz 90/Zieloni w okresie 1998–2005*. [*Foreign, security and defence policy of the SPD – the Alliance 90/the Greens government coalition in 1998–2005.*] Warszawa: Dom Wydawniczy ELIPSA; Stent, A. 2007. Russland. In: Schmidt, S., Hellmann, G., Wolf, R. eds. *Handbuch zur deutschen Außenpolitik*. Wiesbaden, pp. 443–444; Centre for Eastern Studies and Centre for International Relations. 2006. *Stosunki Rosja – Niemcy w latach 1998–2005*. [*Russian-German relations in the years 1998–2005.*] Report 2006. Warszawa.

that in its foreign policy Germany was directed by the narrowly conceived national interest, not the European one. Indeed, the new pipeline assured, bypassing transit countries (Ukraine and Belarus), greater security of supply for German consumers, and responded to the future growth in demand for gas in the total energy consumption in Germany in connection with the resignation from nuclear energy planned by Schröder's government<sup>7</sup>.

In the last several months of Schröder's reigns, Russian-German relations showed a far-reaching convergence of interests and assessments of leading international problems, although there were also many differences of opinion. However, if these occurred, the good relationship between the two leaders facilitated the easing of tensions, for example, in relation to the Orange Revolution in Ukraine or the enlargement of NATO by the Baltic countries. The intensity of contacts between the two is evidenced by the fact that at the end of Schröder's government, in 2005, they met eight times. Because of Schröder and the German Social Democrats the axiological factor in Germany's policy towards Russia weakened at that time, which was manifested in practice by the lack of German Chancellor's criticism of the democratic deficit in Putin's internal policy. Moreover, an important element strengthening German-Russian cooperation was the opposition to the growing unilateral US foreign policy.

This article is an attempt to characterise Polish-German relations in the years 1998–2005 and shows their specificity at that time, and especially depicts the areas in which after the change of government in Germany cooperation with Poland continued and those where it deteriorated. I advance a thesis here that contrary to official assurances and statements of the German side, as well as of the Polish government about the excellent state of Polish-German relations in the analyzed period they underwent systematic deterioration, especially when it comes to political relations. The ways of Germany and Poland were slowly going apart and the 'Polish-German community of interests', painstakingly built in 1989–1998, was falling apart. Formally speaking, at first glance, especially at the beginning of this period everything in Polish-German relations was as in previous years, in the era of the reign of Chancellor Helmut Kohl, who repeatedly stressed that Germany reunited thanks to Poland, was our advocate in NATO and the European Union. Theoretically we deal here with the continuation of Polish-German relations on many

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<sup>7</sup> See Cianciara, A. 2014. Gospodarcze uwarunkowania polityki wschodniej Niemiec i Francji. [Economic conditions of Eastern policy of Germany and France.] In: *Mysl Ekonomiczna i Polityczna*, no 2(45), pp. 202–203.

levels; there were numerous visits, a lot of pompous words were said, but in practice, our paths were diverging slowly. Chancellor Gerhard Schröder in contrast to his predecessor Helmut Kohl did not treat Poland as a country of key importance for Germany. Russia became such a country for him. Animosities in Polish-German relations appeared already during our accession negotiations with NATO and the European Union, and aggravated after the aggression of the United States against Iraq in 2003, when Poland and Germany took different positions in relation to that fact. Their climax falls on the end of Chancellor Gerhard Schröder's government, who behind the back of the Polish government reached an agreement with Russia on the construction of the North European Gas Pipeline (Nord Stream), which not only omitted Poland, but also became a source of tension in Polish-Russian relations.

The analysis of the reasons for Polish and German foreign policies, and the study of their mutual relations, especially political ones, required the use of several research methods. In the explanation of the discussed issues I used primarily the theory of structural realism, the historical analysis method and the institutional and legal analysis. The whole discussion was based on rich, both Polish and foreign literature on the subject. These problems have become a topic of numerous publications, including excellent scientific, source and documentary works.

## 1. THE GENESIS AND DEVELOPMENT OF POLISH-GERMAN RELATIONS IN 1989–1998 AND THEIR PREMISES

Among historians and political scientists there is no doubt that 1989 was a turning point in European history, modifying its post-war shape by breaking the 'iron curtain'. Commonly in the world it is believed that the fall of the Berlin Wall in autumn that year symbolises the end of communism, and also the beginning of changes in the geopolitical situation of Europe. However, in the consciousness of Poles that breakthrough took place earlier and was manifested in 'Solidarity's' victory in the election to the parliament (Sejm and Senate) in June 1989. This election ended with the triumph of the Solidarity camp (35% of parliamentary seats in the Sejm and 99 out of 100 available seats in the Senate), and launched a process of political transformation in Poland<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> See Bankowicz, M. ed. 2004. *Historia polityczna świata XX wieku. [Political history of the world in the twentieth century.]* Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego,

The 'Autumn of Nations 89', launched by the historical socio-political changes in Poland, quickly spread to other countries in Central and Eastern Europe. Just like in Poland, also in other countries of the Soviet bloc, the great transformation of the system began, leading from the communist system to the social market economy and democracy. These processes led to the disintegration of the Soviet bloc, and then in 1991 to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Yalta-Potsdam order, which had been the basis of the bipolar division of Europe and Germany<sup>9</sup>.

These changes also could not omit East Germany, where opposition groups became active. On 9 November 1989 the before mentioned Berlin Wall tumbled down – a symbol of the Cold War and the division of Germany. Thus, SED's policy of 'fencing off' of the GDR from the Federal Republic of Germany and the construction of a separate 'socialist German nation' ended in a fiasco. 3 October 1990 witnesses the reunification of Germany, and the end of the existence of the GDR. The reunification of Germany, and in fact the inclusion of the former East Germany to West Germany under Article 23 of the Bonn Basic Law surprised Europe and the world, including Germans themselves and Poles. At the same time it confirmed the thesis that there is a close relationship between the history of Polish-German relations and the history of Europe<sup>10</sup>.

Reunited Germany was faced with the need to redefine its role in the international arena. Similar challenges also emerged in front of other European countries, also in front of sovereign, democratic Poland. The case of

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pp. 629–631; Painter, D.S. 2007. *The cold war. An international history*. London, New York: Routledge, pp. 106–110.

<sup>9</sup> See Fiszer, J.M. 1992. *Proces jednoczenia Niemiec po „jesieni ludów 1989” i jego specyficzne cechy*. [The process of reunification of Germany after the 'Autumn of Nations 1989' and its specificity.] Warszawa: Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN; Fiszer, J.M. 2016. Nowy, pojałtański ład globalny: bipolarny czy multipolarny? Próba prognozy. [The new, post-Yalta global order: bipolar or multipolar? A forecast attempt.] In: *Biuletyn Analiz i Opinii*. ISP PAN, no. 01(22), pp. 1–6.

<sup>10</sup> See Cziomer, E. 1998. Rozwój stosunków politycznych między Polską a RFN w latach 1989–1995. [The development of political relations between Poland and the Federal Republic of Germany in the years 1989–1995.] In: Holzer, J., Fiszer, J.M. eds. *Stosunki polsko-niemieckie w latach 1970–1995. Próba bilansu i perspektywy rozwoju*. [Polish-German relations in the years 1970–1995. An assessment attempt and development prospects.] Warszawa: Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN, pp. 27–45; Fiszer, J.M. 1996. Stosunki polsko-niemieckie po roku 1989 oraz ich znaczenie dla bezpieczeństwa Europy. [Polish-German relations after 1989 and their meaning for the security of Europe.] In: *Studia Polityczne*, no. 5, pp. 141–151.

reunited Germany, however, was special, because now the future shape of relations in Europe, especially the prospect of European integration depend on it to a large extent, as well as – to a lesser extent – the picture of the Euro-Atlantic alliance, that is the basis of the functioning of the relations between Europe and America. It concerned also the nature of bilateral relations between united Germany and its proximal and distal neighbours. Europe and the United States feared that reunited and again powerful Germany may want to reach for Europe again and may depart from the principles of its hitherto prevailing foreign policy. As Jadwiga Kiwerska and Maria Tomczak aptly write: ‘For most countries, and not only Western ones, there was no doubt that keeping Germany in the North Atlantic Treaty was in the interest of united Germany and in the interest of European security. It still concerned a proven function of controlling Germany within the framework of NATO and the prevention of potential re-nationalisation of its security policy. Besides, maintaining united Germany in NATO meant not only the strengthening of NATO (due to the increase in the potential of new Germany), but also ensured a close relationship of the Federal Republic with the West, preventing gravity to the East dangerous for the transatlantic relations because the Alliance was also bonded by a certain community of values and principles and the tradition of political cooperation’<sup>11</sup>.

Fortunately quite quickly after the German reunification it turned out that this view was also shared in Germany. The majority of society, German politicians and major parties in Germany: the CDU/CSU, the SPD and the FDP guaranteed, therefore, the continuation of the current policy, aimed at cooperation and maintaining of allied relations with the existing partners. Of course, there were forces opposed to the continuation of the current policy and in favour of conducting it in a more independent way than Germany did before the reunification. They demanded the departure from the principle of self-restraint in foreign policy of Germany.

