

POLAND'S POST-COLD WAR EASTERN FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY
IN THE FRAMEWORK

OF ITS DEMOCRATIZATION AND EUROPEAN INTEGRATION PROCESSES

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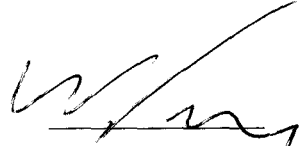
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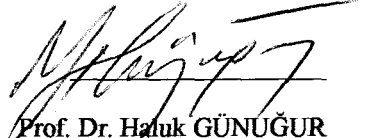
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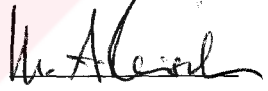
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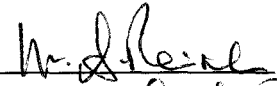

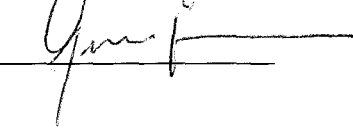

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ABSTRACT

POLAND'S POST-COLD WAR EASTERN FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY
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OF ITS DEMOCRATIZATION AND EUROPEAN INTEGRATION PROCESS

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This thesis analyzes Poland's eastern foreign and security policy in its transition period in the framework of its democratization and European integration process and emphasizes the increasing importance of Poland in the region. In this thesis, the western oriented policies of Poland as marked by Eastern determinants, the interest of big powers in the Central and Eastern Europe, and Poland's leading mission in the region are discussed. Firstly the historical motives and imperatives for European integration and democratization and, secondly, the internal dynamics and their interactions with Poland's external dynamics are analyzed. Lastly, the eastern foreign and security policy is analyzed under two axes. Big powers and important western institutions are discussed as the western axis and eastern neighbors of Poland and some regional co-operation processes are discussed as the eastern axis.

As a conclusion, it is evaluated that Poland is now a democratic country and has completed its integration process to the West. Under the light of these analyzes, the thesis maintains that Poland is a good model for the CEE countries. Moreover, the thesis concludes that the position of a regional leader supported by big powers should be a guaranty of success for other Eastern European countries pursuing pro-western integration efforts. The thesis concludes also that in the post-cold war era, Poland followed a dual, two-axial foreign policy and although it completed its western integration process, Poland still needs to have a well-formulated eastern policy to increase its importance in the international arena.

Keywords: Poland, foreign policy, Eastern Dimension, regional leader, the EU, NATO, Central Europe.

ÖZET

POLONYA'NIN AVRUPA BÜTÜNLEŞMESİ VE DEMOKRATİKLEŞME ÇERÇEVESİNDE, SOĞUK SAVAŞ SONRASI DÖNEMİNDEKİ DOĞU DIŞ VE GÜVENLİK POLİTİKASI

Özkural, Nergiz

Avrupa Çalışmaları Yüksek Lisans, Uluslararası İlişkiler ve Avrupa Birliği Bölümü

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Bu çalışma, Polonya'nın geçiş sürecindeki dış ve güvenlik politikasını demokratikleşme ve Avrupa entegrasyonu süreci çerçevesinde incelemekte ve Polonya'nın bölgede artan önemine dikkat çekmektedir. Bu tezde Polonya'nın doğu belirleyeni ile şekillenen batı odaklı politikaları, büyük güçlerin Orta ve Doğu Avrupa'daki çıkarları ve Polonya'nın bölgedeki liderlik misyonu tartışılmaktadır. İlk olarak, Avrupa entegrasyonu ve demokratikleşmeye neden olan tarihi etmenler ve gereklilikler, ikinci olarak da iç etmenler ve bunların Polonya'nın dış politikası ile olan etkileşimleri analiz edilmiştir. Son olarak doğu dış ve güvenlik politikası iki eksen etrafında incelenmiştir. Büyük güçler ve önemli batı kuruluşları batı ekseninde, Polonya'nın doğu komşuları ve bölgesel işbirlikleri ise doğu ekseninde tartışılmaktadır.

Sonuç olarak, Polonya'nın şu anda batı entegrasyonunu tamamlamış demokratik bir ülke olduğu belirtilmektedir. Bütün bu analizlerin ışığında; tez, Polonya'nın Orta-doğu Avrupa ülkeleri için iyi bir model olduğunu teyit etmektedir. Dahası, Polonya'nın bölgesel lider konumunun diğer Doğu Avrupa ülkelerinin batıya entegrasyon çabalarının güçlendirilmesi için büyük güçler tarafından desteklendiği sonucunu ortaya koymaktadır. Ayrıca tez, Soğuk Savaş sonrası Polonya'nın uyguladığı iki eksenli dış politikasını analiz etmekte ve entegrasyon sürecini tamamlamış olmasına karşın halen iyi tasarlanmış bir doğu dış politikasına uluslar arası arenadaki önemini artırmak için ihtiyacı olduğu sonucunu doğrulamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Polonya, dış politika, Doğu Boyutu, bölgesel lider, AB, NATO, Orta Avrupa.

To My Parents



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ABBREVIATIONS

AK	: The Home Army
AP	: Accession Partnership
AWS	: Solidarity Electoral Action
CBOS	: Centre for Social Opinion Research
CDU	: Christian Democratic Union
CEE	: Central East Europe
CEECs	: Central and Eastern European Countries
CEFTA	: Central European Free Trade Agreement
CFE	: Conventional Forces in Europe
CFSP	: Common Foreign and Security Policy
ChDIIRP	: Christian Democracy of the third Republic of Poland
CIS	: Commonwealth of Independent States
CMEA	: Council of Mutual Economic Assistance
COMECON	: The Council for Mutual Economic Cooperation
CPSU	: Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CSCE	: Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe
EAPC	: Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
EEC	: European Economic Community
ESDI	: European Foreign and Security Identity
FRG	: Federal Republic of Germany
GDR	: German Democratic Republic
GL	: People's Guard
IGC	: The Intergovernmental Conference
KOR	: Workers Defense Committee
KPN	: Confederation of Independent Poland
MKS	: An Interfactory Strike Committee

MND	: Multinational Division
NACC	: North Atlantic Cooperation Council
NGO	: Non-Governmental Organizations
NATO	: North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NKVD	: Soviet Secret Police
NPT	: Non-Proliferation Treaty
NSZZ	: Solidarity Trade Union
NUC	: Nato-Ukraine Commission
PAEF	: The Polish-American Enterprise Fund
PAUCI	: American-Ukrainian Co-operation Initiative
PC	: Central Alliance
PfP	: Partnership for Peace
PIS	: Law and Justice Party
PKWN	: Polish Committee of National Liberation
PO	: Civic Platform
PPR	: Polish Worker's Party
PSL	: Polish Peasant Party
PZPR	: Polish Worker's United Party
ROAD	: The Citizens' Movement- Democratic Action
RS-AWS	: Social Movement-AWS
START-2	: The Strategic Arms Reduction Talks
SCE	: South Central Europe
SdRP	: The Social Democracy of the Republic of Poland
SLD	: Democratic Left Alliance
TKK	: The Provisional Coordinating Commission
UD	: Democratic Union
UP	: Labor Union

UW : Federal Union
WEU : Western European Union xiii
ZchN : Christian National Union
ZSL : The United Peasant's Party



INTRODUCTION

Since 1989, the countries of East Central Europe, Poland included, have embarked on a process of transformation from Soviet-imposed communism into independent, democratic and free-market-oriented states desirous to rejoin the rest of Europe. Internally, successive governments have been consolidating market economic reforms and democratic institutions. Externally, these countries have been seeking to integrate with Western Europe and achieve membership in the European Union (EU) and NATO.

Since the end of the Cold War, the map of Central and Eastern Europe and the geopolitical situation of Poland have undergone considerable change. With the reunification of Germany, the break-up of Czechoslovakia into two separate republics, and the demise of the Soviet Union, Poland has acquired a number of new neighbours. Also the traditional Polish dilemma, namely being located between Russian and Germany, has been modified by these geopolitical changes. The end of the USSR also put an end to Poland's subordination to its huge eastern neighbor. Only by becoming a bridge between the new Russia and the west could Poland finally escape the consequences of its geographic misfortune. With regard to regional policy, Poland has been trying to carry on with the already established forms of regional co-operation and to ensure stability in Central and Eastern Europe. No serious issues in relations with its immediate and more distant neighbours have arisen and Poland has persistently come out in favor and support of the enlargement of NATO and the European Union.

In that period, Poland has been an important actor in Central and Eastern Europe. It introduced the region's first liberal constitution. Following the "managed" free elections held in June 1989, the first fully free elections were held in October 1991, just before the demise of the USSR at the end of the same year.

While Poland has been trying to have close relations with the other CEE countries, on the other hand it also sought to be involved in the westernization process since 1989 to integrate the West. Its primary foreign policy priority has been to achieve closer association with the EU and NATO. Poland was the first country to submit to NATO on 5 July 1994 its individual partnership program, and hosted the PFP's first joint military exercise in September 1994. Afterwards, Poland became a NATO member in 1999. Having joined NATO, it felt well positioned to lead the post-enlargement dialogue with Russia. Yet disputes over spying, bad historical memories and Russia's uneasiness with Poland as a NATO member led to a noticeable cooling off relations in 1999-2000. Despite some diplomatic gestures by the Polish side in 2000, bilateral relations suffered when Poland refused to allow Russia to construct a gas pipeline across Poland by-passing Ukraine, on the grounds that it would harm Ukraine's economic interests. Poland has since softened its stance on the issue, and relations have improved. For Polish foreign policy, relations with Russia and Ukraine are very important. Poland and its neighbours should form a natural bridge linking Russia with Western Europe. While Russia does not want Poland to have close ties with Ukraine, independent and stable Ukraine is crucial to Poland's security. For this reason, the Polish government is interested in maintaining good relations with Ukraine and in stabilizing democracy and the market economy there.

In the first half of 2002, Poland tried to be even more active in the region, in the framework of co-operation with both NATO and the EU. This new approach was shown by the results of the Warsaw conference of 6 November 2001, a joint statement by the chief negotiators of the ten EU candidate countries issued in Warsaw on 24 May 2002, as well as a proposal by President Aleksander Kwasniewski to combine efforts by the Visegrad Group and the ten candidate countries.

Enlargement was one of the most important challenges for the European Union at the beginning of the 21st century. It was a unique opportunity to extend a zone of stability and prosperity to new members. The process of the EU's eastward enlargement formally started in late March 1998. Since then, 13 countries have applied to become new members: 10 of these countries - Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, the Slovak Republic, and Slovenia joined to the Union on 1st May, 2004. Bulgaria and Romania expect to do so by 2007, while Turkey is not currently negotiating its membership. With its accession to NATO in 1999 and to the EU in 2004 Poland has achieved the key objectives of its foreign and security policy. The importance of Poland's relations with the eastern neighbours increased after the latest enlargement of the EU.

