Piotr MADAJCZYK, Próby wznowienia Planu Rapackiego przez dyplomację polską w pierwszej połowie lat sześćdziesiątych / Polish diplomatic attempts AT reviving the Rapacki Plan in the Elary 60s

The article describes the political context of the revival, in early 60s, of the Rapacki Plan. The tradition in Polish historiography holds its main objective to have been a disarmament. Ministry of Foreign Affairs documents, which are currently available make a much more balanced and differentiated approach to its appraisal possible. The article takes into account both a certain autonomy present in the Polish initiative and its dependence on Soviet policy. At the ministry in Warsaw, they were aware that a disarmament initiative as such had meagre chances of being implemented; nevertheless, it could provide an effective tool for the carrying out of foreign policy. What is particularly interesting is the use of the Rapacki Plan as an instrument aimed at restricting the political influences of the Federal Republic of Germany in the 60s, which can be seen in the documents. Minister Rapacki had elaborated upon an idea for focusing attention on West German opposition to the Polish proposals, for propaganda reasons. These efforts aimed at creating an atmosphere of isolation around the FRG and most of all, at persuading the Polish public opinion that it was the FRG which was most responsible for the rejection of the Polish initiative.

Agnieszka KISZTELIŃSKA-WĘGRZYNSKA, Wizyta Willy'ego Brandta w Polsce w dniach 6-8 grudnia 1970 roku w świetle ówczesnej prasy polskiej / An Image of Willy Brandt's Visit to Poland on 6-8 December 1970, in the Light of the Contemporary Polish Press

On 6–8 December 1970, Willy Brandt made his first state visit to Poland as Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany. The unusual historical significance of the event was occasioned by the importance of the treaties signed at the time with the aim of stabilising relations between the two states. In preparation, six sessions of diplomatic talks were held prior to the German leader’s visit and concluding on 18 November 1970. The Polish press gave both the negotiations and the visit itself extensive coverage. This provides profoundly interesting details concerning the Polish-German negotiations, which were a result of the new Social Democrat’s Eastern policy. It represents a viewpoint of great significance, inasmuch as it presents the outlook of the press’s principals, which is to say, the state authorities. They attempted to convey a specific image of the Brandt – Cyranckiewicz – Gomułka meeting, one that was far from true, and lacking in detail and commentary, but serving a purpose nevertheless, as all good propaganda should. The image of W. Brandt’s first state visit to Poland presented by the article is reconstructed on the basis of the Polish press coverage. To this end, twenty national and local titles are analysed. The true course of events was distorted in line with distinct political goals. In all likelihood, manipulation of the contents occurred in the capital, from whence schema, scenarios and comments prepared in advance were sent to individual regional and local dailies. Paradoxically, it was the local dailies, each printing up to 100 thousand copies, who could allow themselves a greater
‘freedom’, and it in these that we can find original headlines, unique photographs, columns by selected journalists, recapitulations bearing bylines, and unadulterated quotations from the foreign press and the overviews published therein. Undoubtedly, Brandt’s visit to Poland in December 1970 was also an historic landmark for the Polish authorities, who were well aware of the meeting’s significance.

Wanda JARZĄBEK, W cieniu problemu granicznego. Polska a proces jednoczenia Niemiec w latach 1989-1990 / Poland and the German re-unification process in 1989–1990 in the shadow of the border issue