In conclusion, it can be said that Germany’s foreign policy after its reunification was the resultant of continuation and change. The continuation manifested itself in making references to the tradition of Western Germany’s diplomacy and strengthening cooperation with the existing partners within the framework of Euro-Atlantic structures in aid of peace and security of Europe. The change, on the other hand, was determined by transformations

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<sup>11</sup> See Kiwerska, J., Tomczak, M. *Problem kontynuacji i zmian w polityce zagranicznej zjednoczonych Niemiec...* [The problem of the continuation and changes in foreign policy of reunited Germany...], pp. 14–15.

taking place in the geopolitical and geo-economic environment of reunited Germany, and especially – after the fall of communism – in Central and Eastern Europe. A political vacuum was formed there, and socio-economic problems opened for foreign policy of united Germany a wide field for action and posed new challenges and temptations. This enforced the increased activity and responsibility of Germany in the international arena, and on the other hand, favoured more daring articulation of national interests in Germany's foreign policy. A clear shift in foreign policy of reunited Germany took place, however, only under the SPD – the Alliance 90/the Greens coalition in the years 1998–2005. In Krzysztof Miszczak's words, an expert on German politics, as well as Polish-German relations, the government of the SPD – the Alliance 90/the Greens coalition was 'an exceptional period from the point of view of changes of foreign and security policy of reunited Germany', and it was 'the last and necessary period of political emancipation of the country in the international arena, which irrevocably ended the period of post-war Germany and began the process of real normalisation of foreign, security and defence policy'<sup>12</sup>.

With the reunification of Germany and the fall of authoritarian regimes in Central and Eastern Europe a new chapter in the history of Polish-German relations and in the history of the whole of Europe opened up. Leading to a historic breakthrough in relations with Germany become a major foreign policy goal of Tadeusz Mazowiecki, who on 24 August 1989 became the head of a new government in Poland, and was the first non-communist prime minister in Central and Eastern Europe after the Second World War. This task was entrusted to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Professor Krzysztof Skubiszewski, a superb lawyer and expert on Polish-German relations. The assumptions of Polish foreign policy pertaining to Polish-German relations were clear: to settle and close the past, to create strong foundations for the development of future relations and to build united Europe jointly with Germany. Jerzy Holzer writes: 'The creation of Tadeusz Mazowiecki's government, in which Krzysztof Skubiszewski became the Minister of Foreign Affairs, was also a turning point for Polish-German relations. This resulted primarily from the fact that although the government felt initially obliged by the participation of Poland in the Warsaw Pact and alliance commitments to the Soviet Union, it rejected the dependence of Polish foreign policy on directives from Moscow or the usage of the psychosis of German threat for

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<sup>12</sup> See K. Miszczak, *Polityka zagraniczna, bezpieczeństwa i obrony...* [Foreign, security and defence policy...], p. 400.

the purpose of domestic policy, which had continued with bigger or smaller intensity during the whole period of communist reigns in Poland<sup>13</sup>.

Assessing critically German policy of the Polish People's Republic, I would like to emphasise, however, that the policy of West Germany until 1970 and also later until 1990 did not facilitate abandoning of distrust and did not encourage Poland to show increased willingness to agreement and common dialogue and full normalisation of relations. Architects of Bonn's eastern policy gave priority to political relations with the Soviet Union because of the role the Kremlin played in intricate tangle of German affairs. Germany's political strategy towards other countries of the Eastern bloc was a function of the West Germany's policy towards Moscow. The above rule for years prejudged the location of Polish affairs in the eastern policy of Bonn<sup>14</sup>.

Tadeusz Mazowiecki's government was the first among the governments of the Warsaw Pact which in 1989 advocated for the right of the German people to reunite and decide on their own fate on condition that reunited Germany will not threaten any other country. Taking the view that the reunification could be beneficial for Polish national interests and the state, the government also announced its readiness for Polish-German reconciliation on the moral level. In his first speech on 12 September 1989 Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki emphasised, among others, that 'We need a breakthrough in relations with Germany. Societies of the two countries have already gone much further than their governments. We are looking forward to clear development of economic relations and we want true reconciliation just like the one that took place between Germans and the French'<sup>15</sup>.

At the same time, the then German Chancellor Helmut Kohl recognised reconciliation with Poland as one of the main aims of German foreign policy. However, in Polish foreign policy in 1989 there also appeared proponents of

<sup>13</sup> See Holzer, J. *Próba bilansu i oceny stosunków polsko-niemieckich w latach 1989–1995*. [An assessment attempt of Polish-German relations in the years 1989–1995.] In: Holzer, J., Fiszer J.M. eds. *Stosunki polsko-niemieckie w latach 1970–1995...*, [Polish-German relations in the years 1970–1995...], p. 47.

<sup>14</sup> See Fiszer, J.M. 1998. *Stosunki polsko-niemieckie w latach 1970–1989 – uwarunkowania i bilans*. [Polish-German relations in the years 1970–1989 – conditions and an assessment.] In: Holzer, J., Fiszer J.M. eds. *Stosunki polsko-niemieckie w latach 1970–1995. Próba bilansu i perspektywy rozwoju*. [Polish-German relations in the years 1970–1995. An assessment attempt and development prospects.] Warszawa: Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN, pp. 16–17. Cf. also: Gura, K. 1996. *Preliminaria do układu Polska – RFN z 7 grudnia 1970 roku*. [Preliminaries to the Polish – German treaty of 7 December 1970.] In: *Rocznik Polsko-Niemiecki*, vol. V., pp. 136–137.

<sup>15</sup> *Gazeta Wyborcza* 13 September 1989.

the need to build a Polish-German community of interests, the implementation of which was conditioned by the definitive recognition of the Polish western border by reunited Germany<sup>16</sup>. For the Polish side an agreements of this type became all the more urgent because of the expected substantial economic aid from Germany in the processes of economic transformation which were to start soon<sup>17</sup>.

The Polish-German process of reconciliation and construction of the Polish-German community of interests began with the visit of Chancellor Helmut Kohl in Poland on 9–14 November 1989. This visit had an even symbolic importance as it coincided at the same time with a great event for Germany and Europe, which was the fall of the Berlin Wall. The meeting in Krzyżowa and the adopted joint statement was the prototype of a bilateral treaty. This was undoubtedly a success for both sides that favoured the further development of comprehensive relations between Poland and Germany<sup>18</sup>.

In the joint statement adopted on 14 November 1989, numbering as many as 78 points, both parties expressed the desire to create a new basis for mutual relations. It was stressed, among others, that ‘the Polish People’s Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany are aware of their special responsibility for the policy of peace, understanding and cooperation in the interest of the people and nations of Europe. (...) Bearing in mind the tragic and painful pages of history, they are determined to shape their relations with the future in mind, and thus set an example of good neighbourliness’<sup>19</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> See Fiszer, J.M. 1998. Stosunki polsko-niemieckie w latach 1970–1989 – uwarunkowania i bilans. [Polish-German relations in the years 1970–1989 – conditions and an assessment.] In: Holzer, J., Fiszer J.M. eds. *Stosunki polsko-niemieckie w latach 1970–1995. Próba bilansu i perspektywy rozwoju*, [Polish-German relations in the years 1970–1995. An assessment attempt and development prospects.] Warszawa: ISP PAN, p. 25.

<sup>17</sup> See Jacobson, H.A., Tomala, M. eds. 1992. *Warszawa – Bonn 1945–1991. Stosunki polsko-niemieckie. Analiza i dokumenty*. [Warsaw – Bonn 1945–1991. Polish-German relations. The analysis and documents.] Warszawa: PISM; Teltschik, H. 1991. *329 dni. Zjednoczenie Niemiec w zapiskach doradcy kanclerza*. [329 days. The unification of Germany in the notes of a Chancellor’s advisor.] Warszawa: PISM.

<sup>18</sup> See Kuźniar, R. 2008. *Droga do wolności. Polityka zagraniczna III Rzeczypospolitej*. [The road to freedom. Foreign policy of the Third Polish Republic.] Warszawa: Wydawnictwo SCHOLAR, pp. 54–57; Moynahan, B. 2006. Jak upadał stary świat. [How the old world was falling.] *Forum*, no. 22/23 1 June–14 June 2006, pp. 5–11.

<sup>19</sup> See Tomala, M. ed. 1996. *Na drodze do współpracy i przyjaźni. Warszawa – Bonn 1945–1995*. [On the road to cooperation and friendship. Warsaw – Bonn 1945–1995.] Warszawa: PISM, p. 167; Koćwin, L. 1992. *Dekada przełomu. Stosunki polsko-niemieckie od czerwca 1989 do czerwca 1991. Dokumenty – Materiały – Komentarze*. [The

In addition, the document contained an announcement of Prime Minister Mazowiecki's visit to Germany, as well as Federal President's to Poland, the establishment of contacts between the heads of selected ministries and the intensification of relations at the parliamentary level, and the introduction of regular consultations of foreign ministers. The German side pledged to support Polish economic reforms and supported Polish efforts to obtain loans from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. On the other hand, Poland for the first time admitted here that on its territory there were people and groups of 'German origin' or admitting to the German 'language, culture or tradition'<sup>20</sup>.

Due to the rapid process of the reunification of Germany, which started after 9 November 1989, and which was also supported by Poland, the issue of the final recognition of the border on the Oder and Lusatian Neisse by Germany gained in importance for our country. 'The Treaty between the Polish People's Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany concerning the basis for the normalisation of their mutual relations', signed in 1970, recognised this border only until the conclusion of a peace treaty with the reunited German state (the GDR recognised this border in 'The Agreement between the Polish Republic and the German Democratic Republic concerning the demarcation of the established and the existing Polish-German state frontier' (called the Treaty of Görlitz) which the GDR and Poland signed already in 1950 and in the agreements concluded for its implementation and amending<sup>21</sup>. This issue was very controversial because the German side was not initially inclined to final recognition of this border. Poland wanted to sign relevant treaties separately with the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic before their unification, but it turned out to be impossible because Chancellor Helmut Kohl did not accept such a solution. In exchange for the recognition of the Polish western border he demanded that the Polish government abandon efforts for reparations, grant the rights

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*breakthrough decade. Polish-German relations from June 1989 to June 1991. Documents – Materials – Comments.* ] Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, pp. 122–125.