In this thesis, the western oriented policies of Poland caused by Eastern-oriented policies will be discussed under the title of "Poland's post-cold war eastern foreign and security policy in the framework of its democratization and European integration process." For that matter, in the post-communist era, the importance of the East for Polish foreign policy and its becoming crucial actor, in the central and eastern Europe as a model and a leader for the other CEE countries, will be discussed. In the first chapter Poland's historical policy imperatives for European integration will be examined in two sections. The first section begins with the Treaty of Versailles of 1919 that put an official end to World War I until the 1945 Yalta conference that changed the political atmosphere in Poland. So the situation of the great powers of that period and the place of Poland within these power balances will be examined. In the second section the communist era of Poland will be examined on the basis of both its internal and external dynamics. The Polish Communists were never able to completely dominate Polish society. Historically, the most important non-governmental actor has been the Catholic Church, which can also influence political parties through unofficial parties. Unlike the other countries in the region, Poland has had an anti-communist opposition since 1970s. So the most significant events – like

the Polish October, Solidarity movement, etc. – that changed Poland's destiny in the communist period will be analysed to comprehend the internal dynamics and the external dynamics. Obviously, Poland's interactions with Russia will be stressed while analyzing Poland's external dynamics to see the ground of its eastern foreign relations. In the second chapter, the attitude of Polish domestic policy-making institutions and processes towards eastern foreign and security policy in the post-communist era will be examined. In the transition period, the main components of the Polish decision-making process and its effects on Polish post-communist foreign and security policy will be analysed. In the third chapter, Poland's eastern foreign and security policies since 1990 will be examined on the basis of two axis. Through the western axis Poland-US relations and Poland's strategic alliance with the United States, especially in the involvement, in Iraq and also the EU-Poland and NATO-Poland relations will be examined. While the western axis of Polish foreign policy is analysing, the interactions with the US, the EU and NATO will be taken into consideration in the framework of the eastern enlargement process. Through the eastern axis, Eastern Europe (Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus), relations with the Baltic states (Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia), and the Visegrad group will be examined. Poland's role in the region as shaped by the West and its mission as a bridge between east and west will be covered in that chapter.

CHAPTER 1

POLAND'S POLICY IMPERATIVES FOR EUROPEAN INTEGRATION FROM 1919 UNTIL THE POST-COMMUNIST ERA

Polish history has been dominated by a series of weak regimes, powerful neighbors, and many rebellions. The country has been invaded twenty-six times in the last three hundred years. It has been an important actor in Central and Eastern Europe and introduced the region's first liberal constitution. In addition, "Poland suffered the highest per capita casualties during World War II and more recently, it became the first communist state to end one-party rule, sparking even more dramatic revolutions in other socialist states."¹ A new Poland has acted as a buffer zone between western Europe and the new and somewhat feared Soviet Union.

Eastern Europe has provided an excellent example of a region struggling with its own past. In fact, one can distinguish three separate stages in the socio-political and economic development of the area. The first stage began with the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, the second stage covered the period after the end of World War II and coincided with the process of Communist seizure of power in the region, and the third stage began with the year 1989 and has continued until today².

¹ Derleth, S. William, *The Transition in Central and Eastern European Politics*, Prentice-Hall, 2000, p. 264.

² Korbonski, Andrzej, "Poland", in Barany, Zoltan and Ivan Volgyes (eds.), *The Legacies of Communism in Eastern Europe*, The John Hopkins University Press, 1995, pp. 138-139.

I. FROM VERSAILLES TO YALTA

Poland's politics have been very complex during its transition to a democracy. The country had never experienced anything remotely similar to democracy; its history has been passed almost totally under totalitarian systems, and it was partitioned over one century between the Austrian, Prussian and Russian autocracies. Poland was split into a vast number of political groupings. The Catholic Church held sway over most of the country, but there were also some very significant minority groups from Jewish to German and Russian to Austrian. Within these minority groups, there were also different types of political parties, some openly right wing and nationalistic, others on the far left and predominantly internationalist. The two main personalities involved in the process of taking Poland into peace and democracy were Roman Dmowski and Jozef Pilsudski, both of whom had significant support across Poland. Dmowski was nationalist and Catholic, Pilsudski was socialist and indifferent to religion. Their impact on Versailles was very important³.

Poland's occupiers Russia, Germany and Austria were pitted against each other during the World War I. Russia joined the Allied Forces against Germany and Austria; Polish troops fought on both sides. The eastern front was strategically important and because of this, the belligerents tried to use this opportunity and line up Poland on their side with the promise of an independent state. For Poland, this war provided a good chance to be independent again. Until 1914 there was a great surge of independence throughout Europe and several committees were set up to achieve this aim. For Pilsudski, independence was above everything.

³ Synder, Timothy, "Federalism and Nationalism in Eastern Policy", *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, Winter/Spring 2003, see, http://journal.georgetown.edu/Issues/ws03/ws03_pd_snyder.html

In 1917, the National Committee of Poland was established and the Austrian government recognized it. After the Bolshevik Revolution of October 1917, Russia withdrew from the war, signed a separate peace treaty with Germany, and annulled the partition agreements. When the US joined the war in 1917, the speculations about Poland ended. In January 1918, President Woodrow Wilson put forward his general plan for peace in his Fourteen Points. The thirteenth point foresaw a "united, independent and autonomous Poland with free unrestricted access to the sea" and situated on "territories inhabited by an indubitably Polish population."⁴ On 7 November 1918, a provisional government was set up in Lublin by the socialists and several leftist factions. Pilsudski's followers formed the backbone of this government.

After the Allies defeated Germany, Poland's Socialist Party leader, Jozef Pilsudski, became the provisional president of Poland until 20 February 1919 when he handed power over to the *Sejm*. Pilsudski's first task was to reunite the Polish regions that had assumed various economic and political identities since Poland's partition in the late 18th century. Pilsudski was preoccupied with the east and tended to proceed without great concern for western preferences. On the other hand, there was some opposition to Pilsudski, like Jan Paderewski, a Polish pianist then statesman, who advocated close cooperation with the western powers and stressed concern for Poland's western frontier with Germany. While he was staying in the United States he also influenced the Wilson administration with regard to Polish independence⁵.

Pilsudski feared that a Poland sandwiched between Germany and Russia might be unable to secure its independence. Consequently, he aimed at reducing Russia's territorial holdings. For him the best guarantee of Poland's security was in having Russia confined to the ethnically Russian

⁴ Castle, Marjorie; Taras, Ray, *Democracy in Poland*, Wetsview, 2002, p. 20.

⁵ Biskupski, M.B, "Paderewski, Polish parties, and the Battle of Warsaw, 1920", *Slavic Review*, Vol. 46, No. 3/4, Fall/Winter 1987, p. 511.

lands. He always viewed with sympathy the struggle for independence of the Balts, the Byelorussians, the Ukrainians and the Caucasus nations, and saw Poland's interest in their success. He also had far-reaching plans of bringing a free Poland, Lithuania, Byelorussia and the Ukraine into some form of cooperative-federation, confederation or alliance- thus creating a bloc of countries between the Baltic and Black Seas strong enough to withstand both German and Russian expansion.⁶

In those days, Pilsudski asked Ignacy Daszynski to form a Government. In effect, Poland now had two governments. Firstly, there was the actual government in Warsaw headed by Pilsudski. Secondly, in Paris sat the Polish National Committee headed by Roman Dmowski who was Pilsudski's political antagonist. Dmowski was strongly nationalistic, anti-Semitic, anti-German, and pro-Russian and also had numerous supporters among Western politicians. Because of his pro-Russian orientation, he disagreed with Pilsudski's foreign policy⁷. This second government was seen to be a *de facto* Polish Government and had a larger army than Pilsudski. It took until the middle of January 1919 to resolve the issue. The obvious outcome was not seriously in doubt as Pilsudski was in Poland and Dmowski was not. However, Pilsudski was rightly concerned that any prolonged dispute would damage the international standing of the new state. His priority was the army and he had inherited units which had served under a variety of commands in World War I⁸.

The Treaty of Versailles of 1919 was the peace treaty that came out of Paris Peace Conference that put an official end to World War I. The treaty, ratified on 10 January 1920 by the League of Nations, stipulated that Germany accept responsibility for the war and pay war reparations. It also provided for the creation of the League of Nations, a major goal of US President Woodrow Wilson. The purpose of the organization was to arbitrate conflicts

⁶ Karski, Jan, *The Great Powers of Poland: 1919-1945*, University Press of America, 1985, p. 581.

⁷ Derleth, S. William, p. 267.

⁸ *The Biography of Jozef Pilsudski*, see, <http://members.lycos.co.uk/jozefpilsudski/free.html>

between nations before they led to war. Other provisions included the loss of German colonies and of German territories. The former German provinces that changed hands were most of Poznan Province, Western Prussia, and part of Silesia, which were given to Poland.⁹ Therefore, the 1919 Treaty of Versailles settled the German-Polish borders in the Baltic region. The port city of Danzig, predominantly German but as economically vital to Poland as it had been in the 16th century, was declared a free city. Therefore, the Versailles Treaty created the Danzig Corridor that affords Poland access to the Baltic Sea. Moreover, the lands lying between Poland and its eastern neighbours were inhabited by a mixed population of Poles, Jews, Lithuanians, Ukrainians, and White Russians, with no single group being a majority. The British Foreign Secretary, Lord Curzon, on behalf of the Allies, suggested a line running from Grodno through Brest-Litovsk to Lwow, leaving unclear which side of the proposed border Lwow would be on. A later version of this Line, known as Curzon Line "B", awarded Lwow to Poland. Curzon proposed it as a possible armistice line in the Russo-Polish War of 1919–20 but his plan was not accepted.

Speaking in Lublin early in 1920, Pilsudski said:

A great question has come before Poland: is it to be a country on a par with the great powers of the world, or is it to be a small state, in need of protection from larger states?...if we are to turn the circle of history to the extent that the Republic of Poland is to become not only the greatest military but also cultural power of the whole east.¹⁰

In interviews, Pilsudski said that he had no hesitation about the Germans, "who will later become a dreadful danger to us." With regard to Lithuania, Byelorussia, and Ukraine, he said that "On our bayonets we are bringing liberty without reservation to these countries." Pilsudski also made it clear that the Bolsheviks must be removed from influence in central Europe. "It must not be allowed to happen that fear of the Bolsheviks should become a

⁹ Leslie, R.F. (ed.), *The History of Poland since 1863*, Cambridge University Press, 1980.

¹⁰ For documents of Jozef Pilsudski, see, <http://www.iyp.org/pilsudski/documents.html>

pretext for doing nothing.”¹¹ According to him, Russia was a great enemy of Poland and that was the reason he maintained good relations with Germany after the war.

Poland’s international policies were no less conflict filled at this time. Between 1918 and 1921, the country had many border disputes. The Poles took on the Ukrainians regarding eastern Galicia; on two occasions Germany threatened Poland with regard to Poznan and Silesia, where national uprisings had broken out; the Lithuanians wanted the return of their capital, Vilnius. In addition, the Czechs disputed the border in the Teschen region and Soviet leaders questioned Poland’s right to the territories of western Ukraine¹². In 1921, the League of Nations successfully resolved a dispute between Poland and Germany over Upper Silesia. The Treaty of Versailles decided that the people of this territory should vote in a plebiscite to decide whether they wished to be part of Poland or Germany. The result was close and resulted in rioting, so the League decided to step in. It finally decided to divide the area between Poland and Germany, though drawing the borders was extremely complicated and Germany received the greater share¹³. At the same time, Vladimir I. Lenin, leader of the new communist government of Russia, saw Poland as “the bridge over which communism would cross into the working class of a disorganized postwar Germany.”¹⁴

After World War I, a traditional ally of France no longer existed and Moscow dominated communism was considered a danger. That fear provoked Paris to establish a system of alliances with Poland and the countries of the Little Entente, including Czechlovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia. “Poland by its very nature and geographical position seemed destined to play a dual role- as an eastern check on Germany and as a

¹¹ The Biography of Jozef Pilsudski, see, <http://members.lycos.co.uk/jozefpilsudski/free.html>

¹² Castle, Marjorie; Taras, Ray, p. 21.

¹³ Todd, Allen, *Democracies and Dictatorships*, Cambridge University Press, 2001.