The period during which both German states underwent unification was a difficult one for relations between Poland and Germany. The authorities in Warsaw, represented by a government with a non-communist prime minister at its head, expected to be able to obtain an unambiguous declaration regarding the acknowledgement of the border by the RFG as fixed and irrevocable, which, in view of the changes under way in Poland and in Europe, was becoming an urgent. Initially, attempts were made, with a view to clarifying the doubts, on a bilateral basis. To Warsaw, it was incomprehensible that the German side would be reluctant to make an unambiguous declaration, perceived as such in Warsaw. Then, with the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the events in the GDR and Chancellor H. Kohl’s unveiling of his plan for German unification, the vision of unification drawing ever closer, Warsaw thus become aware of the necessity to internationalise the issue of unification, e.g., by using the CSCE structures, and was also seeking international support for the unambiguous solution of the border issue. In order to avoid any ambiguities related to the status of the border on the Odra and Nysa Łużycka Rivers, and referring to the decisions taken by the Potsdam Conference, as well as having in mind the legal position of the FRG, according to which, any decisions regarding the borders may be made by the government of united Germany and settled in a peace treaty, Warsaw wanted a peace treaty or a legal settlement of equal rank, acknowledged to be equivalent to the peace settlement set forth in the Potsdam Treaty, to be signed with Germany. Not all Warsaw’s demands were taken into account. United Germany was, however, placed under an obligation to sign a border treaty with Poland. After the process of German unification was completed, the Polish side was left with the impression that Warsaw had fought the battle for the border successfully.

Joanna SZYMONICZEK, Niemieckie groby wojenne z okresu II wojny światowej w Polsce. Zagadnienia wstępne / German World War II graves in Poland; preliminary issues

446 thousand German soldiers died in Poland in World War II. Until the end of the 1980s, the Poles were unwilling to remember most of the German graves situated in their country. The breakthrough of 1989, together with a series of bilateral agreements, on the basis of which the graves of the German war victims were to be legally protected, respected and appropriately maintained, changed this. As a result, the remains of over 100 thousand German soldiers have been disinterred, the graves of German soldiers at the cemeteries in Joachimów-Mogiły, Kraków, Warsaw (The Northern Cemetery) and Poznań have been commemorated, and new, mass cemeteries have been built in Przemyśl, Mławka, Modlin, Siemianowice Śląskie,
Nadolice Wielkie, Gdańsk, Puławy, Bartosze, near Elk, and Stary Czarnów (Glinna) near Szczecin. These cemeteries are to provide for reconciliation and a genuine normalisation in relations between Poles and Germans. Since the late 1990s, youth camps as well as the Bundeswehr and Polish army camps have been organised in localities where German war cemeteries are situated, during which the participants carry out building work and repair the architectural artefacts in German cemeteries from both World War I and the World War II. The camp organisers' aim is for these events to help the youth of both countries to become acquainted with each other, to learn history and tolerance, to disperse prejudices, and so forth. While to most of the Poles such actions are a form of expressing a humanitarian attitude, some of them find it unacceptable to commemorate the aggressor's dead, while others perceive these efforts as a business opportunity.

Andrzej HANICH, "Noc kryształowa" z 9/10 listopada 1938 roku i "ostateczne rozwiązanie kwestii żydowskiej" na Śląsku Opolskim w latach II wojny światowej / "The Crystal Night" 9/10th November 1938 and the "Final Solution" of the Jewish question in Opole Silesia in the World War II years

The article describes the situation of the Jewish Judaic community in Opole Silesia under the Third Reich. It shows also its territorial distribution during the inter-war period. The main body of the article consists of a description of the events in Opole Silesia during so called Crystal Night on 9/10th November 1938, both as far as that action itself is concerned and in terms of the reaction to it. In the section dealing with the later years of World War II, the author points out the difficulties, faced by the Catholic clergy in providing assistance to the Jews, as well as indicates the fate met by the Jews from other parts of Europe whom the war years took to the concentration camps on the soil of Opole Silesia.

Piotr ŁYSAKOWSKI, Glosa do Listu biskupów polskich do biskupów niemieckich z 18 listopada 1965 roku w dokumentach Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej / A gloss to the echo, in the documents of the Institute of National Remembrance, of the Polish bishops' letter of 18th November 1965 to the German bishops

The article refers to source materials in respect of the Polish bishops' letter of 18th November 1965 to the German bishops, held in the archives of the National Remembrance Institute. Some of these materials are unknown to researchers. They are not significant enough to alter either our vision of the events related to the letter, or of its impact on the Polish-German relations; they may well, however, extend this knowledge to a substantial degree and complement it. These materials originate not only from the Polish special services, but also from the East German STASI.