<sup>20</sup> See Cziomer, E. Rozwój stosunków politycznych między Polską a RFN w latach 1989–1995. [The development of political relations between Poland and the Federal Republic of Germany in the years 1989–1995.] In: Holzer, J., Fiszer, J.M. eds. *Stosunki polsko-niemieckie w latach 1970–1995...* [*Polish-German relations in the years 1970–1995...*], p. 31.

<sup>21</sup> See Sułek, J. 2011. Historia powstania traktatu dobrosąsiedzkiego RP-RFN z 17 czerwca 1991 roku. [The history of the RP-FRG neighborly treaty of 17 June 1991.] In: *Przegląd Zachodni*, no. 2, p. 14.

of the German minority living in Poland. In addition, the German side did not agree to Polish participation in the talks in the framework of the conference '2+4' on the 'external aspects of the establishment of German unity, including the security problems of the neighbouring countries'<sup>22</sup>.

The behaviour of Chancellor Kohl provoked a wave of criticism in Poland. As is clear from the documents recently declassified by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs relating to the reunification of Germany, Poland was disappointed with the attitude of the German Chancellor who supported Mazowiecki's government but for a long time refused to recognise the Polish western border. The distrust was fuelled by the fact that Helmut Kohl steered a middle course in this issue. On the one hand, he assured the Polish government that Germany had no claims to the Polish territory, and on the other hand, for example at the congress of the Federation of Expellees said that 'German legal positions' were in force, i.e. that after the reunification of Germany the issue of the border would return. The reunification plan presented by Kohl in late November 1989 also did not mention the borders<sup>23</sup>.

Finally the Germany reunification plan was adopted at the International Conference '2+4', the sessions of which were attended by foreign ministers of four powers, members of the former anti-Hitler coalition, i.e. the United States, the UK, France and the Soviet Union as well as the FRG and the GDR. In some of its meetings concerning Poland, also a Polish delegation participated. During this conference, the Federal Republic of Germany agreed to the treaty, final recognition of its eastern border on the Oder and Lusatian Neisse. Also 'the Treaty on the final settlement with respect to Germany' signed on 12 September 1990 in Moscow within the framework of the conference, also called the 'two plus four treaty', or the 'reunification treaty', contained a statement that reunited Germany would confirm this border. This treaty was also of great importance for the further process of the reunification of the two German states and for foreign policy of reunited Germany. The 'two plus four treaty' is considered today a masterpiece of

<sup>22</sup> See Cziomer, E. Rozwój stosunków politycznych między Polską a RFN... [The development of political relations between Poland and the Federal Republic of Germany...] In: Holzer, J., Fiszer, J.M. eds., p. 31; Romaniec, R. Trudna droga do traktatu. [A difficult road to the treaty.] Available at: [www.dw.de](http://www.dw.de)

<sup>23</sup> See Wieliński, B.T. 2015. Baliśmy się zjednoczenia Niemiec. [We were scared of the reunification of Germany.] *Gazeta Wyborcza* 2 October 2015, p. 8. See also: Fiszer, J.M. 1992. *Proces jednoczenia Niemiec po „jesieni ludów 1989” i jego specyficzne cechy.* [The process of reunification of Germany after the 'Autumn of Nations 1989' and its specificity.] Warszawa: ISP PAN.

diplomacy. It was the result of several months of an extremely complex negotiation marathon, during which there were many meetings of heads of state and governments and foreign ministers of the countries participating in the 'two plus four' negotiations in Bonn, East Berlin, Paris and Moscow<sup>24</sup>.

I would like to recall here that under that 'reunification treaty' Germany became a sovereign state, equated in its status with other European countries. The resignation of the four great powers under Article 7 'from their rights and duties towards Berlin and Germany as a whole' was not just a rhetorical expression<sup>25</sup>. In this way, the German state was given, without limitation, the right to independently determine its foreign policy – in accordance with the obtained sovereignty. This was of great importance for Germany. The sense of power and position of Germany in international relations grew, and the external perception of the German state also changed. Undoubtedly, in this way, Europe agreed to the emergence of a new centre of influence, radically changing the existing balance of power in the European arena. Moreover, the consent of the four great powers to independent shaping of foreign policy of reunited Germany gave it the right to choose alliances and international organisations. Article 6 of the reunification treaty of 12 September stated unequivocally that 'this treaty does not violate the right of reunited Germany to belong to alliances with all the ensuing rights and obligations'<sup>26</sup>.

Parallel to the conference, '2+4' Polish-German talks were held on the issue of the final recognition of our western border. Initially, both countries sought to conclude a comprehensive treaty that would regulate besides the border issue also other issues concerning bilateral relations between the two countries after the reunification of Germany. Eventually it was decided that two treaties would be prepared, which, however, would be ratified together. In November 1990, when Helmut Kohl and Tadeusz Mazowiecki met again, the treaty concerning the borders had already been agreed<sup>27</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> See Teltschik, H. 1991. 329. *Tage. Inneransichten der Einigung*. Berlin; Barcz, J., Tomala, M. 1992. *Polska – Niemcy: dobre sąsiedztwo i przyjazna współpraca*. [Poland – Germany: good neighbourliness and friendly cooperation.] Warszawa: PISM; Barcz, J. 1994. *Udział Polski w konferencji „2+4”. Aspekty prawne i proceduralne*. [The participation of Poland in the '2+4' conference. Legal and procedural aspects.] Warszawa: PISM; Strobel, G. 1996. Der Normalisierungsprozess zwischen Polen und Deutschland. In: *Zeitschrift für politische Bildung*, no. 2, pp. 4–21.

<sup>25</sup> See Barcz, J. 1991. *Polska – Niemcy. Dobre sąsiedztwo i przyjazna współpraca*. [Poland – Germany: good neighbourliness and friendly cooperation.] Warszawa: PISM, pp. 5–12.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 7.

<sup>27</sup> See Sułek, J. Historia powstania traktatu dobrosąsiedzkiego RP-RFN... [The history of the RP-FRG neighborly treaty...], p. 33; Cziomer, E. Rozwój stosunków politycz-

Finally, the ‘Treaty between the Polish Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany on the confirmation of the frontier existing between us’ was signed by the foreign ministers Krzysztof Skubiszewski and Hans-Dietrich Genscher on 14 November 1990 in Warsaw. This document, consisting of a preamble and four articles finally confirmed the course of the Polish-German border on the Oder and Lusatian Neisse and closed the way for further speculation on this subject<sup>28</sup>. In the preamble of the treaty both parties stressed that they would strive for reconciliation between the two nations and expressed their willingness to work towards a ‘European peace order’ in which borders are not the reason for discord between states, and become a guarantor of lasting peace and freedom on the European continent.

The signing and implementation of the treaty confirming the border between Poland and Germany marked a breakthrough in the process of normalisation of mutual relations and building of foundations for cooperation in all areas of life between Germany and Poland. According to earlier agreements, after the conclusion of the border treaty, work on a second treaty that would regulate the issues of peaceful coexistence between the two countries after Poland’s regained sovereignty and the reunification of Germany accelerated. Negotiations over it took place in 1990–1991. There were six rounds of negotiations, which took place in Bonn and Warsaw. The German side first of all sought to regulate matters concerning the German minority in Poland and the priority of the Polish side was to gain international support for our aspirations of integration with Euro-Atlantic structures and debt reduction. Finally, the treaty was signed on 17 June 1991 in Bonn<sup>29</sup>.

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nich między Polską a RFN... [The development of political relations between Poland and the Federal Republic of Germany...], pp. 34–35.

<sup>28</sup> See *Traktat między Rzeczpospolitą Polską a Republiką Federalną Niemiec o potwierdzeniu istniejącej między nimi granicy*. [The treaty between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Poland on the confirmation of the frontier between them.] In: Dz. U. 1992, no. 14, item 54.

<sup>29</sup> See *Traktat między Rzeczpospolitą Polską a Republiką Federalną Niemiec o dobrym sąsiedztwie i przyjaznej współpracy*. [The treaty between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Poland on the confirmation of the frontier between them.] In: Dz. U. 1992, no. 14, item 56. See also: Cziomer, E. *Rozwój stosunków politycznych między Polską a RFN...* [The development of political relations between Poland and the Federal Republic of Germany...], p. 34; Barcz, J. 2007. *Podstawy prawne stosunków Polski z zjednoczonymi Niemcami*. [Legal bases of the relations of Poland with united Germany.] In: Góralski W.M. ed. *Polska – Niemcy 1945–2007. Od konfrontacji do współpracy i partnerstwa w Europie. Studia i dokumenty*. [Poland – Germany 1945–2007.

The treaty between Poland and Germany on good neighbourhood and friendly cooperation, the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of which will be celebrated in June 2016, is preceded by the preamble, which refers not only to history, but also to the common interests and the need to overcome divisions in Europe and to ensure its security. It is followed by as many as 38 articles. The first of them talks about the need for peaceful cooperation and consultations at various levels. In article eight there is a very important statement for Poland that Germany will support Polish efforts for the membership in the European Communities. Subsequent articles emphasise the need to develop economic cooperation between the two countries, the issues of regional cooperation, environmental protection and others. For Germany article twenty was of particular importance, giving Poles of German origin a minority status. From the beginning of the negotiations this issue was a priority for the German side. Further, among other things, the issues of cultural cooperation and care for places of worship are mentioned. Moreover, in the treaty both parties agreed to strengthen cooperation in the framework of international organisations<sup>30</sup>.