¹⁴ U.S. Library of Congress, October 1992, see, <http://countrystudies.us/poland/>

cordon sanitiare against communist westward expansion.”¹⁵ Collaboration between France and Poland was considered even more important to the Poles than to the French.

The Poles signed a compromise peace treaty at Riga in early 1921 that split the disputed territory in Belorussia and Ukraine between Poland and Soviet Russia. The treaty avoided giving historically Polish territory back to the Russians. “Poland gave in to Soviet insistence and agreed to recognize the Moscow-controlled Ukrainian government in Kiev, to disarm the Ukrainian nationalist forces.”¹⁶ Because the Ukrainians and Byelorussians were fighting for their independence from Bolshevik rule and Poland wanted to withdraw all support from them. It also meant that Pilsudski’s federalist ideas had been formally disclaimed. In exchange for the Polish concessions, the Bolsheviks declared their lack of interest in the Polish-Lithuanian dispute over Vilna¹⁷.

Even if the country faced various problems associated with a transition to modernization, the political system was a failure. Parliamentary government was difficult to establish under conditions of inconclusive elections and vacillating party coalitions between 1922 and 1926¹⁸. Pilsudski took back the presidency in a 1926 coup. There were several reasons why democracy failed in Poland during the interwar period. Firstly, with the exception of Silesia, Poland lacked an industrial base. This limited the development of the middle class that has historically been in the front position of political change. In addition, because of their geographic weakness and their recent independence, most Poles were more concerned with strengthening the state than creating a pluralistic political order¹⁹.

¹⁵ Karski, Jan, *The Great Powers of Poland*, University Press of America, p. 105.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* *idem*.

¹⁸ Castle, Marjorie; Taras, Ray, p. 24.

¹⁹ Derleth, S. William, p. 268.

Beginning in 1926, Pilsudski's main foreign policy aim was to balance Poland's still powerful neighbors, the Soviet Union and Germany. He assumed that both powers wished to regain the Polish territories lost in World War I. Therefore, his approach was to avoid Polish dependence on either power. Above all, Pilsudski sought to avoid taking positions that might cause the two countries to take concerted action against Poland²⁰.

The *Locarno discussions* arose from exchanges of notes between Britain, France and Germany. German foreign minister Gustav Stresemann's 9 February 1925 proposed a mutual guarantee of his country's western frontiers as established under the unfavourable 1919 Treaty of Versailles, as a means to facilitate Germany's diplomatic treatment by the western powers²¹. The Locarno Pact, signed in 1926 by the major West European powers with the aim of guaranteeing peace in the region, contained no guarantee of Poland's western border. Over the next ten years, substantial friction arose between Poland and France over the former's refusal to compromise with the Germans and French refusal to resist Adolf Hitler's rise to power in the early 1930s. Accordingly, Poland signed non-aggression pacts with both countries in the early 1930s. After Pilsudski's death, his foreign minister Józef Beck continued this policy. The failure to establish planned alliances in Eastern Europe meant great reliance on the French, whose enthusiasm for intervention in the region waned markedly after World War I.

In the beginning of the 1930s, French leaders no longer believed that the Polish-German boundaries, particularly the so-called Corridor, could long remain unchanged and the American government shared their skepticism. American leaders urged the Prime Minister of France, Pierre Laval, to do something about the frontiers of Central Europe. In February 1932, the disarmament conference further deepened the rift between Paris and Warsaw. The Polish predicament worsened in the 1930s with the advent of Hitler's openly

²⁰ U.S. Library of Congress, October 1992, see, <http://countrystudies.us/poland/>

²¹ The Free Encyclopedia, see, http://en2.wikipedia.org/wiki/Locarno_Pact

expansionist Nazi regime in Germany and the obvious weakness of France's resolve to defend its East European allies. Pilsudski retained the French connection but had progressively less faith in its usefulness. Hitler and British prime minister Neville Chamberlain signed the Anglo-German Agreement, declaring that neither country would go to war with the other again. By the time 1938 was over, Britain had signed a treaty of friendship with Italy and France had signed a similar one with Germany.

Many Germans had been forced to live in Poland because of the Versailles Treaty. In particular, both countries valued Eastern Prussia, which had been given to Poland in 1919 to allow the new country to have access to the sea. The Poles called it the "Polish Corridor" although many Germans lived there. Poland was not willing to hand it back to Germany²². During the 1930s, the Soviet Union tried to contain Nazi Germany through collective security arrangements with Britain, France, and other states. Like Germany it had lost territory after World War I, and was interested in revising the post-war settlement. Stalin wanted to get back under Russian control the Baltic States and eastern Poland, all lost in 1918.

The Nazi-Soviet Pact signed in August 1939, shocked the world. Neither Hitler nor Stalin was prepared to sign the document himself. Instead, the foreign ministers of Germany and Russia signed the pact. The USSR and Germany agreed not to go to war with the other for ten years. There was also a secret clause - the Soviet Union would do nothing if Germany attacked Poland; in fact, both agreed to carve up Poland between themselves²³. On 1 September 1939, Germany attacked Poland, starting World War II. The Polish armed forces resisted the German invasion with great heroism, but their strategic position was hopeless since Germany and German-occupied Czechoslovakia surrounded Poland on three sides. Britain and France honoured their pledge to Poland by declaring war on Germany, but could offer no practical assistance. The Soviet Union could have assisted Poland, but the Poles

²² History Learning Site, see, <http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/ww2.htm>

²³ The Free Encyclopedia, see, http://en2.wikipedia.org/wiki/Locarno_Pact

feared Stalin's communism nearly as much as they feared Hitler's Nazism, and during 1939, they had refused to agree to any arrangement, which would allow Soviet troops to enter Poland. The Nazi-Soviet Pact of August 1939 ended any possibility of Soviet aid.

On 17 September 1939, the Polish government decided to leave Polish territory and by 3 October, a government-in-exile was fully established in London with Wladyslaw Sikorski as Prime Minister and Supreme Commander of the Armed forces, and Wladyslaw Raczkiwicz as president. While some groups supported Sikorski, the other groups never accepted his authority and they wanted to continue the fight against Poland's enemies.

The Polish government and the Polish armed forces in France were financially dependent on French approval. The French government stood to benefit from any plans which the Polish government-in-exile made for the continuation of the fight against Germany. The issue, which most obviously preoccupied the Poles, was the extent to which it was prudent to allow the newly formed Polish units to be used by the French in their plans for fighting in Europe. Since neither Western government was willing to make a declaration stating that the restoration of Poland to its pre-war borders was one of the Allied war aims, Sikorski's commitment to co-operation with France and Britain made him vulnerable to accusations by his opponents within the Polish community in France that he was a "French puppet". France and Britain accepted the need to create a strong Central European bloc dominated by Poland. As Sikorski stated, "the destruction of Germany and support for Polish aspirations would be a guarantee of European stability".²⁴ On the other hand, there were also some critics of Sikorski. Staff Colonel Alexander Kedzior was one of his biggest antagonists and believed that neither France nor Britain could be trusted. He urged that while preparing to fight Poland's two enemies, it was necessary to launch a propaganda offensive to educate the Allies about the need to support Poland's historic mission to the East. He also suggested

²⁴ Prazmowska, Anita, "Polish Military Plans for the Defeat of Germany and the Soviet Union, 1939-41", *European History Quarterly*, Vol. 32, No. 4, 2001, pp. 594-595.

that the Caucasus states and the Ukraine should become independent and together with Czechoslovakia form the basis of an East and Central European Federation dominated by Poland²⁵.

Under the Nazi-German-Soviet pact, Poland was divided; the Soviets took and absorbed into the Soviet Union the eastern half (Byelorussia and West Ukraine), the Germans took West Prussia, Ponzan, and Silesia, and the rest with Warsaw was designated as the General-Government²⁶. In the Soviet zone, 1.5 million Poles were transported to labour camps in Siberia and other areas. Many thousands of captured Polish officers were shot at several secret forest sites. The Germans declared their intention of eliminating the Polish race alongside the Jews. This process of elimination, the "Holocaust", was carried out systematically²⁷. Between 1938 and 1945, nearly 6 million people were killed with the inclusion of mass extermination of Jews in concentration camps in Poland.

By 1942, two separate resistance organizations had emerged, the larger linked to the London government in exile, the smaller to the Soviet Union. The Home Army (AK) numbered some 200.000 by 1944 and was united behind General Wladyslaw Sikorski until his death in 1943. After that, the AK was split into two groups. The first, represented by the new premier and PSL leader Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, sought accomodation with the USSR; the second, linked to the commander in chief of Polish forces, Kazimierz Sosnkowski, was strongly anti-Soviet. It was not coordinated beforehand with either the Western Allies or the Soviet Union, or even with the London government in exile. "The only forces in a position to assist these insurrectionists were Red Army troops, who made only feeble attempt to help."²⁸

²⁵ Ibid., p. 599.

²⁶ See Hunczak, Taras, "Poles and Ukrainians in the first year of the World War II", *The Ukrainian Quarterly*, Vol. 5, No. 1, Spring 1999.

²⁷ History of Poland by Mieczyslaw Kasprzyk, see, <http://www.kasprzyk.demon.co.uk/www/PostWar.html>

²⁸ Castle, Marjorie; Taras, Ray, p. 26.

In Teheran, Iran in November 1943, Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin confirmed the Curzon Line as Poland's eastern border. The decision deprived Poland of nearly half of her territory and a third of her population²⁹. In July 1944, the Soviet Red Army entered Poland and established a communist-controlled Polish Committee of National Liberation (PKWN) in Lublin. The other resistance force, the People's Guard (GL) had a membership of at most 50,000 in 1944. This communist military organization was less divided than the pro-western resistance and quickly saw the advantages of working closely with Moscow. With Stalin's approval of a political wing, the Polish Workers' Party (PPR) was created in January 1942³⁰.

In 1944, after Poland was invaded, an underground resistance movement was created. It is important to stress that resistance was directed against both the Germans and the Red Army. Its goal was to liberate Warsaw from the Germans in order to create a base for the return of the exiled Polish government in London, thus preventing the Soviet Army from entering the city. While the Russians watched from across the Vistula River, the Germans suppressed the underground resistance's uprising in summer 1944³¹.

From that time on, the Polish communists exerted primary influence on decisions about the restoration of Poland. Given this outcome, there is a strong suspicion that the Soviet failure to move on Warsaw in 1944 was an intentional strategy used by Stalin to eliminate the noncommunist resistance forces. In addition, in February 1945, at the Yalta conference Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin reached some important decisions. Firstly, Germany would be divided into four occupation zones, which would be run by the USSR, the USA, Britain, and France and Berlin would also be divided into four occupation zones.

²⁹ Jan Karski, p. 581.

³⁰ Castle, Marjorie; Taras, Ray, p. 27.

³¹ Derleth, S. William, p. 269.

Secondly, the countries of eastern Europe would be allowed to hold free elections after liberation. This decision changed the political atmosphere in Poland. Because of the Yalta conference, Poland lost its eastern provinces but gained new ones in the North and West. Following the Yalta Conference, National Unity was recognised as the temporary Polish government by the USSR. Edward Osobka Morawski who gave up holding his post of a prime minister in London earlier the same year became the prime minister of the temporary government, and Wladyslaw Gomulka and Stanislaw Mikolajczyk became vice-prime ministers. Although everybody knew that the most members of the government were Stalin's allies, all the countries of the Anti-Nazi coalition accepted it. The Poles had been promised the old lands up to the Oder and Neisse rivers, occupied by Germany, in return for the eastern part of Poland. This promise was never made formal, nor was it completely accepted by the western Allies. The Red Army expelled the last German troops from Poland in March 1945, several weeks before the final Allied victory in Europe³².