Both treaties discussed above were ratified together by the Polish Sejm and the German Bundestag in October 1991 and in January 1992 after being signed by the presidents of both countries they entered into force. The border treaty of 1990 closed a painful chapter in the history of Polish-German relations, and the treaty on good neighbourliness of 1991 opened a new chapter in relations between the two countries. Both countries then entered on the path of reconciliation and building of the Polish-German community of interests<sup>31</sup>.

Democratic Poland and reunited Germany became sovereign states again, and at the same time direct neighbours. Systemic contradictions and ideologi-

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*From confrontation to cooperation and partnership in Europe. Studies and documents.* [Warszawa: PISM, pp. 151–152.]

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>31</sup> See more on this topic in: Stolarczyk, M. 1997. Niektóre problemy w stosunkach polsko-niemieckich w pierwszej połowie lat dziewięćdziesiątych. [Selected problems in Polish-German relations in the first half of the nineties.] In: Dobrowolski, P. ed. *Stosunki polsko-niemieckie w okresie przemian ustrojowych w Polsce. Wybrane problemy.* [Polish-German relations in the period of systemic transformation in Poland. Selected problems.] Katowice: Uniwersytet Śląski, pp. 14–16; Fiszer, J.M. 1996. Rozwój stosunków polsko-niemieckich po roku 1989 i ich znaczenie dla integracji Europy. [The development of Polish-German relations after 1989 and their meaning for the integration of Europe.] In: *Rocznik Polsko-Niemiecki*, vol. V, p. 15–172; Malinowski, K. 1997. *Polityka Republiki Federalnej Niemiec wobec Polski 1982–1991.* [The Federal Republic of Germany's policy towards Poland.] Poznań: Instytut Zachodni.

cal barriers disappeared from Polish-German relations. Also, the problems of borders and minorities lost their previous importance, especially after Polish accession to the European Union, which Germany supported. Of course it must be mentioned here that Poland failed to negotiate the status of a national minority for over a million Polish people living in Germany, while the German government negotiated such status for a group of half a million Germans living in Poland. The signing of both treaties, however, required from both countries to accept a difficult compromise in the name of higher reasons. In summary, despite some shortcomings in the second of these treaties, their signing was a milestone in Polish-German relations and enabled their further development in the new, post-communist and post-Cold War international reality. As a result, these relations entered into a new phase, covering in the following years other planes as well, which led to the especially rapid development of economic, cross-border, scientific and cultural cooperation as well as on international forums.

Generally speaking, it can be argued that in Polish-German relations the years 1989–1998 were a time of a great breakthrough, a process of building new treaty foundations, and also a time of rapprochement and reconciliation between the two nations. In this regard symbolic gestures and events were very important here too. The historic visit of Chancellor Helmut Kohl to Poland in November 1989 should be recalled, when the now famous conciliatory ‘gesture from Krzyżowa’ took place and also the announcement with Polish Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki of the above mentioned ‘joint statement’. This process could be implemented and accelerate after the countries of Central and Eastern Europe enslaved by the USSR regained sovereignty, and thanks to the reunification of Germany. These countries obtained the possibility of creating independent domestic and foreign policies.

In order to ‘return’ to Europe and to enter the Euro-Atlantic structures, Poland after 1989 had to not only transform the political system, based on the free market and the rule of law, but also properly arrange relations with its neighbours in the new international realities. Especially with Germany, where two ideologically opposed countries transformed into a single state according to the standards of the Federal Republic of Germany, which for years questioned the legality of the Polish western border. Despite some controversy over its recognition by some political circles in Germany, this issue was definitively closed by the conclusion of the above mentioned border treaty in 1990. The affirmation of the legality of the Oder-Neisse border by the German side was of great importance for Poland, as it signified the integrity and inviolability of its territory. In addition, by implementing the assumptions of

the border treaty, both Poland and Germany expressed their willingness for mutual understanding and reconciliation and readiness to contribute to the 'European peace order'.

As already mentioned, the treaty on friendly cooperation and good neighbourliness of 1991 was formulated in a similar vein. Three agreements were enclosed to it: on regional and border cooperation, supported by the facilitation of the border traffic (under agreements of 1991 and 1992.). The leitmotif for the signatory countries became the closure of difficult cards of the past and return to the good tradition of bilateral relations, while building united Europe based on human rights and democracy and the social market economy. In addition, Poland and Germany committed themselves to renouncing force in their mutual relations and expressed their adherence to the development of good neighbourly relations in the spirit of friendship, respect and mutual understanding.

The implementation of the assumptions contained in these treaties and agreements created a new political-legal framework for the development of Polish-German relations of a new type, and served their improvement, as evidenced by their growing intensification at the political and social level in the years 1989–1998, although Chancellor Kohl visited democratic Republic of Poland only in 1995, i.e. five years after the meeting with Prime Minister T. Mazowiecki. Undoubtedly this fact went beyond the realm of the protocol and resulted from the lack of political stability in Poland and certain differences in the functioning of the political system of both countries. At that time regular consultations of foreign ministers and meeting of heads of all the major departments were very important as they served the concretisation of cooperation in all fields on the basis of specific contracts and agreements. Parliamentary cooperation, supporting government contacts, also developed successfully. On the other hand, party contacts played a relatively smaller role due to differences in the functioning of party systems in both countries. German parties did not in fact have suitable and direct Polish partners. The above gap was filled to a certain extent by German political foundations close to the leading parties, which opened their representative offices in Poland – of Konrad Adenauer (CDU), Friedrich Ebert (SPD), Friedrich Naumann (FDP) and the Hans Seidel (CSU), which maintained lively contacts with individual groups and parties and opinion forming circles in Poland<sup>32</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> See Cziomer, E. *Rozwój stosunków politycznych między Polską a RFN...* [The development of political relations between Poland and the Federal Republic of Germany...], pp. 4–45; Dobraczyński, M. ed. 1996. *Niemcy-Polska-Rosja. Bezpieczeństwo europejskie i współpraca społeczeństw.* [Germany-Poland-Russia. European security and cooperation

In the years 1989–1998 regional and cross-border cooperation between Poland and Germany also rapidly developed, while political contacts between federal states and Polish provinces for various reasons were not particularly intense. It stemmed from the different nature of politico-administrative structures between the two countries, as well as the competences of the executive and parliaments.

Analyzing the political effects of Polish-German relations in the nineties of the twentieth century we should also mention the extension of bilateral cooperation in the direction of multilateral cooperation within the Polish-German-Danish military contingent, or with the participation of France in the framework of the Weimar Triangle, which preceded the Polish membership in NATO and the European Union. Especially in the context of Polish aspirations and efforts for the accession we should draw attention here to the Euro-Atlantic direction of Polish-German cooperation. Without the support of Germany, which was de facto an ‘advocate’ of Poland in the accession negotiations with both NATO and the European Union, Warsaw’s efforts might have been significantly delayed in time, and its possible adoption might have taken place on less favourable terms<sup>33</sup>.

Summarising the effects of Polish-German relations in the years 1989–1998, we should emphasise their intensification visible at that time in all spheres of life. As a result, in 1995 these relations were defined both in Poland and in Germany as excellent and the Polish and German press wrote that they aroused hope and well served both countries and entire post-communist Europe. There was no indication that they will change with Germany Chancellor Helmut Kohl’s departure from the political scene and after the transfer of power in 1998 to the Social-Democratic – the Greens coalition, headed by Social Democrat Gerhard Schröder.

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*of societies.*] Warszawa; Tomala, M. 1996. Realizacja traktatu między Rzeczpospolitą Polską a RFN o dobrym sąsiedztwie i przyjaznej współpracy z 17 czerwca 1991 r. [The implementation of the Polish-German treaty of good neighbourliness and friendly cooperation of 17 June 1991.] In: *Zeszyty Niemcoznawcze*, no. 1. Warszawa: PISM, pp. 77–104; Pflüger, F., Lipscher, W. ed. 1994. *Od nienawiści do przyjaźni. O problemach polsko-niemieckiego sąsiedztwa.* [From hatred to friendship. About the problems of Polish-German neighbourliness.] Warszawa: ISP PAN.

<sup>33</sup> See Michałowski, S. 2002. Nowa jakość w stosunkach z Niemcami. [New quality in the relations with Germany.] In: Kuźniar, R., Szczepanik, K. ed. *Polityka zagraniczna RP 1989–2002.* [Foreign policy of the Republic of Poland 1989–2002.] Warszawa: Wydawnictwo ASKON, pp. 145–147; Sulowski, S. ed. 2002. *Polska-Niemcy – nadzieja i zaufanie.* [Poland-Germany – hope and trust.] Warszawa: Fundacja Politeja.

Gerhard Schröder is undoubtedly an attention worth man mainly because of the great success he achieved without any financial support or patterns learned at home which would help him in his political career. His determination, fight against poverty he experienced in his youth and diligence shaped his character, making him a responsible man and an efficient politician<sup>34</sup>. It seemed that Social Democrat Schröder would easily find a common language with the post-communists (SLD) led by Leszek Miller and President Aleksander Kwaśniewski and the Peasant Party (PSL) which ruled in Poland at that time and would continue comprehensive cooperation between Germany and Poland. That did not happen, and I write about the reasons for changes in Polish-German relations in 1998–2005 in the second part of this study.

## 2. POLISH-GERMAN RELATIONS IN 1998–2005 – CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

In late summer and autumn of 1998 the German political scene became an arena of a fierce election campaign which ended on 27 September in the parliamentary election, which brought victory for the Social Democrats and defeat for the Christian Democrats and the Liberals. Searching for the causes of the electoral defeat of the Christian Democrats, it was pointed primarily to inefficient social policy, manifested by rising unemployment and the ‘fatigue’ of voters with sixteen-year government of Helmut Kohl, who after losing the election resigned from being the chairman of the CDU. Chancellor Kohl was not a supporter of radical changes which had been awaited by German society for a long time. In the late nineties Helmut Kohl’s government ceased to be the guarantor of social security in reunited Germany, which resulted in the growing number of people dissatisfied with the direction of change after 1990 both in the east and the west of Germany<sup>35</sup>.

On the other hand, Gerhard Schröder spoke mainly about the need to introduce changes and drew attention to social, economic issues, fighting unemployment, the need for technological progress and development of edu-

<sup>34</sup> See Anda, B., Kleine, R. 2002. *Gerhard Schröder. Eine Biographie*. München; Łoś, R. 2008. *Gerhard Schröder. Blaski i cienie władzy*. [*Gerhard Schröder. The ups and down of power*.] Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego.

<sup>35</sup> See Krasuski, J. 2002. *Historia polityczna Europy Zachodniej 1945–2002*. [*Political history of Western Europe 1945–2002*.] Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, pp. 369–370; Pięciak, W. 1999. *Kanclerz obojga Niemiec. Helmut Kohl – szkic do portretu*. [*The chancellor of both German states – a sketch for a portrait*.] Warszawa, p. 62.

cation, thanks to which he achieved a great electoral success. He spoke about what German society in fact wanted to hear. After sixteen years in power, Chancellor Helmut Kohl was substituted by Gerhard Schröder, who led to the creation of a coalition of the SPD – the Alliance 90/the Greens, ruling in Germany until 2005. The position of Vice-Chancellor and the post of foreign minister in the government of Chancellor Gerhard Schröder was taken by Joschka Fischer, a co-leader of the Greens, a quite colourful political figure, a pacifist in his youth and known for his anti-Western attitude<sup>36</sup>.

In Poland, just like everywhere in Europe and in the United States these changes were received with mixed feelings; with certain concerns and reservations about the new chancellor and the Social Democrats in general, who were thought to be supporters of rapprochement of the Federal Republic of Germany with Russia. It was sad to say goodbye to Helmut Kohl who enjoyed great popularity and benevolence in Poland. Kohl was considered a proven partner and the formula of Germany as a ‘Polish advocate in Europe’ promoted by him gave Poland a certain, special place among the candidates to the European Union, with which accession negotiations began in 1998. On the other hand, there was also an attempt to look at the change of power in Germany with some optimism. It was emphasised that Schröder belongs to a younger generation of politicians who treat unification of Europe as a completely natural and understandable process. He was seen as a supporter of Germany playing a central role in Europe, but not a dominant one. It was also pointed to the opportunity to refresh and improve bilateral relations, ‘to come out of the rigid liturgy’, on the basis of a solid foundation in the mutual relations built in the early nineties. Schröder himself strengthened this optimism when in his first speech after the elections he emphasised the importance of the historical responsibility of Germany in relation to Poland<sup>37</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> See Cziomer, E. 2006. *Historia Niemiec współczesnych 1945–2005*. [History of contemporary Germany 1945–2005.] Kraków: Wydawnictwo Neriton, p. 407 and 482; Kosman, M.M. *Polityka RFN...* [The policy of the Federal Republic of Germany...], pp. 319–320; Łoś, R. 2004. *Rząd Gerharda Schrödera wobec postkomunistycznych państw Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej*. [Gerhard Schröder’s government towards the post-communist countries of East-Central Europe.] Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego.

<sup>37</sup> See Krzemiński, A. 1998. Bajka o złych socjaldemokratach. [A fairy tale about bad social democrats.] *Polityka*, no. 41, p. 21; Mildemberger, M. 2001. Od pojednania do trudnego partnerstwa. Dziesięć lat stosunków polsko-niemieckich w kontekście europejskim. [From reconciliation to difficult partnership. Ten years of Polish-German relations in the European context.] In: Malinowski, K., Mildemberger, M. eds. *Trudny dialog. Polsko-niemiecka wspólnota interesów w zjednoczonej Europie*. [A difficult dia-

*Notabene*, Gerhard Schröder visited Poland before assuming the office of chancellor. On 17 June 1998, on the 7<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the friendship and good neighbourly relations treaty he met with President Aleksander Kwaśniewski to discuss Polish-German relations and further cooperation. He assessed them as good and stressed that relations with Poland were as important as relations with France. In addition, he assured that Germany would support Polish aspirations for membership in NATO and the European Union. He also said that ‘our neighbours in Europe know that the more we, Germans, trust ourselves, the more they can trust us’<sup>38</sup>.

The first programming documents and announcements of Schröder’s government did not indicate any shift in German foreign policy towards Poland, the United States and Russia, which Polish politicians feared. It looked like it would be a continuation of the policy pursued by the government of Chancellor Kohl. The large coalition agreement of 20 October 1998 talked mainly about German socio-economic problems and little space was devoted to foreign policy. The section entitled ‘Good neighbourliness and historical responsibility’ refers firstly to the relations with France, then with Poland, the Czech Republic and Israel, and Russia is mentioned together with Ukraine: ‘The new federal government will continue to develop (...) good relations with Russia and Ukraine. Its aim is to ensure the stability in the area by supporting democratic, social and market reforms’<sup>39</sup>. In turn, in the government declaration announced on 10 November 1998 in the Bundestag, Schröder devoted a lot of attention to the relations of Germany with the United States, less to those with France, Great Britain, and Poland, and he did not mention Russia at all<sup>40</sup>.

The government of Chancellor Gerhard Schröder initially quite pointedly stressed that it intended to continue foreign policy of Helmut Kohl, both in bilateral and multilateral dimensions, and at the same time concentrated on

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*logue. A Polish-German community of interests in united Europe.*] Poznań: Instytut Zachodni, pp. 31–32.

<sup>38</sup> See Wolff-Powęska, A. Polska racja stanu w procesie normalizacji stosunków z Niemcami w warunkach wolności i demokracji. [Polish raison d’état in the process of normalisation of relations with Germany in the conditions of freedom and democracy.] In: Góralski, W.M. ed. *Polska – Niemcy 1945–2007...* [Poland – Germany 1945–2007...], p. 181.

<sup>39</sup> See *Aufbruch und Erneuerung – Deutschlands Weg ins 21. Jahrhundert. Koalitionsvereinbarung zwischen der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands und Bündnis 90/Die Grünen*. Bonn 20 October 1998, p. 44. Available at: [www.spd.de](http://www.spd.de).

<sup>40</sup> See Regierungserklärung des Bundeskanzlers vor dem Deutschen Bundestag. In: *Bulletin, Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung*, no. 74, 1998.

greater pragmatism in German foreign policy, whose aim was to strengthen the position and role of sovereign Federal Republic of Germany in the arena of world politics. For this purpose the Federal Republic of Germany in 1999 got engaged in resolving the Kosovo conflict, and after 11 September 2001 was ready to participate in war with terrorism announced by President George W. Bush. This declaration and the subsequent concrete actions confirmed the intention of the red-green coalition to continue current German foreign policy. The authorities of Germany, despite the objections of the opposition and a large part of society, decided to take part alongside the United States in the attack on Afghanistan in October 2001<sup>41</sup>.

This situation changed, however, in 2002 with the preparations of the United States to attack Iraq. In Germany it sparked the debate on the principles and directions of German foreign policy. This debate became one of the main elements in the campaign taking place in Germany before the election to the Bundestag scheduled for 22 September 2002. The opposition of the SPD/the Greens coalition and the anti-American rhetoric of Chancellor Schröder revived the debate about the continuation and change in German foreign policy. It was discussed whether in the face of clearly colder relations with the United States it was already possible to speak about a break with the Atlantic political line, marked out in the fifties by Chancellor Konrad Adenauer. What was alarming was the fact that Schröder decided to put emphasis on the development of relations with France and Russia, which disrupted so far well developing relations of Germany with a number of European Union countries, especially those that decided to support the US intervention in Iraq, including also Poland<sup>42</sup>.

The American attack on Iraq took place on 20 March 2003, and as early as 11 April 2003 Schröder met with Putin in St. Petersburg. The topic of their talks was the US-Iraqi war. On the next day, French President Chirac joined

<sup>41</sup> See Schmidt, S., Hellmann, G., Wolf, R. eds. 2007. *Handbuch zur deutschen Außenpolitik*. Wiesbaden; Bos, E. 2003. Deutsche Außenpolitik nach dem 11 September 2001. Von der 'uneingeschränkten Solidarität' zum 'deutsche Weg'. In: Bos, E. u. a. (Hrsg). *Neue Bedrohung Terrorismus*. Münster; Rühle, M. 2009. Afghanistan. Deutschland und die NATO. *S + F*, no. 1/2009.

<sup>42</sup> See Malinowski, K. 2004. Konsekwencje kryzysu irackiego. Niemcy wobec nowego kształtu stosunków transatlantyckich. [The consequences of the Iraq crisis. Germany towards the new shape of the transatlantic relations.] In: *Zeszyty Instytutu Zachodniego*, no. 34, pp. 10–14; Miszczak, K. 2005. Niemcy i Polska wobec europejskiej polityki bezpieczeństwa. [Germany and Poland towards European security Policy.] In: *Sprawy Międzynarodowe*, no. 1, pp. 79–109; Kosman, M.M. *Polityka RFN...* [*The policy of the Federal Republic of Germany...*], pp. 398–402.

them, which was the beginning of the traditional Russian-German-French consultations in subsequent years. The three leaders expressed criticism of the US-British actions, emphasizing their non-compliance with international law. At the same time Schröder and Putin manifested the desire to avoid creating the impression of a formation of a Paris – Berlin – Moscow axis, stressing that excellent German-Russian relations were not in conflict with the transatlantic relations. The three leaders called for a rapid reconstruction of Iraq from the devastation of war under the aegis of the United Nations and for a multipolar international order. In addition, German Chancellor warned against questioning of international law by the unilateral actions of the United States<sup>43</sup>.