After the Second World War, Poland had to rebuild. The need for normalcy coexisted with resistance and opposition to an oppressive system which over four decades gradually adapted itself to the nation and gained some local support. However, resistance to communism persisted and as a result of that resistance, more concessions were made. The postwar history of Poland was marked by interaction between the people and the authorities. "The nation oscillated between opposition and adaptation; and the authorities vacillated between open repression and an occasional dose of tolerance."³³

³² U.S. Library of Congress, Oct. 1992, see, <http://countrystudies.us/poland/>

³³ Karpinski, Jakub, "In Poland, a Long-standing Tradition of Resistance", *Transitions*, Vol. 3, No. 3, 21 February 1997, p. 14.

II- COMMUNIST ERA

In May 1945, at the end of the II World War, the Provisional government of Poland occupied the western territories. The Polish population of the old eastern provinces, including Lwow, moved west as their territories were absorbed by the USSR, and the German population was largely removed to the German Democratic Republic. In 1945, Poland had very few minorities such as the Lithuanians, Ruthenes and Jews. After 1945, Potsdam conference, relations among the allies came into open conflict. In spring 1946, Winston Churchill made a speech, which made people aware of existence of a communism threat that marked the final collapse of the wartime coalition of the Great Three. The Cold War began.

In spring 1948, US President Harry Truman stated that the USA would support countries that were resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or outside forces. The aim was to contain communism but not to push it back. The aim of the Marshall Plan, announced in 1948, was to prevent the spread of communism by making Europe prosperous again. After the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, Cold War tension increased. The Marshall was offered to plan Poland and other countries dominated by communist governments. Under pressure from Moscow, the eastern countries could not accept the Marshall Plan.

International systems theory holds that under bipolarity, when two great powers dominate world politics, small and medium powers have little room for maneuver. They must join the alliance system of one or the other hegemon. By contrast, under multipolarity a medium sized power like Poland could shift easily from one alliance system to another.

Setting aside all other factors, the international politics of the Cold War period forced Poland into the political and economic dependency of the USSR, its superpower neighbour³⁴.

The territorial despoiling of Germany would naturally produce much resentment toward Poland, which would require Warsaw to seek protection from the Soviet Union. The Western powers were reluctant to recognize the new Polish western borders, although they were quick to accept Soviet seizure of eastern Poland. Thus only Moscow guaranteed the territorial integrity of postwar Poland and Poland was drawn into the Soviet orbit by geopolitical necessity. Moreover, for almost half a century Poland was removed from full membership in the European community, with delaying effects that will take years to overcome. Poland, which culturally identified itself with Western Europe, became the main state of the new Eastern Europe, a term used to designate the Soviet satellites in Europe regardless of their previous historical evolution. "At least in the mind of the West, it was assimilated into an often-undifferentiated Communist bloc."³⁵

Consequently, there were several Polish political factions with whom the Big Three had to contend. The right-wing London Poles and their underground Home Army, the moderate London Poles around Mikołajczyk, the "Muscovite" Communists, and the underground Communists. All of them had unrealistic expectations. The London Poles did agree on one thing was that Stalin needed them to run the country because they had the necessary political experience. If Great Britain and the US would give them unqualified backing they might return in triumph. The Warsaw uprising was a political and ideological attempt to liberate the capital and win control over the entire country³⁶.

³⁴ Castle, Marjorie; Taras, Ray, pp. 33-34.

³⁵ Biskupski, Mieczyslaw B., *The History of Poland*, Greenwood Press, 2000, p.125.

³⁶ Rieber, Alfred J., "The Fate of Poland", *The New York Review*, Vol. 33, No. 18, 20 November 1986.

A- Internal Dynamics

1) PZPR

In Poland in 1945, all the levers of power were in Communist hands, The Red Army was in the country, and the NKVD (Soviet secret police) was active. Under these conditions Mikolajczyk's popularity had no political significance, while the growing awareness of the absence of effective Western support made it possible to apply increasing terror against the Polish Peasant Party (PSL)³⁷. Far more dangerous for the Polish Peasant Party (PPR), was the PSL, which enjoyed widespread support in the countryside. The PSL also became the focus for many elements in Polish society opposed to the communists. Aware of its weakness, and desperate to avoid the kind of electoral disaster that befell Hungary's communists in November 1945, the PPR resisted Mikolajczyk's insistence on the free elections promised to Poland by the Yalta agreements³⁸.

The new Poland was 20 per cent smaller than the pre-1939 one, but it was more compact and had acquired a 300-mile long Baltic coastline. Although much devastated, the ex-German lands were more developed than the provinces lost to the USSR. The demographic changes were also conspicuous. Post World War II Poland had just under 24 million inhabitants in 1946, as opposed to 35 million in 1939, but it now contained an overwhelmingly ethnic Polish population. With wartime material destruction estimated at two-fifths of its productive capacity, Poland was the most devastated country in Europe³⁹.

³⁷ Brezezinski, Zbigniew K., *The Soviet Block*, Harvard University Press, 1960, p. 12.

³⁸ Lukowsky, Jerzy, Zawadzki, Hubert, *A Concise History of Poland*, Cambridge, 2001, p. 253.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 250.

The economy of Central Europe was now going through the process of Sovietisation. In 1947 in Szklarska Poreba, Poland, a conference of communist parties was held. Under Stalin's pressure the Cominform was founded, whose purpose was to help all communist parties in building socialist societies according to the USSR model. As the result, the communists intensified their terror and propaganda. In the communist countries in Central Europe, people were living under different conditions from those of people from western countries. Although the Yalta agreement called for free elections, the Communist Party controlled those held in Poland, in January 1947. The communists then established a regime entirely under their domination⁴⁰. The pro-communist socialist Jozef Cyrankiewicz led the new Polish government formed in February 1947, while the key ministries continued to remain in communist hands. In the January 1947 elections, the main non-communist politicians were defeated by the use of violence. Wladislaw Gomulka became the undisputed leader of Poland. Then in September 1948, Gomulka was dismissed for advocating a "Polish road to socialism". Because of his radical opinions, he was imprisoned and an era of full Stalinist dictatorship and industrialisation began under the leadership of Boleslaw Bierut.

After manipulated elections formalized the liquidation of his party, Mikolajczyk escaped abroad. From the point of view of the communists, this ended yet another chapter in the process of sweeping away the remnants of the preceding historical phase, namely those of bourgeois rule⁴¹. In that year, the *Sejm* worked out a new three year economic plan whose purpose was to raise the standard of life. Free trade was abolished and the introduction of agriculture collectivization was announced. The government also gave importance to the increase of coal production and the development of heavy industry.

⁴⁰ See Department of State, available at <http://state.gov/p/eur/ci/pl>

⁴¹ Brezezinski, Zbigniew K., p. 12.

The PSL was reduced to impotency and its rump membership was taken over by communist sympathizers. In the 1947 and 1948 climate of the Cold War, Moscow tightened its grip on its satellites. They were not only obliged to abandon any involvement with the Marshall Plan but were also forced to accelerate the adoption of the Soviet model of political, economic and social control. "In 1948, after Stalin's break with Tito, steps were taken to eliminate all so-called 'Titoist' or 'nationalist' deviations within the communist parties of the Soviet bloc."⁴²

In December 1948, the PPS agreed to unite with the PPR to form the PZPR (Polish Worker's United Party), the name under which the communists were to rule Poland until 1989. From 1948 to 1953, the PZPR pursued a policy of "Stalinization". This included the elimination of the noncommunist parties, the police state, persecution of the Roman Catholic Church, agricultural collectivization, nationalization of industry, and government takeover of all independent organizations and the media.

In 1950, a new six-year plan was drafted whose main purpose was to satisfy the military needs of the USSR. In the agricultural sector, a regression started and the government did not manage to reverse the bad economic situation. This system resulted in submission to the authorities and resignation from the responsibility which deprived society of independent thinking and self-organization. A simultaneous effort was launched to make Poland conform more closely to Soviet and Russian norms. Administrative reforms from local to national levels followed Soviet practices, culminating in the 1952 constitution, based on that of the Soviet Union⁴³. Sovietization was reflected in the adoption of the 1952 Constitution, which stressed the leading role of the PZPR and "eternal friendship" with the

⁴² Lukowsky, Jerzy; Zawadzki, Hubert, pp. 254-255.

⁴³ Biskupski, Mieczyslaw B., p. 134.

Soviet Union⁴⁴. The death of Stalin in 1953 and this event affected the satellite states of the East Europe in different ways. In Poland, Boleslaw Bierut caused an increase of tension in the PZPR. Part of the communists wanted to carry out a program of social reform and they announced liberal ideas. This group realized that the terror led to deep division between the authorities and the people. Their opponents wanted no change and carried out the commands from Moscow. They wanted to keep close ties with the USSR and to continue their policies which were frequently anti-Semitic, and opposed any liberalization.

a) Polish October

Poland was the first country which has challenged Moscow's hegemony in East Central Europe. In February 1956, CPSU First Secretary Nikita Khrushchev made his famous "secret speech" before the 20th Party Congress in Moscow, in which he denounced the excesses and crimes of Stalin. Khrushchev's speech was immediately circulated in Poland. The party leadership in Warsaw was sharply divided. Under mounting public pressure, a number of concessions were made by the regime, though no clear liberalization was decided. The worst of the Stalinists were removed and the security police was reduced in size and its activities were curtailed⁴⁵. Khrushchev announced a change in policy and gave orders for the Soviet Union's political prisoners to be released.

At the same time, an economic crisis was developing. Instead of fear, people had great hopes of improving their living conditions. Slogans, referring to the independence of Poland, came back and they were voiced at demonstrations. In June 1956, workers took to the streets, asking for better wages. This action turned into a large patriotic and anti-governmental demonstration. On June 18 and 19 1956, 75 people were killed and 900 people

⁴⁴ Derleth, S. William, p. 269.

⁴⁵ Biskupski, Mieczyslaw B., p.138.

were injured and the demonstration was suppressed by the soldiers of the Poznan garrison. The June events increased hatred for a system based on lawlessness. Workers councils began to function in the factories and the teachers introduced new education programs.

The communist government was in crisis and there was a possibility that the crisis spread to other countries of Central Europe. On 19 October 1956, Gomulka was elected first secretary of the PZPR. On the same day, Nikita Khrushchev, accompanied by the commander of armed forces of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and Soviet army generals arrived in Warsaw. Khrushchev was unwilling to accept any changes in Poland and Gomulka's return to the power. But, he changed his mind because after Gomulka, who assured him that authority would be still remain in communist hands, with the proviso that there would be a reform of the political administration. More importantly, he claimed that Poland would not leave the Warsaw Treaty Organization and that the basic principles of its policy would not change. Gomulka was supported by Polish society and became a national hero.

According to the handwritten notes of Czech party leader Antonin Novotny's aide at the secret meeting of communist bloc leaders on 24 October in Moscow, the Soviet leaders noted that "Gomulka several times emphasised that the Poles would not permit their independence to be taken away and would not allow anyone to intervene in Poland's internal affairs". At the same meeting, Khrushchev said, "finding a reason to start a military conflict against Poland would be easy, but finding a way to end it would be hard."⁴⁶ Gomulka's regime oscillated from the very start between a mild form of a national communism and the more restricted orientation of domestic affairs⁴⁷. Gomulka faced a sharp conflict within the Party and difficult negotiations with the USSR. The new first secretary used the new

⁴⁶ Granville, Johanna, "Hungarian and Polish Reactions to the Events of 1956: New Archival Evidence", *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 53, No. 7, 2001, p. 1054.