In the years 2002–2003 a clear turn appeared in Germany's foreign policy, which largely interrupted its continuity in relation to the years 1990–1998. As Krzysztof Miszczak writes, during the reigns of the SPD – the Alliance 90/the Greens coalition 'in foreign, security and defence policy (...) there were significant revaluations, changes and modifications of these policies and the increase of Germany's importance in the European and worldwide arena. (...) During the reigns of the SPD – the Alliance 90/the Greens coalition foreign policy of the Federal Republic of Germany reached a new quality, unknown in the post-war history of this country, which in a limited way corresponds to the previously declared concept of civil power of the state (*Zivillmacht*) in foreign policy of Germany before 1989. The thesis that there was "only" a continuation of the essential principles of foreign, security and defence policy of this state is empirically untenable<sup>44</sup>.

Chancellor Gerhard Schröder justified this turn saying that Germany was then a normal country, i.e. a country which ended the stage of settling accounts with the past, and therefore should conduct independent policy, according to the German *raison d'état*. Formally speaking, he took advantage of reunified Germany's right to conduct sovereign foreign policy, about which I wrote earlier, discussing the results of the '2+4' conference. Despite this, the turn in Schröder's international politics caused great concern in Germany and around the world, including in Poland. It was feared that united Germany

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<sup>43</sup> See Reissner, J. 2004. Europas Beziehungen zu Iran. In: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, no. 9, pp. 47–54; Kosman, M.M. *Polityka RFN... [The policy of the Federal Republic of Germany...]*, p. 401.

<sup>44</sup> Patrz K. Miszczak, *Polityka zagraniczna, bezpieczeństwa i obrony... [Foreign, security and defence policy...]*, p. 15.

was ready to negate the policy worked out after World War II and again become a threat to peace and security in Europe<sup>45</sup>.

The change of directions in Germany's foreign policy under Chancellor Gerhard Schröder had an impact on Polish-German relations, especially in 2003-2005, when their continuity was also interrupted compared to the relationship between Poland and Germany at the times of Chancellor Helmut Kohl's government. In addition to the international situation, the then situation in both countries undoubtedly influenced Polish-German relations. Polish attempts to adapt to the conditions set by the European Union and the transformation and adjustment of the eastern part of Germany (the former GDR) to the western part certainly did not facilitate mutual contacts. The prospects of Polish accession, and later membership in NATO and the European Union were undoubtedly beneficial for the mutual relations, but also here some disagreements appeared, for which the Federal Republic of Germany was responsible.

One of the most important events in Polish-German relations at the beginning of the functioning of Schröder's government was the joint celebration of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the outbreak of World War II. On this occasion, in 1999 the German president and Chancellor came to Poland. This was the first event of this kind that was jointly celebrated. A year later, the millennium of Polish-German neighbourliness was celebrated. During the intergovernmental consultations in April 2000 both governments repeated that Polish-German relations were better than ever. 2000 was also the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the border treaty of 14 November 1990 and the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the conclusion of the border treaty between the Federal Republic of Germany and Poland on 7 December 1970. On this occasion, during a visit to Poland, Gerhard Schröder assured that at the upcoming EU summit in Nice Germany would approve solutions that would make it easier for Poland to join the European Union<sup>46</sup>. This was an important promise for

<sup>45</sup> See Kiwerska, J., Tomczak, M. Problem kontynuacji i zmian w polityce zagranicznej zjednoczonych Niemiec. [The problem of the continuation and changes in foreign policy of united Germany.] In: Kiwerska, J., Koszel, B., Tomczak, M., Żerko, S. *Polityka zagraniczna zjednoczonych Niemiec. [Foreign policy of reunited Germany...]*, pp. 24–25; K. Miszczak, *Polityka zagraniczna, bezpieczeństwa i obrony... [Foreign, security and defence policy...]*, pp. 117–291; Erler, G. 2009. *Mission Weltfrieden. Deutschlands neue Rolle in der Weltpolitik*. Freiburg im Breisgau.

<sup>46</sup> See Brössler, D. Podsumowanie stanu obecnego. Badania oceniające stan stosunków niemiecko-polskich. [The summary of the current state. Research assessing the state of German-Polish relations.] In: Kerski, B. ed. *Sąsiedztwo w centrum... [Neighbourliness in the centre...]*, p. 47; Stolarczyk, M. 2010. *Zbieżność i różnice interesów w stosunkach*

Poland, because in the course of accession negotiations, which took place from 1998 to 13 December 2002, Poland encountered many difficulties, the source of which was the often intransigent positions of Germany. For example, as far as the free movement of people was concerned, Schröder's government wanting to protect its own labour market, advocated the introduction of the longest transition period for Polish workers, which ultimately amounted to 7 years. Another controversial area of Polish accession negotiations, which was also greatly influenced by Germany, was agriculture. At the beginning of the negotiations on this subject, the German government was opposed to granting any direct payments to farmers in the new Member States. Finally, during the final phase of the accession negotiations, which took place in Copenhagen in December 2002, the increasing funds for subsidies for Polish farmers from the common EU budget were agreed. At first it was 25% to 35% of the funds which farmers in countries which became members of the EU before 2004 were entitled to. Later it was possible to increase the amount of these payments to 65%<sup>47</sup>.

An important issue that was solved then, was the agreement between the Polish government and Germany on compensations for Polish forced labourers working during World War II for the Third Reich. In contrast to the government of Chancellor Helmut Kohl, Gerhard Schröder's government distanced itself from restitution claims of the German expellees environment towards Poland and finally agreed to resolve this painful problem. In mid-2000 the German Bundestag established the Foundation 'Remembrance, Responsibility and Future' for this purpose, the aim of which was to distribute the funds allocated by the German government for this purpose among partner organisations. At the same time both governments reached an agreement on this issue and jointly established the amount which was to be allocated as a compensation for all victims and people forced to work not only from

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*polsko-niemieckich w latach 1989–2009. [The convergence and differences of interests in Polish-German relations in the years 1989–2009.]* Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, pp. 13–15.

<sup>47</sup> See Lorkowski, A., Ostrzyniewska, K. 2004. Proces negocjacji akcesyjnych Polski z Unią Europejską – kwestie wrażliwe z punktu widzenia Niemiec. [The process of accession negotiations of Poland with the EU – issues sensitive from the German point of view.] In: Małachowski, W. ed. *Polska – Niemcy a rozszerzenie Unii Europejskiej. [Poland – Germany and the enlargement of the European Union.]* vol. I, Warszawa: SGH, pp. 282–285; Stolarczyk, M. *Zbieżność i różnice interesów w stosunkach polsko-niemieckich w latach 1989–2009...* [The convergence and differences of interests in Polish-German relations in the years 1989–2009...], p. 522.

Poland, but also from other countries. This amount reached the value of 10 milliard marks, out of which 1,812 milliard DM was assigned for Poland<sup>48</sup>.

However, a dispute over the war in Iraq, which arose at the turn of 2002 and 2003, played the greatest role was in the context of the continuity and change in Polish-German relations. From the very beginning of the Iraq crisis the German government took a stand which was radically different from the Polish position. As early as the end of 2002 during the election campaign to the Bundestag, Chancellor Schröder assured that Germany would not participate in the military intervention against Iraq. Moreover, in January 2003, he announced a possible veto of Germany as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council if the United States put to the vote a resolution that would legitimise their attack on Iraq. The German chancellor did not dispute the fact that Saddam Hussein was a bloody tyrant, but sceptically evaluated arguments in favour of the military intervention given by the US government. Throughout the period preceding the American military intervention in Iraq, representatives of the German government pointed to the need for prior exhaustion of the whole arsenal of economic and legal measures. The position of Germany was supported by France, Russia and China<sup>49</sup>.

Meanwhile, on 31 January 2003, Prime Minister Leszek Miller signed the famous ‘letter of eight’, which in a sense was a declaration of Polish solidarity with the United States in the Iraqi conflict. Poland, a member of NATO since 1999, wanted to show the world, especially the US ally that it was a responsible and loyal partner. Together with Poland the letter was signed by representatives of the United Kingdom, Italy, Denmark, Portugal, Hungary, Spain and the Czech Republic. The letter caused consternation in the countries opposing the US war with Iraq. The German press wrote at the time that it divided the European Union and led to the isolation of Germany in the international arena<sup>50</sup>. Miller’s government committed a faux pas not informing the German side about its decision, thought it was required to do

<sup>48</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 13–14.

<sup>49</sup> See Varwick, J. 2003. Kultura strategiczna i zmiany w polityce bezpieczeństwa Niemiec (wojna o Kosowo, zwalczanie terroryzmu, kryzys iracki). [Strategic culture and changes in Germany’s security policy (the war about Kosovo, fight with terrorism, the Iraq crisis).] In: Malinowski, K. ed. *Kultura bezpieczeństwa narodowego w Polsce i Niemczech*. [The culture of national security in Poland and Germany.] Poznań: Instytut Zachodni, pp. 257; Szabo, S.F. 2006. *Na rozstaju dróg. Kryzys w stosunkach niemiecko-amerykańskich*. [At the cross-roads. The crisis of German-American relations.] Warszawa.

<sup>50</sup> See Szubert, O. 2003. Podzielona zjednoczona Europa. [Divided united Europe.] In: *Stosunki Międzynarodowe*, no. 2, pp. 156–158.

so pursuant to the provisions of the Treaty of 17 June 1991, providing ‘consultations to coordinate their positions on international issues’<sup>51</sup>.

The fact that Poland and Germany were on the opposite sides of the conflict between Iraq and the United States had a negative impact on Polish-German relations. Germany believed that Poland showed ingratitude to its western neighbour and wanted to play a role of a power, and in Poland the German position on the intervention in Iraq was assessed as a betrayal of the transatlantic interests. Germany was accused of having super power ambitions and returning to the so-called ‘German special way’ in the international arena. Neither party was able to fully understand its neighbour’s proceedings. This led to the deterioration of the political dialogue, and affected Polish-German relations in the European Union. Poland could no longer count on Germany’s support in many issues. This was particularly evident during the meeting held at that time on the Constitutional Treaty for the European Union. Mainly due to Germany the treaty included many provisions which were unfavourable for Poland, especially in relation to provisions contained in the Treaty of Nice signed on 26 February 2001<sup>52</sup>.

In order to improve the atmosphere in bilateral relations on 2 November 2003, Foreign Minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz in a special supplement on the pages of ‘Tygodnik Powszechny’ formulated ten points pertaining to Polish-German relations stressing that Germany was the most important partner for Poland, both in economic and political cooperation and that both countries should continue to play an essential role in shaping European and global security structures<sup>53</sup>.

Minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz presented this position again a year later in a message on Polish foreign policy in 2004, but the German side did not change its policy towards Poland till the end the reign of Chancellor

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<sup>51</sup> See Tomala, M. 2004. Wspólnota interesów polsko-niemieckich czy tylko własne interesy Polski i Niemiec? [A community of Polish-German interests or only own interests of Poland and Germany?] In: *Rocznik Polsko Niemiecki*. Warszawa: ISP PAN, pp. 123–124; Michałowski, S. 2004. Stosunki Polski z Niemcami. [Relations of Poland with Germany.] In: *Rocznik Polskiej Polityki Zagranicznej*. Warszawa: PISM, pp. 132–135.

<sup>52</sup> See Chyliński, M. 2012. Między polityką europejską i atlantycką. Niemiecka SPD wobec dylematów bezpieczeństwa 1989–2011. [Between European and transatlantic policies. The German SPD towards security dilemmas 1989–2011.] In: *Athenaeum*, vol. 35, pp. 204–205; Stolarczyk, M. *Zbieżność i różnice interesów w stosunkach polsko-niemieckich w latach 1989–2009...* [The convergence and differences of interests in Polish-German relations in the years 1989–2009...], pp. 500–501.

<sup>53</sup> See Zając, M. 2003 Niemcy. [Germany.] *Tygodnik Powszechny*, no. 44.

Gerhard Schröder, which meant that we dealt with far reaching stagnation in Polish-German political relations. The Polish side was irritated by the disrespectful attitude of the government of Chancellor Schröder to the Polish fear of close cooperation between Germany and Russia. It seemed that the German side completely did not understand the Polish fears and often put forward quite malicious counterarguments. In retrospect it seems to me that, indeed, the Polish side too emotionally approached the German-Russian rapprochement. On the other hand, it was a sign of a trauma and a syndrome of fear of German-Russian cooperation behind Polish back, which in the past ended tragically for our country, that is in successive partitions<sup>54</sup>.

On the other hand, in the years 1998–2005 economic and trade cooperation between the two countries developed quite well. We can distinguish here its two stages, namely in the years 1998–2003 and 2004–2005, i.e. before and after Polish accession to the European Union, which – as I said – was also supported by Chancellor Schröder’s government. We dealt here rather with the continuity in Polish-German relations. At that time, the trade turnover between the two countries grew steadily, exceeding the sum of 40 milliard USD in the year of Polish entry into the European Union. German direct investment grew from year to year, proving that Poland was an attractive country for German investors. An important role in Polish-German trade was played by the border regions and Euroregions created there, among others, Euroregion Spree-Neisse-Bober and Pro Europa Viadrina. The development of cross-border cooperation greatly accelerated the integration of the Polish economy with the EU economy<sup>55</sup>.

<sup>54</sup> See Cziomer, E. 2005. *Polityka zagraniczna Niemiec. Kontynuacja i zmiana po zjednoczeniu ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem polityki europejskiej i transatlantyckiej*. [Germany’s foreign Policy. The continuation and change after the reunification with special emphasis on European and transatlantic policy.] Warszawa: Fundacja Promocji Wiedzy o Polityce Politeja, pp. 256–257; Guział, A. 2006. Miejsce Rosji w polityce zagranicznej RFN a szanse na wspólną politykę wschodnią UE. [The place of Russia in Germany’s foreign policy and chances for EU’s common Eastern policy.] In: *Przegląd Zachodni*, no. 2.

<sup>55</sup> See Brocka-Palacz, B. 2006. Zmiany w polityce gospodarczej Niemiec w okresie rządów koalicji SPD/Zieloni. [Changes in Germany’s economic policy during the reign of the SPD/the Greens coalition.] In: Bil, I. ed. *Gospodarka Niemiec a kraje Europy Środkowej i Wschodniej*. [Germany’s economy and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.] Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza SGH, pp. 16–19; Kasperska-Sporek, T. 2004. Euroregiony – formą współpracy Polski i Niemiec. [Euroregions as a form of cooperation of Poland and Germany.] In: Weresa, M.A. ed. *Niemcy w Unii Europejskiej. Implikacje dla Polski*. [Germany in the European Union. Implications for Poland.] Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza SGH, pp. 253–255.

At the end of this analysis, I would like to point out that in the era of the rule of Chancellor Gerhard Schröder Polish and German cultural relations and military cooperation also developed quite well. Here, too, we dealt more with their continuity than change. At the University of Wrocław Chancellor Schröder founded Willy Brandt's Scientific Centre which has effectively operated to this day. One of the most important cultural events during Schröder's government was undoubtedly the Polish-German Year in 2005. This event became a nice touch, as well as the completion of mutual relations in the era of the rule of Chancellor Schröder.

Many scholars and experts believe that the years 1998–2005 were a very difficult period for Polish-German relations, that in the era of the rule of Chancellor Gerhard Schröder the process of building the 'Polish-German community of interests' was interrupted. I think these are too far-reaching assessments. In my opinion, in this period, only significant differences in the objectives and tasks of foreign policies of the two countries and ways of achieving them were revealed. In this period, in spite of everything, the political dialogue between the two countries continued all the time, including in the framework of the Weimar Triangle. The economic cooperation and in the field of culture and science developed well. In the years 1998–2005 certain new habits in our relations were established, which pointed to the importance and role of Poland for Germany. Namely, in those years annual intergovernmental meetings and talks were held regularly at which the most contentious issues could be discussed and ways to solve them could be found. It was not always possible to find a compromise or persuade the other party as to the relevance of own arguments, but the fact that such meetings took place regularly was proof of the importance of Poland for Germany, because Germany practices this form of cooperation only with its most important allies.

The government of Chancellor Gerhard Schröder still supported Polish efforts to join NATO and the European Union, and without this support it would be difficult for Poland to achieve these strategic goals for our foreign policy. The differences – in my opinion – mainly related to the interests and objectives of Poland and Germany realised in the framework of the Euro-Atlantic system and the rules of its operation<sup>56</sup>. Despite these differences, it

<sup>56</sup> See Cziomer, E. *Polityka zagraniczna Niemiec. Kontynuacja i zmiana po zjednoczeniu ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem polityki europejskiej i transatlantyckiej...* [Germany's foreign Policy. The continuation and change after the reunification with special emphasis on European and transatlantic policy...], pp. 252–260; Lipowicz, I. 2005. *Stosunki z Niemcami.* [Relations with Germany.] In: *Rocznik Polskiej Polityki Zagranicznej – 2005 rok.* Warszawa: PISM.

was after all during the reign of Chancellor Gerhard Schröder that Poland was admitted to NATO and the European Union, which strengthened our position in Europe and in the world. Simultaneously, for the first time in the history of Poland and Germany we became allies, and we found ourselves on the same side of the barricade, that is in the same bloc of democratic and sovereign states.

## SUMMARY

Summarizing the above considerations, I would like to emphasise that my research and many publications on this subject show that in the years 1989–2005 in Polish-German relations we dealt with both the continuity and changes, especially after 1998, but these were not radical changes, either for Poland or the Federal Republic of Germany. These changes were unavoidable, because bilateral cooperation of states – as I mentioned earlier – is always greatly influenced by numerous external factors, and in particular determined by transformations taking place in the close international proximity. And those were dynamic and far-reaching, both in the international environment of Poland and West Germany in the years 1989–2005. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that they caused the changes in Polish-German relations.

After the next early parliamentary election in 2005, in which Gerhard Schröder was defeated, Angela Merkel became a new Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany. She comes from the former GDR and knows the taste of life in the communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe<sup>57</sup>. Jadwiga Kiwerska emphasises that ‘Angela Merkel was a new type of a political leader of Germany. She represented the third post-war generation – not emotionally connected with pro-Americanism of the fifties and sixties, as Kohl’s generation, and also not shaped by the passions of ‘68, including strong anti-Americanism, as was in the case of Schröder and Fischer. (...) Convinced that the improvement of relations with the United States was in the interest of Germany, she was ready to work in aid of this improvement. She understood that it would be beneficial for the strengthening of the transatlantic treaty, which is an important element of the international order. But above all, she wanted to help change the anti-American senti-

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<sup>57</sup> See Stepin, A. 2014. *Angela Merkel. Cesarzowa Europy*. [*Angela Merkel. The Empress of Europe*.] Warszawa: Wydawca Agora SA.

ment in Germany<sup>58</sup>. And one her biographers writes about her that she has something in common with the sphinx. She is impenetrable, and says little and reluctantly about her past. Polish roots of her grandfather, who in the thirties of the twentieth century changed the surname from Kaźmierczak to Kasner remained one of her secrets for a long time. Angela Merkel arouses extreme emotions among German and European politicians. Also in Poland, where in the public opinion research center poll in 2012 she was chosen the most popular foreign politician for the fifth time, winning previously in 2006, 2007, 2010 and 2011<sup>59</sup>.