⁴⁷ Zbigniew K. Brezezinski, p. 261.

situation to reduce Poland's dependence on the USSR. Political prisoners were gradually released from jail, the Roman Catholic Primate was freed from house arrest, and enforced agricultural collectivisation was dropped, so that Poland entered the "small stabilisation" period⁴⁸. However, Gomulka soon backed out of the liberal course and the PZPR continued to be absolute power in Poland.

The October revolution in Poland had deep repercussions in Eastern bloc, especially in Hungary, where the news of Gomulka's victory prompted large demonstrations of support that turned into a major uprising⁴⁹. Ideologically, the political situation in Poland created a revolutionary situation in Hungary. For the same reason, the Polish situation made it necessary to use manipulation and make concessions, despite the reactions of the other Communist leaderships⁵⁰. Gomulka's approach to the task of "building socialism" in Poland produced an uneasy equilibrium between Party aims and national objectives. The stabilization proved short-lived and was to be undermined by the harsh economic system, which was unable to achieve high growth rates and raise living standards at the same time⁵¹.

The remodelling of Polish culture and values clearly met with the opposition of the powerful Roman Catholic Church. In 1959, Gomulka turned against the Roman Catholic Church by ending religious education in the schools, but allowed it to continue after school hours in churches. He also closed down schools run by religious orders such as the Ursulines, but allowed the Catholic University of Lublin to continue in existence. His government routinely refused building permits for churches⁵². In the second half of the

⁴⁸ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, see, <http://www.poland.gov.pl>

⁴⁹ Dziewanowski, M. K., *The Communist Party of Poland*, Harvard University Press, 1976, p. 283.

⁵⁰ Zbigniew K. Brezezinski, pp. 260-261.

⁵¹ Leslie, R.F. (ed.), p. 367.

⁵² Cienciala, Anna M., "Poland 1957-1980/81", Lecture Notes, No. 18, History 557, Spring 2000, see, [http://www.ukans.edu/wcb/schools/CLAS/his/aciencia/1/file/newlecture18a\[2\].htm](http://www.ukans.edu/wcb/schools/CLAS/his/aciencia/1/file/newlecture18a[2].htm)

1960s, the conflict between the government and society became more and more evident. The government kept up a propaganda campaign against the Church. But this campaign was a failure, and did little or nothing to reduce the traditional religious beliefs of the Polish people. Indeed, the fact that postwar Poland became almost religiously uniform meant that the Catholic Church was extraordinarily important in Poland. In no other country of the Soviet bloc, was there an independent institution as powerful as the Roman Catholic Church in Poland. This was a discouraging reality for the PZPR, and had long-term consequences for the eventual re-emergence of a non-communist Poland. Because “the Church had traditionally regarded itself as the defender of the national heritage, it served as important element of continuity in Polish history, which had been forcibly redirected after 1945.”⁵³ By 1961, religious instruction in schools had ended and drastic official limits had been placed on the building of new churches. In November 1965, Poland’s bishops sent a formal letter to the German Roman Catholic episcopate seeking reconciliation between the two nations. For Gomulka, this was an unacceptable interference by the Church in foreign affairs, “even more resented since the communist authorities had used the threat of West German revanchism as one of their key arguments to defend communist rule in Poland and of Poland’s alliance with USSR.”⁵⁴

In 1968, the country was in turmoil because of the clash between state and the church during Poland's millennium celebrations in 1966. The student strikes on March 1968, and the anti-Semitic campaign bunched by the Party in 1968 were the main symptoms. By 1968, the country was in turmoil again. Anti-Russian feelings grew until student riots broke out in Warsaw and Krakow. Gomulka found himself under pressure from the repressive nationalist "Partisan" faction led by Mieczyslaw Moczar. This faction was “anti-German”, “anti-Ukrainian”, and “anti-Semitic”. He got Soviet backing by allowing Polish armed forces

⁵³ Biskupski, Mieczyslaw B., pp. 136-137.

⁵⁴ Jerzy Lukowsky and Hubert Zawadzki, p. 264.

to take part in the August 1968 Warsaw Pact repression of the Czechoslovak attempt to create a more humane socialist system⁵⁵. The ensuing student protests, first in Warsaw and then in most university towns, were met with a violent police response and thousands of arrests.

In December 1970, "the PZPR faced another major crisis, provoked in great measure by its own ineptitudes; by the increasing burden of subsidies and by a succession of agricultural failures."⁵⁶ In the 1970s, West German Chancellor Willy Brandt followed an *Ostpolitik* (Eastern policy) that played a vital role in the international politics. He repeatedly emphasized that reconciliation with the East was only possible for a Federal Republic of Germany securely integrated with the West. Moscow soon accepted the offer to negotiate an undertaking that neither the FRG nor the Soviet Union would attack one another. Warsaw, meanwhile, had agreed to talks on Polish-West German relations and both sets of negotiations started early in 1970. They proved difficult but not wholly unpromising. In the Kremlin, however, the desire for better relations with the West gaining the upper hand. The idea was floated of the general Security Conference, which was to meet in Helsinki. However, the western governments stood firmly together in saying that a German settlement had to come first. In August 1970, West Germany and Moscow signed a Treaty of Non-Aggression, with both sides promising to "promote the normalization of the situation in Europe." December 1970 clearly represented a turning point in modern Polish history. Just as the workers' demonstrations became the stepping-stone for the emergence of Solidarity a decade later, "the massive use of the military against the civilian population turned out to be a dress rehearsal for the imposition of a martial law in December 1981"⁵⁷.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 265.

⁵⁶ Millard, Frances, *The Anatomy of the New Poland*, Edwar Elgard Publishing Company, 1994, pp. 1-8.

⁵⁷ Fajfer, Luba, "The Polish Military and the Crisis of 1970", *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 2, June 1993, p. 205.

Gomulka's health deteriorated and on 20 December of 1970, a sudden increase in the price of foodstuffs in December 1970 led to riots in the Baltic cities of Gdansk, Gdynia and Szczecin, which were put down amidst great bloodshed. The fighting spread and led to the replacement of Gomulka by Edward Gierek, who managed to calm down the situation by cancelling the price rises and promising reforms. A policy of rapid industrialisation, based on Western imports and credits, and an artificial rising of living standards began. Gierek aimed to modernize Polish industry and obtained massive credits from Western countries. This was possible due to the Brezhnev-Nixon *détente* of the 1970s. Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev wanted good relations with the U.S. led by President Richard Nixon. This allowed Poland to secure western credits, which resulted in an improvement in the Polish standard of living in the cities, as shown by the number of imported western cars and household appliances. Despite these economic improvements, a decline set in 1974. This was partly due to the rise of oil prices in the West, which led to an economic recession and thus a reduction in orders of Polish-made goods. But the decline was due even more to the continued mismanagement and waste in the state-run economy. At the same time, party leaders enjoyed comfortable life styles, which they no longer bothered to conceal, even though communism preached an egalitarian society.

One can say that the main component of Gierek's regime was the rapid expansion of the economy, fuelled by western credits amounting to 24 billion US\$, and the introduction of modern technology to increase Poland's role in international trade. In the new climate of East-West *détente*, Gierek paid official visits to several western countries, and in return played host in Warsaw to the French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, and the US presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford. But external factors, such as the 1974 oil price rise and rising western interest rates compounded the economic difficulties⁵⁸.

⁵⁸ Lukowsky, Jerzy; Zawadzki, Hubert, p. 269.

In June 1976 the government announced a big price increase. Protests broke out all over the country, especially in the city of Radom and the outside of Warsaw, and were brutally put down. This time however, the workers and the intelligentsia came together and a new dissident movement was born. When strikes broke out again in 1976, the opposition was crushed by force. A group of intellectuals established a Workers Defense Committee (KOR) to stand for oppressed workers. The Committee was treated as an illegal organization. The authorities harassed KOR members but stopped short of using terror. KOR was a small group, as were the other opposition groups. The majority of Poles feared open action against the authorities, but the incompetence of the ruling elite, corruption, lack of prestige and dependence on the USSR deprived it of any legitimacy. Two of KOR's best-known members were Jack Kuron and Adam Michnik, both trained historians and former communists. Others included the literary critic Jan Jozef Lipski and the historian Bronislaw Gieremek. KOR members demanded the rights of freedom of speech, association, and publication on the basis of existing rights in the Polish Constitution, the Helsinki Agreements of August 1975, and international labor agreements. Underground publications were printed without government permission, and the authors signed their names, daring the authorities to come after them. The significance of KOR is still hotly debated by historians. Some see in its members the real masterminds of the Solidarity movement that was to emerge in 1980, while others downplay its role and give more prominence to the autonomous actions of the working class. Still other scholars argue that KOR enjoyed a very prominent position in Polish historical writing, while other groups such as the nationalist Confederation of Independent Poland (KPN) and the various organizations with Catholic and right-of-center ideologies received less attention. Whatever the outcome of this debate, one can safely say that the activities of KOR and other intelligentsia-based organizations of the late 1970s did much to increase the level of political awareness in Polish society⁵⁹.

⁵⁹ Tworzecki, Hubert, *Parties and Politics in Post 89' Poland*, Westview Press, 1996, p. 47.

In 1979, Poland's standard of living declined as compared to 1973. This economic situation caused an underground reaction and some organizations, and an underground education were established. Finally, a large underground press developed in the period 1976-80. This too had precedents in the 1890-1914 and 1939-45 periods of Polish history.

2) The Solidarity Movement

Gierek's government maintained good relations with the Vatican and the Polish Catholic Church. This was due to the end of the economic and social crisis, and also to the activity of the opposition. In 1977, next his U.S. visit, the most important foreign trip by Gierek was to the Vatican to see the Pope, a visit that followed the normalization of church-state relations at home⁶⁰. In October 1978, Karol Wojtyla, Cardinal of Krakow, was elected Pope. All people had hopes that this election would break the wall, which the socialistic system separated Poland from western countries, since 1945. Polish society listened to the new Pope's speeches with great enthusiasm and hopes for a better future. In June 1979, Pope John Paul II visited Poland at a time when the economic crisis was deepening. Thus, his visit was an important prelude to the birth of Solidarity in August 1980. The papal visit had a powerful liberating impact on the Polish national psyche at a time when, despite official propoganda to the contrary, the economic situation continued to deteriorate. In 1980, over four fifths of Poland's income earned from exports went to service the foreign debt. This explains the scale and intensity of the strikes that swept across the country in July 1980.⁶¹ In August, the strikes reached the Lenin Shipyard, Gdansk, where Lech Walesa became the strikers' leader. At the end of August, the Gdansk Agreement established Solidarity as an independent, self-managing trade union. Solidarity began as a trade union movement, but

⁶⁰ Taras, Ray, Poland: Socialist State Rebelious Nation, Westview Press, London, 1986, pp. 81-85.

⁶¹ Lukowsky, Jerzy, Zawadzki, Hubert, p. 272.

this was only one of its aspects because it was also a movement for democratic socialism, a Polish national movement, and a Catholic movement.

Solidarity wanted to democratize the existing communist system by instituting self-government at all levels of economic and public life. In this, it expressed the desires of the vast majority of Poles who wanted to run their own lives. Indeed, Catholicism was part of the Polish identity, and the Catholic Church had worked for human and civil rights in the 1970s. Later, it supported KOR and other dissident movements that paved the way for the Solidarity.

Lech Walesa was a member of the Free Baltic Trade Union and tried to persuade the workers not go back to work, but he failed. On the evening of 16 August 1980, an Interfactory Strike Committee was formed (MKS) in the Lenin Shipyard of Gdansk. The MKS gained over more and more enterprises, not only in other Baltic port cities but also in other parts of the country, especially in Silesia. Its leaders then set up the Provisional Coordinating Commission (TKK) to coordinate action all over the country. A few days later, some intellectuals, mainly from KOR, arrived from Warsaw to offer their help as advisers. The government reacted to these developments by cutting all telephone, rail, road and air communications between Gdansk and the rest of the country, then proposed negotiations. The strike ended on August 31st with the signing of the Gdansk Agreement. Solidarity agreed to recognize "the leading role of the PZPR in the state", and Poland's existing system of international alliances. It also wanted to abolish censorship, but then demanded a law defining it. For the first few months, the country was in a state of euphoria. There was free speech and free elections of leaders in all kinds of civil and institutional organizations, including university chancellors.

August 1980 marked the beginning of a process of change in the PZPR's own structure and functions. It now faced a confident society organized around two institutional structures, the Solidarity and the Catholic Church, whose own mutual relationship was

closely interwoven, if at times uneasily⁶². The government dragged out the negotiations with Solidarity on economic matters and gave the impression that it was unwilling to negotiate. One solution for Solidarity was a proposal to establish a Social Council on the National Economy, which would propose unpopular but much-needed economic measures like price hikes. Solidarity was ready to approve price increases on the condition that they would be part of a larger economic reform. But the government refused and did not allow outside supervision of food stocks⁶³. Solidarity's legal existence in 1980-1981 as an opposition activity was a major exception. Its authorities were elected and internal democracy was practiced in the unions when it was legally recognized. Other opposition movements were not so democratic and were rather based on an authoritarian figure or figures⁶⁴.

In October 1981, Stanislaw Kania replaced the leader of the party, Edward Gierek as leader of the PZPR. In October 1981, because of Solidarity's challenge, Kania was replaced by General Wojciech Jaruzelski who was later the key figure in the decision to impose martial law.

a) Martial Law

In the face of the economic crisis and the growing influence of Solidarity, and under the pressure from the USSR, General Jaruzelski decided to use force. On 13 December 1981, martial law was introduced in the People's Republic of Poland. The public responded to martial law with massive civil resistance. Before a month had passed, tens of underground newspapers and publications appeared. This fact rendered censorship and party propaganda helpless and fruitless and the tragic alienation of the authorities from the people became even

⁶² Macdonald, *op.cit.*, pp. 26-29 as quoted in Millard, Frances, *The Anatomy of the New Poland*, p. 16.

⁶³ Karpinski, Jakub, *Poland since 1944*, Westview Press, 1995, p. 229.

⁶⁴ Karpinski, Jakub, "In Poland, a Long-standing Tradition of Resistance", *Transitions*, Vol. 3, No. 3, 21 February 1997, p. 14.

more evident. Under martial law Jaruzelski's regime placed some restrictions on civil liberties. The regime closed the universities, and imprisoned thousands of Solidarity activists, including Walesa. During the succeeding months, the government undid much of Solidarity's work and finally dissolved the union. Official pressure foiled attempts by Solidarity sympathizers to force the annulment of martial law. By the end of 1982, the regime felt sufficiently secure to set Walesa free, whom it now characterized as the "former leader of a former union." After gradually easing the most onerous features of the state of emergency, Warsaw officially lifted martial law in July 1983, but Jaruzelski and his generals continued to control the most critical party and government posts⁶⁵. After these events, in 1983 Lech Walesa was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. By 1983, the scale of the repressions as well as of the opposition activities was relatively moderate compared to the earlier phase.

Several thousand opposition campaigners were interned, and strikes were broken with the help of the army and special riot police units. On 16 December, nine miners were killed in the Wujek coal mine. Many members of the opposition and underground trade unionists were sentenced to prison terms, others were forced to emigrate⁶⁶. Nevertheless, martial law had not resolved Poland's problems and the Polish economy still could not emerge from the crisis.

Pope John II, during his second visit to Poland in June 1983, expressed his hope for the re-legalization of Solidarity to the ten million Poles who come out to greet him. The people turned to the Church for protection with patriotic demonstrations. One year later, the murder of the popular priest Jerzy Popieluszko in October 1984, by "agents" of the interior ministry backfired badly on the government⁶⁷. Criticism of the regime and the overall public

⁶⁵ U.S. Library of Congress, October 1992, see, <http://countrystudies.us/poland/>

⁶⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, see, <http://www.poland.gov.pl>

⁶⁷ Jerzy Lukowsky and Hubert Zawadzki, p. 278.

mood reached a boiling point. The perpetrators were put on trial, revealing the disintegration of the state apparatus⁶⁸.

Solidarity remained sufficiently active in the 1980s and continued to operate under the leadership of Zbigniew Bujak, who headed a provisional national executive until his arrest in 1986. Although Solidarity was now different, it did provide for the continuity of the Solidarity myth⁶⁹. The dormant situation was broken in 1988 after the experience of the party generated reforms from 1986 to 1988 and in the midst of the dramatic changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Two rounds of industrial strikes centered in the Lenin Shipyard shook Poland in May and August 1988. This time the huge demonstration led to the negotiation between the regime and Solidarity⁷⁰. In 1988, the PZPR's Communist party leaders started negotiations with representatives of the then unofficial opposition.

3) Round Table Negotiations and Elections

The policy of CPSU First Secretary Mikhail S. Gorbachev played an important role in the collapse of communism. He adopted a policy of sustained political and economic openness to the outside world (*glasnost* and *perestroika*). Because of the Poland's economic plight, in early 1988, strikes were started again in Gdansk and elsewhere by Solidarity and Walesa, and Jaruzelski took the momentous step of beginning round table talks with the trade union and with the other opposition groups.

The 1989 roundtable talks between the authorities and the opposition were arranged and held with the mediation of the Church. They were helped by a favorable international

⁶⁸ Polonia Today Online, see, <http://www.poloniatoday.com/history13.htm>

⁶⁹ Millard, Frances, *The Anatomy of the New Poland*, p. 22.

⁷⁰ Lee, Hongsub, "Transition to Democracy in Poland", *East European Quarterly*, Vol. 35, No. 1, March 2001, p. 98.

situation, namely Gorbachev's policy in the USSR and the support of the Western states for reforms in Poland. During the roundtable talks, the PZPR discussed the possibility of sharing power with Solidarity. To get support for crucial economic reforms and try to preserve communist control, it agreed to the legalization of Solidarity, freedom of speech, and partially free general elections.

The semi-free elections took place on 4 June 1989. Two-thirds of the seats in the *Sejm* were allotted to the Communist Party and its allies, while one-third were contested electorally. In the resurrected Senate, 100 electoral seats were contested⁷¹. In return, the PZPR was allowed to select the first occupant of the newly created post of president. The elections brought a victory to Solidarity. It was clear that the Communist Party would not be able to continue to govern in the face of such massive opposition from the people. The election proved to be the first key move toward the dismantling of the communist system in east-central Europe.

On 3 July 1989, Gorbachev's envoy made the momentous announcement that Poland was free to determine the form of its own government, and on 19 July, Jaruzelski was elected president; ten days after later he resigned from his post of Party secretary⁷². On 29 July 1989, the Parliament changed the country's name and constitution and the Polish United Worker's Party was dissolved in January 1990, simultaneously turning itself into a new, more "liberal" party, the Social Democracy of the Republic of Poland (SdRP). The United Peasants' Party (ZSL) transformed itself into the Polish Peasants' Party (PSL), a name change that meant to put some distance between it and its communist era past⁷³.

⁷¹ Derleth, S. William, p. 273.

⁷² Jerzy Lukowsky and Hubert Zawadzki, p. 279.

⁷³ Tworzecki, Hubert, p. 53.

B) External Dynamics

1) USSR

Eastern Europe was central to Soviet foreign and defence policy throughout the Cold War. After World War II and especially from 1947 on, the Soviet military and security forces, together with the local communist elites, built up the most integrated alliance system of the Cold War period. Soviet state institutions of control also helped to reorganize the military and security forces of the states devastated by World War II. Their aim was to secure communist regimes in postwar Eastern Europe dedicated to defend the Soviet Union's western frontiers.

From 1944 to approximately 1954, the Soviet Union played a dominant role, first instance by supporting the Communist Party in Poland. The USSR was the key international actor, establishing the post-World War I Curzon line as Poland's eastern boundary with the Allied powers at Teheran in 1943, acting as the guarantor of a "united democratic regime" at Yalta in February 1945, and fixing the western boundary on the Oder-Neisse line at Potsdam in August of that year. Indeed, the whole experiment in Polish socialism has often been seen as the result of an external revolution, imposed upon Poland and moulded by the strategic, economic and ideological interests of the Soviet Union⁷⁴.

In international affairs, Poland's membership of the Soviet Bloc had profound consequences. First, as the cold-war unfolded in the late 1940s, Poland's association with Moscow caused it to follow the Soviet lead in rejecting participation in the Marshall Plan. This clearly delayed Poland's economic recovery and forced it to form a closer relationship with Moscow. Second, bloc membership disrupted Polish commercial patterns away from

⁷⁴ Millard, Frances, *The Anatomy of the New Poland*, pp. 1-8.

their natural links to the West. The fact that Poland's major trading partner both before World War II and after 1994 had been Germany speaks for itself. Poland's integration into the Soviet security system, the Warsaw Pact, formed in 1955 as a counter-move to West Germany's entrance into the NATO, required Warsaw to spend vast resources on its military in order to contribute to Soviet imperial needs and put an enormous strain on its weak and rebuilding economy⁷⁵.

The relationship between Stalin and the Polish communists was both one of dependency and reciprocity. Both sides had common aims and served each other's purposes. However, the Polish communists did not simply sit uneasily on top of a hostile society. In the Cold War period, there was a general tightening of Soviet control over Eastern Europe and a great push towards uniformity followed the rejection of the Marshall Plan at Stalin's insistence. "Stalinism never achieved complete control over Polish society, however, it was less violent in Poland than elsewhere and in marked ways less successful and anti Soviet and anti-Russian sentiments remained pervasive."⁷⁶

After Stalin's death in March 1953, the Soviet Union intervened less directly in Poland's domestic politics, although it still determined the broad military, economic and political framework within which the PZPR operated. "The Stalinist legacy of central planning and mechanisms of party control remained dominant, but was also influenced by bouts of social assertiveness, which punctuated the developments of the next thirty years."⁷⁷ After 1953, Stalin's powerful personal influence was removed and the successive Soviet governments had to find something else to replace Stalin's direct control. One of the solutions was the creation of the Warsaw Treaty Organization that would also serve the purpose of substituting for Stalin's control of Eastern Europe. De-stalinization began in 1954

⁷⁵ Biskupski, Mieczyslaw B., p. 132.

⁷⁶ Millard, Frances, *The Anatomy of the New Poland*, pp. 1-8.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* idem.

but it was given its greatest impetus by Nikita Khrushchev's secret speech of 1956. The first major test of Khrushchev's policy of peaceful coexistence was the Polish rebellion of 1956. After the workers' protest in Poznan, in 1956, a new national reconciliation appeared possible. In October 1956, Gomulka gave a speech calling for stronger ties with the Soviet Union, because Poland remained under the security umbrella of the USSR.