The government formed in 2005 by Angela Merkel, called the grand coalition of the CDU/CSU-SPD made a successful attempt to restore Adenauer's principles in German foreign policy: the Atlantic orientation and the rejection of the choice between Washington and Paris. It is true that the fact that Frank-Walter Steinmeier, formerly a close associate of Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, became the Foreign Minister and Vice-Chancellor constituted a threat that the course of foreign policy characteristic of the SPD-Greens coalition would be maintained, and so it happened, but only to a small extent<sup>60</sup>.

As a result of Angela Merkel's coming into power, the relations Moscow-Berlin, so friendly during the reign of Gerhard Schröder whose relations with Vladimir Putin went far beyond official contacts, became less personal. In addition, Merkel sought to repair the transatlantic relationships impaired during the reign of Schröder and to pay more heed to the interests of the Central European countries with the relations with Moscow. On the other hand, the coalition partner, Vice-Chancellor and Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, in Schröder's government the chief of the Federal Chancellery, was a supporter of the continuation of the pro-Russian course. This pragmatic approach, marginalising the issues of Russia's democratic shortcomings boiled down mainly to exposing such areas of cooperation as energy relations and international security. It was supported mainly by France, Italy

<sup>58</sup> See Kiwerska, J. Niemcy we wspólnocie transatlantyckiej. [Germany in the transatlantic community.] In: Kiwerska, J., Koszel, B., Tomczak, M., Żerko, S. *Polityka zagraniczna zjednoczonych Niemiec...* [Foreign policy of united Germany...], p. 242.

<sup>59</sup> Ibidem, p. 9. See also: Wieliński, B.T. 2013. Mutti jest tylko jedna. [There is only one Mutti.] *Wysokie Obcasy* 21 September 2013, pp. 11–17.

<sup>60</sup> See Kosman, M.M. *Polityka RFN...* [The policy of the Federal Republic of Germany...], pp. 417–492; Franzke, J. 2009. Wertepolitik versus Realpolitik. Die Russlandpolitik der Regierung Merkel/Steinmeier. In: *Welt Trends*, no. 67, pp. 93–98.

and Spain, while the Central European EU members, including Poland, as well as the UK and Denmark had a critical attitude.

Generally speaking, Angela Merkel managed to overcome the most painful consequences of actions of Schröder's government, including rebuilding of confidence in Germany among allies and to bring the crisis in European politics under control. Germany once again became a reliable, loyal partner of the United States and an active member of the European Union. It became a strong link in the Euro-Atlantic system, which is the guarantor of security in Europe, and thus in Poland<sup>61</sup>.

Angela Merkel also found a common language with Prime Minister Donald Tusk, who in autumn 2007 became the head of the coalition government of the Civic Platform (PO) and the Polish Peasant Party (PSL). One of the main objectives of the government of Prime Minister Donald Tusk was the normalisation of the strongly impaired relations with Berlin. Prime Minister Tusk referring to Polish relations with Germany in his first speech also confirmed the desire and determination to strengthen the strategic partnership with Berlin, saying, among others: 'I guarantee that these relations will bring satisfaction to the whole EU and both partners'<sup>62</sup>.

The parliamentary speech of Prime Minister Tusk was a clear signal for Chancellor Angela Merkel that a change in the balance of power on the Polish political scene was also accompanied by a positive reorientation of Polish foreign policy towards Germany. As a result, since the formation of the PO – PSL coalition government, which ruled in the years 2007–2015, the relations between Warsaw and Berlin have come back on the proper track for the benefit of both countries and their peoples and for the security of the whole of Europe. Let us hope it will be continued.

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<sup>61</sup> Patrz Kiwerska, J. Niemcy we wspólnocie transatlantyckiej. [Germany in the transatlantic community.] In: Kiwerska, J., Koszel, B., Tomczak, M., Żerko, S. *Polityka zagraniczna zjednoczonych Niemiec...* [Foreign policy of united Germany...], pp. 230–255; Bowers, L.N. ed. 2009. *German foreign and security Policy*. New York.

<sup>62</sup> See *Expose Premiera Rady Ministrów RP Donalda Tuska*. [Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk's First Speech.] Warszawa 23 October 2007. Cf. also: Koszel, B. 2009. „Nowe otwarcie”? Stosunki polsko-niemieckie w okresie rządów koalicji PO-PSL [‘A new opening’? Polish-German relations during the reign of the PO-PSL coalition.] In: *Przegląd Zachodni*, no. 4, pp. 193–206; Cichocki, A.M. 2006. Niemiecka polityka wobec Polski na nowych drogach? [German policy towards Poland on new roads?] In: *Dialog*, no. 76, pp. 23–25.

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## SHAPING AND DEVELOPMENT OF POLISH-GERMAN RELATIONS IN THE YEARS 1989–2005. AN ASSESSMENT ATTEMPT

### Summary

The aim of this article is an attempt to present Polish-German relations in the years 1989–2005, that is, from the fall of communism in Poland and East Germany and after the reunification in 1990 to the parliamentary election in Germany in 2005, as a result of which Angela Merkel became a new chancellor. There is no doubt that for Poland and Germany it was one of the most difficult stages in their history. It was also an exceptional time in Polish-German relations, as well as a time of great international events in Europe and the world which had a significant impact on foreign policies of both these countries and on Polish-German relations. This article was written in a chronological-problematic arrangement and consists of two parts. The first part covers the years 1989–1998 and shows the development of the treaty bases of Polish-German relations and their normalisation and development at this time. The second part contains the analysis of Polish-German relations in 1998–2005, with particular emphasis on their continuity and changes and their reasons. The period 1998–2005 was the time of the SPD – the Alliance 90/the Greens government coalition in Germany, and the SLD – PSL coalition in Poland. The main thesis of the article is the conclusion that in the years 1989–2005 in Polish-German relations we dealt with their difficult normalisation, continuation and at the same time significant changes, not always favourable for Poland, especially in 1998–2005.

## KSZTAŁTOWANIE SIĘ I ROZWÓJ STOSUNKÓW POLSKO-NIEMIECKICH W LATACH 1989–2005. PRÓBA BILANSU

### Streszczenie

Celem artykułu jest próba przedstawienia stosunków polsko-niemieckich w latach 1989–2005, czyli od momentu upadku komunizmu w Polsce i NRD oraz po zjednoczeniu Niemiec w 1990 roku do wyborów parlamentarnych w RFN w 2005 roku, w wyniku których nowym kanclerzem została Angela Merkel. Nie ulega wątpliwości, że dla Polski i Niemiec był to jeden z najtrudniejszych etapów w ich historii. Był to również wyjątkowy czas w stosun-

ках polsko-niemieckich, a także czas wielkich wydarzeń międzynarodowych w Europie i na świecie, które miały istotny wpływ na politykę zagraniczną obu państw i na relacje polsko-niemieckie. Niniejszy artykuł został napisany w układzie chronologiczno-problemowym i składa się z dwóch części. Część pierwsza obejmuje lata 1989–1998 i ukazuje kształtowanie się podstaw traktatowych stosunków polsko-niemieckich oraz ich normalizację i rozwój w tym czasie. Natomiast w części drugiej dokonana została analiza stosunków polsko-niemieckich w latach 1998–2005, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem ich ciągłości i zmian oraz ich przesłanek. Lata 1998–2005 to czasy rządów w RFN koalicji SPD – Sojusz 90/Zieloni, a w Polsce koalicji SLD – PSL. Tezą główną artykułu jest konstatacja, że w latach 1989–2005 w stosunkach polsko-niemieckich mieliśmy do czynienia z ich trudną normalizacją, kontynuacją i zarazem istotnymi zmianami, nie zawsze korzystnymi dla Polski, zwłaszcza w latach 1998–2005.

## ФОРМИРОВАНИЕ И РАЗВИТИЕ ПОЛЬСКО-НЕМЕЦКИХ ОТНОШЕНИЙ В 1989–2005 ГОДАХ. ПОПЫТКА ПОДВЕДЕНИЯ ИТОГОВ

### Резюме

Целью статьи является попытка представления польско-немецких отношений в 1989–2005 годах, или от момента упадка коммунизма в Польше и ГДР, а также после объединения Германии в 1990 году до парламентских выборов в ФРГ в 2005 году, в результате которых новым канцлером стала Анджела Меркель. Не подлежит сомнению, что для Польши и Германии это был один из труднейших периодов их истории. Было это также особенным временем для польско-немецких отношений, кроме того, временем значительных международных событий в Европе и в мире, оказавших существенное влияние на внешнюю политику обоих государств и на польско-немецкие отношения. Настоящая статья имеет проблемно-хронологическую композицию и состоит из двух частей. Первая часть охватывает временной период с 1989 по 1998 год и рассматривает формирование основ договорных польско-немецких отношений, а также их нормализацию и развитие в этот период. В свою очередь, во второй части произведён анализ польско-немецких отношений в 1998–2005 годах, с особенным учётом их продолжительности, изменений и предпосылок. 1998–2005-е годы – это период правления в ФРГ коалиции СДПГ – «Союз 90/Зелёные», а в Польше – коалиции SLD – PSL (Союз демократических левых сил – Польский Крестьянский Союз). Главным тезисом статьи является кон-

статирование, что в 1989–2005 годах в польско-немецких отношениях мы имели дело с трудностью их нормализации, продолжением и одновременно существенными изменениями, не всегда благоприятными для Польши, прежде всего в 1998–2005 годах.