In 1957, Polish foreign minister Adam Rapacki submitted a proposal to the United Nations calling for a ban on all nuclear weapons in Central Europe that is in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the two German states. The plan doubtlessly coincided with Soviet security interests and may have even been inspired by the Kremlin; nonetheless, its acceptance by the West, would have strengthened Poland's international status in Europe. It would have also reversed the trend toward the establishment of rival military political and economic blocs in Europe. Moreover, West Germany had begun a process of remilitarization, and the Adenauer government continued to insist on a revision of Poland's western border running along the Oder-Neisse rivers. A U.S. acceptance of the Rapacki plan would have permitted Poland to improve its political relations with the West and might have decreased its isolation in and dependence on the Soviet camp, in a more modest way than had occurred with Yugoslavia. For the West, the problem with the Rapacki plan was that it would have greatly enhanced the Soviet Union's strategic position if Central Europe had to be defended by conventional forces alone; the USSR had significant military superiority in that regard. Accordingly, the United States and West Germany rejected this plan as well as a subsequent modified version of it, called the Gomulka plan⁷⁸. Even so, the rejected Rapacki Plan was an important landmark in post-1945 Polish diplomatic history. First it was a real Polish proposal, not one in which Poland served as a "front" for the Kremlin. Second, the plan explicitly linked Poland's security and future to the three other Central European states (the two Germanies and Czechoslovakia), rather than to either the West or the Soviet

⁷⁸ Taras, Ray, *Poland: Socialist State Rebelious Nation*, pp. 81-85.

Union. "Although the Soviet Union nominally supported Rapacki's initiative, the Western reaction encouraged Moscow to tighten its grip on Eastern Europe."⁷⁹

The acceptance of Poland as a legitimate member of the Soviet bloc also helped to improve trade relations. Polish industrial development was greatly hampered by the shortage of investment capital and foreign exchange with which Western equipment could be bought, and the creation of the European Economic Community (EEC) seemed to make trade with the West even more difficult. Gomulka turned to the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) as a possible solution of the problem. He criticized the organization at a meeting of the PZRP Central Committee, just before the Thirteenth Session of the CMEA in June 1960 was stressing co-operation in the important investment sector. Gomulka succeeded in winning over Khrushchev to his point of view, and the initiative for the integration of the CMEA was launched as a Soviet proposal. Khrushchev proposed a scheme for a central allocation of investments within the organization so that the needs of the members could be better met by specialization in certain lines of production by individual countries which had favourable conditions to develop them. Gomulka believed that the scarce Western currency resources of the Soviet bloc ought to be used for the benefit of the bloc. After consultations with the other Comecon countries and, as he claimed in September 1967, with the prior support of Eastern Germany and Bulgaria, Gomulka put forward a proposal for the reform of the CMEA at a meeting of communist leaders in Moscow in 1967. He spoke about the force of the technological revolution of the twentieth century and the need of the socialist countries to follow the capitalist example on the road to integration. Brezhnev's response was cool and according to him the problem was one which required long-term planning⁸⁰.

⁷⁹ Prizel, Ilya, *National Identity and Foreign Policy*, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 87.

⁸⁰ Leslie, R.F. (ed.), pp. 381-393.

Writing in *Kultura* in 1967, Juliusz Mieroszewski made several observations concluded that “an independent Poland is necessary for the Poles, but not for Europe.” Therefore, if Poland were to regain its independence, it would have to restructure completely both its image of itself and its role within the international system. If it tried again to play a role of defending Europe against Russia, Poland would never assume any importance in Europe. Russia was simply far more significant to the west than Poland could ever be. Instead, Poland should exploit its position as both a Roman Catholic and a Slavic state and serve as a bridge between Russia and the West. It should devote its energies to “Europeanizing” Russia, since only such a process would enable Poland to escape its fate as a Russian satellite or prevent it from becoming the object of Russo-German competition. Mieroszewski argued, “Poland must win a peace with Russia because it cannot win a war”.⁸¹

When the Polish government showed signs of responding positively to West German Chancellor Willy Brandt’s *Ostpolitik* in 1969, the Soviet Union insisted that it would be the first to sign a treaty before its client states could go ahead. In August 1970, Brezhnev and Brandt ratified a pact mutually renouncing the use of force, and in December, Gomulka was finally able to conclude his own agreement, which included the Federal German Republic’s recognition of Poland’s western frontier. This treaty was the most significant foreign policy achievement and legacy of Gomulka.

In 1970, a close relationship was established between Gierek and Brezhnev. Both leaders paid particular attention to the relations with West Germany, which soon became their most important trading partner in the West. Just as Brezhnev met regularly with the U.S. presidents, Gierek’s visit was the first postwar official visit by a Polish leader to Washington⁸². (Breznev wanted the USSR to catch up in armaments with the U.S., while

⁸¹ Prizel, Ilya, *National Identity and Foreign Policy*, p. 95.

⁸² Taras, Ray, *Poland: Socialist State Rebelious Nation*, Westview Press, London, 1986, pp. 81-85.

Nixon wanted to play off the USSR against China and vice versa.) The mid-1970s also saw the re-emergence of political tensions, notably over proposals to amend the Polish constitution. Because of protests by intellectuals and Church leaders, the most controversial proposal, stressing Poland's "eternal and inviolable ties with the USSR"⁸³, was modified. "The new provision only stressed 'friendship and cooperation' with the USSR and other socialist states."⁸⁴

Another major crisis in Poland occurred with the rise of the independent labor union, Solidarity in 1980. The leaders of Solidarity were demanding deep and significant reforms of the Polish economic system. By themselves, these reforms might not have seemed particularly dangerous as they were concerned primarily with getting the failing Polish economy back into working order. However, in the minds of the Soviet leaders, who still bore much of the Stalinist obsession with having total control over all aspects of life, Solidarity was a clear and immediate threat to them. The mere fact that Solidarity was an independent organization created by the workers themselves, rather than being an organ of the Polish government, made it particularly dangerous. If the Polish government were to accept Solidarity's demands, thus recognizing the independent trade union as a legitimate organization, the peoples of the other East European nations or even of the Soviet Union itself could easily see this as a signal that they would be allowed to create independent organizations of their own. Because of the fear of losing control, the prospect of a stable but reformed Poland would pose certain risks for the Soviet Union, particularly in the area of maintaining political and ideological unity within the Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO). Thus the Soviet government decided that strong action was warranted in order to crush the Solidarity movement and restore Soviet-style governmental control. Several times during the period of Solidarity, the Soviet Union carried out military exercises, either alone or jointly with WTO forces. These military exercises would serve the political function of displaying

⁸³ Millard, Frances, *The Anatomy of the New Poland*, pp. 1-8.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*idem

to the Poles the power at the disposal of the Soviet Union. In addition, the Soviet Union sent a number of high-ranking Soviet officials to hold talks with the Polish government.

On December 5, 1981, a summit of the leaders of the WTO was held with several delegates from the Polish government in attendance. It is almost certain that a large part of the discussions at this summit dealt with the crisis in Poland, and with preparations for possible joint the WTO action to suppress the Solidarity movement. The final statement of the summit bore this out, stating that Poland would remain a socialist nation and a member of the WTO, and promising the "fraternal aid" of the other WTO members in preserving its socialist system. In Soviet parlance, a promise of "fraternal aid" was usually best interpreted as a veiled threat of military intervention. On 8 December 1981, US President Jimmy Carter, concerned about the course of events in Poland, sent a message to Brezhnev which apparently, Brezhnev did not answer. On 13 December, 1981, because of the economic crisis and the growing influence of Solidarity, and under pressure from the USSR, General Wojciech Jaruzelski introduced the Martial Law in Poland.

The process of a comprehensive re-evaluation of Polish-Soviet relations was set in motion shortly after Mikhail Gorbachev became first Secretary of the CPSU. On 27 April, 1985, only days after the April Plenum that forewarned major changes in Soviet socio-economic development, Gorbachev and Polish First Party Secretary Jaruzelski met in Warsaw to discuss economic, scientific and technological cooperation between Poland and the USSR. The two leaders stressed the need to develop multifaceted contacts between their peoples. According to Polish reports, it was at this meeting that the "need to explain some aspects in the area of Polish-Soviet relations"⁸⁵ was raised.

⁸⁵ Trybuna Robotnicza, 01 May 1987 quoted as in Szayna, Thomas S., "Addressing 'Blank Spots' in Polish-Soviet Relations", Problems of Communism, November / December 1988, pp. 38-39.

The need to maintain stability at all costs was also emphasized at a US-Soviet meeting in Washington on the eve of Gorbachev's visit to Poland. Ever since the first Nixon-Brezhnev summit in Moscow in May 1972, American, and Soviet specialists would meet annually to discuss developments in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. East Central Europe was conspicuously absent as an object of discussion until early 1988 when the Soviets specifically requested a meeting to analyze the situation in the region. The well-known economist Oleg Bogomolov, one of Gorbachev's close advisers led the Soviet delegation, automatically raising the significance of the meeting. Bogomolov was the director of the Institute of the Economy of World Socialist System, an important source of new foreign policy ideas⁸⁶. The Gorbachev administration gave an impetus the US-Soviet relations with the new foreign policy concept. As a result, those events affected the Soviet-Polish relations because during the communist era, there was lack of credibility in Poland towards the Soviet regime and domination. Anti-Russian feelings have been at the heart of Polish nationalism. These feelings, plus the history of Soviet trampling on Polish sovereignty (especially under Stalin) and the role that Polish communists have played in it, have been major obstacles to popular acceptance of communist rule in Poland. The accession of Gorbachev to power and "the resulting Soviet reforms, which led to a re-evaluation of the history of the Soviet Union and the discrediting of its Stalinist structures, offered the Jaruzelski regime an opportunity to win some credibility in Poland."⁸⁷

a) Council For Mutual Economic Aid (CMEA)

The communist political system created the communist economies, but the system did not include the simultaneous integration of external economic relations for the region.

⁸⁶ Levesque, 1997, p.46 quoted as in Karbonski, Andrzej, "East Central Europe on the eve of the changeover: the case of Poland", *Communist and Post-communist Studies*, Vol. 32, 1999, p. 147.

⁸⁷ Thomas S.Szayna, "Addressing "Blank Spots" in Polish-Soviet Relations", *Problems of Communism*, Nov/ Dec. 1988, p. 59.

The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) was established in 1949 as an East European version of the European Common Market. Prior to the creation of a communist "Common Market" termed the CMEA, the USSR had already become Poland's principal trading partner and supplier of capital and machinery. Poland's role in the Council's general division of labor was to specialize in certain sectors while renouncing the development of others. "Such arrangements inhibited Poland's overall economic growth."⁸⁸

The CMEA never became a multilaterally-organized mini Common Market but remained a collection of states whose trade with one another was regulated by bilateral treaties⁸⁹. The economic transformations had a similar character, involving agricultural reforms, banks, the nationalization of transport and industry, and also the introduction of monopoly in foreign trade in all communist countries. Moreover, the first plans related to social and political developments were almost similar. The communist countries accepted the USSR's concept regarding building the foundations of socialism, which led to the introduction of a uniform system of the economic plans. The processes of industrialization, electrification, and creating productive co-operatives in the villages, which took place in 1949 - 1955, were similar everywhere. The process of socializing the villages proved to be the most difficult. In all countries, the peasants for a long time did not accept collectivization and the progress of collectivization differed countries.

After turning down of the Marshall plan, the USSR and communist countries opted for new economic contacts. In January 1949, the representatives of Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Rumania, Hungary and the USSR called into being the CMEA in Moscow. The council was open to all the countries, which would accept the principles of co-operation. Meetings were held a few times each year at which very important decisions were

⁸⁸ Castle, Marjorie; Taras, Ray, p. 33-34.

⁸⁹ Barany, Zoltan; Volgyes, Ivan (eds.), "The Economic Legacies of Communism" in Volgyes, Ivan, *The Legacies of Communism in Eastern Europe*, The John Hopkins University Press, 1995, p. 46.

made. In 1959, the CMEA adopted a new statute and the scope of co-operation was radically widened, limiting the economic independence of the member states. Prior to the creation of this communist "Common Market", the USSR had already become Poland's principal trading partner and supplier of capital and machinery.

b) Warsaw Treaty Organizations (WTO)

This organization was created because the project to militarize the Federal Republic of Germany caused a feeling of anxiety in the communist countries. In December 1954 during a conference held in Moscow, the communist countries warned West Germany not to become a member of NATO. However, in May 1955, the FRG was admitted to this organization. In response, the representatives of Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic (GDR), Poland, Rumania, Hungary, and the USSR signed in Warsaw a "contract related to friendship, co-operation and mutual aid" called the Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO).

Poland's foreign policy objective was the same as the Soviet objective: full integration into the various institutions created by the Soviet Union, the most important of these being the military alliance of the Warsaw Pact⁹⁰. The Warsaw Treaty Organization provided the Soviets with a way of containing the growing movements toward nationalism in the East European armies which began after the death of Stalin. Through the WTO, the Soviet military became the final guarantor of the stability and even the very existence of the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe. However, the Soviet Union could also use the Warsaw Pact to limit the freedom of action of those very same regimes. If they wanted any degree of internal autonomy, the East European nations had to fulfil their military

⁹⁰ Castle, Marjorie; Taras, Ray, p. 33-34.

obligations under the Warsaw Treaty Organization⁹¹. For instance, when Gomulka sent troops to Czechoslovakia in 1968, it was apparently in order to show Moscow that Poland was still the Soviet Union's faithful ally⁹². Furthermore, the Soviets sought as much as possible to weave the command structures of the East European national military forces into the WTO's control system in order to reduce their potential for autonomous action. Through the agencies and joint activities of the WTO, the Soviet Defense Ministry was systematically linked to its counterparts in the various East European nations. These linkages provided many opportunities for the Soviet military command to exert considerable pressure on the leadership of the militaries of the various "allied" nations. In addition, the educations of the officers of the various national militaries were largely supervised by the Soviet Union. For example, almost all Polish flag officers attended Soviet service academies and spoke Russian. By being trained in Soviet service academies, Polish officers were heavily exposed to the might of the Soviet military, and were thus more likely to regard any hope of resisting it and seeking a separate path for Poland as being utterly futile. Through these various means, the Soviet Union established a powerful link to the military forces of their various East European allies, which it was able to use to its advantage in order to manipulate the activities of these military forces.

The historical record shows the ways in which the Soviet Union could use the WTO as a tool to influence and shape Polish domestic policy. First, the WTO served as a vehicle for facilitating visits of important Soviet military officials to the government in Warsaw. Such visits enabled the Soviets to bring their views on the situation at hand directly to the Polish government. Secondly, the alliance served as a convenient tool for covertly applying more direct military pressure on the Polish government and people. The Soviets were able to use military maneuvers to remind the Poles of the sort of military might which was at the

⁹¹ Terry, Sarah Meiklejohn, *Soviet Policy in Eastern Europe*, New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1984, pp. 259-260.

⁹² Dziewanowski, M. K., *The Communist Party of Poland*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1976, pp. 150-155.

disposal of Moscow, should it feel that the situation warranted bringing it to bear against Poland. Also, these maneuvers could serve as a cover for bringing further Soviet troops into Poland beyond those normally garrisoned there. Finally, the maneuvers could serve as a cover for taking actual action against disturbances, as was the case during the Polish October of 1956. These various political functions made the WTO a convenient tool for the Soviets to manipulate Polish domestic policy. By skillful use of the WTO, the Soviet government was able to ensure that Poland would continue on a course favorable to Soviet interests, without having to resort to the actual use of military force, something which would bring censure from the West.

The transition to democracy in Eastern Europe was caused by the rise of Gorbachev. In addition, pressure from the US and the Western countries in the sphere of human rights had a great effect on democratization⁹³. In 1991, as a result of the collapse of communism in East Central Europe, the WTO was also terminated.

2) Germany

When analyzing the foreign policy of West Germany in the context of its eastern policies, one must mention three important statesmen: Konrad Adenauer, Willy Brandt and Helmut Kohl.

The Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) was created in 1949 out of the post-1945 British, French, and American zones of occupation in Germany. At the same time, the German Democratic Republic (GRD) was established in the zone occupied by the Soviet Union. Konrad Adenauer became the first Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany on 15 September 1949. He held power for the next fourteen years and during that time

⁹³ Lee, Hongsub, "Transition to Democracy in Poland", *East European Quarterly*, Vol. 35, No. 1, March 2001, p. 100.

played an important role in restoring good relations with France and the United States. However, he refused to recognize the legal existence of the GDR and pursued a policy promoting integration into the western alliances. In 1952, the FRG joined the European Coal and Steel Community, in 1957, it became a founding member of the European Community and in 1955, the FRG joined NATO and rearmed. Germany invested a lot of effort into improving its relations with its neighbours. In response, the government of GDR signed the Warsaw Treaty with the Soviet Bloc countries.

With East-West *détente* at the end of the 1960s, West German foreign policy was able to take a new direction. The new center-left government initiated an *Ostpolitik* (Eastern policy) of more relaxed relations with the East that greatly enhanced Germany's scope for international action. "The Federal Republic settled into a *modus vivendi* in Europe."⁹⁴

As Adenauer said:

We should also look eastwards when we think of Europe. Those countries, with their rich European past, are part of Europe too. They must also be given the opportunity to accede. Europe must be large; it must have strength and influence, so that it can have its interests accepted on the international political stage.⁹⁵

Adenauer went to the USSR in September 1955 after a general strike was announced in East Germany. During his meeting with the Soviet leaders, it was decided to restore diplomatic relations between the USSR and the FRG. There were also negotiations with the GDR delegation. Afterward, it was agreed that the border police of the GDR would take control of the transit traffic between the FRG and West Berlin as of 1 December 1955. On 13 August 1961, the government of East Germany built the Berlin Wall, which was to separate

⁹⁴ German Council on Foreign Relations' website, see, http://www.dgap.org/english/tip/tip0301/book1_p.htm

⁹⁵ Poettering, Hans Gert, "Konrad Adenauer's policy on Europe", EPP-ED Group in the European Parliament Research-documentation-Publications Servic, see <http://www.epp-ed.org>

East and West Berlin for 28 years. The East German communists were convinced that the Berlin Wall would unite their nation. East Germany's society, isolated from the world, turned into a "socialist German nation" while West German policy ignored the existence of the GDR. In 1958, Gomulka secured the recognition of the Oder-Neisse line by the GDR. The two states had disagreed on this subject, but confidential discussions had taken place in 1960 about the establishment of diplomatic relations. In 1963, the two countries exchanged trade missions. "Fears of weakening the Polish position in future negotiations perhaps explain the ire of the Polish government when Cardinal Wyzsynski proposed a Polish-German rapprochement at the end of the 1965."⁹⁶ In 1965, the Polish bishops asked forgiveness for the wrongs done to Germans expelled at the end of World War II. For Gomulka it was an unacceptable interference.

Afterward, Willy Brandt became Foreign Minister in the Federal Republic of Germany in 1966 and he developed *Ostpolitik*. In 1969, Brandt became the Chancellor of West Germany. He continued his policy of reconciliation between eastern and western Europe and in 1970 negotiated an agreement with the Soviet Union accepting the status of Berlin. He also signed the Basic Treaty with the German Democratic Republic. On 17 May 1969, Gomulka suddenly proposed to the FRG a treaty based upon the recognition of the Oder-Neisse frontier alone. The GDR was not unnaturally displeased by Poland's dropping the second condition of recognition and East German leaders expressed their disapproval. Gomulka's proposal had followed closely upon the deferment of his plan for integration by the CMEA executive council. It is possible that failure by the East German leaders to support his plan was one reason for the change in the Polish attitude. The response of the Brandt government to Gomulka's proposal was favourable, and discussions on the normalization of relations began in February 1970⁹⁷.

⁹⁶ Leslie, R.F. (ed.), pp. 395-396.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 396.

In December 1970, the FRG signed a treaty with Poland recognizing the western border of Poland. It also paid the Polish communist government 150 million marks for war damages and gave Warsaw additional credits of 1 billion marks. The Polish government subsequently let 200.000 ethnic Germans emigrate to the West Germany. Simultaneously, a joint commission worked on writing history textbooks that both sides could agree was fair⁹⁸.

If we look back at the history, we can see the source of the emigration. In the years from 1944 to 1949, Germans and Poles who had been living in the eastern territories of both countries were forcibly and permanently removed from their homelands. 2.1 million people from the eastern territories, Eastern Europe, and eastern Poland who had previously been deported to Siberia, were moved to Poland by 1948. After the August 1939 Hitler-Stalin Pact, that is the fourth partition of Poland, eastern Poles suffered first at the hands of the Soviets after the Red Army marched into the eastern half of Poland on 17 September 1939. Then in the autumn of 1944, the Soviets started to expel eastern Poles from their homes. Poles had lived for centuries among Lithuanians, Belorussians, Ukrainians, and Jews in eastern Poland, which they regarded as their homeland. "The Treaty of Potsdam in July 1945 attempted to provide for the humane and organized transfer of the German populace."⁹⁹ In these years, official propaganda was negative towards Germans and found an echo in the Polish Church. The chairman of the Polish Peasant Party (PSL), Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, stated in 1946: "If someone is German, his place is in Germany, not in our country."¹⁰⁰ This German phobia continued until the fall of the Iron Curtain and many leaders including

⁹⁸ Pond, Elizabeth, "A Historic Reconciliation with Poland", *Transition*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 9 February 1996, p. 9.

⁹⁹ Ther, Philipp, "The Integration of Expellees in Germany and Poland after World War 2: A Historical Reassessment", *Slavic Review*, Vol. 55, No. 4, Winter 1996, pp. 779-786.

¹⁰⁰ Lebioda, Tadeusz, "Poland, die Vertriebenen, and the road to integration with the European Union" in Ordell, Karl, *Poland and the EU*, Routledge, 2000, p. 166.

Gomulka shared the same feeling. These communist leaders also sought to strengthen and legitimise communist rule by enhancing anti-German sentiment.

In the 1970s, after the signing on 7 December 1970 of the Treaty on the Mutual Renunciation of Force with the German Federal Republic, relations between Poland and the FRG became friendlier and the new government of Edward Gierek softened the tone of anti-German propaganda. With the growth of Solidarity movement, in the 1980s the issue of expellees began to change in some meaningful way and more and more Poles began to call for an improvement in German-Polish relations¹⁰¹. The early trust in West German sympathy was strengthened as the Warsaw government outlawed Solidarity and declared Martial Law in 1981, and West Germans flooded Poland with donations of food and clothing¹⁰².

The new chancellor Helmut Kohl had two ideals. As head of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) government, he had championed states' rights in the face of Brandt's centralization of power in Bonn. Second, he fully shared Adenauer's policy of tying West Germany to the Common Market and NATO. On 23 June 1983, Kohl announced that the relations with the East would be tougher, more realistic, and less charitable. He proclaimed that "there is only one German nation." Finally, Kohl suggested that a unified Germany should join an integrated Europe. "We need European unification, just as the peoples of Europe need the elimination of the division of Germany." Although he had been an early critic of Brandt's eastern policy, his foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher (a refugee from East Germany) strongly pursued an eastern policy after 1982. Whereas Kohl initially distrusted the reforms of Mikhail Gorbachev in the Soviet Union, comparing the Soviet leader to Nazi propaganda Chief Joseph Goebbels, Genscher eventually asked his partners in London, Paris, and Washington to take Gorbachev and his reforms seriously. By

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 170.

¹⁰² Pond, Elizabeth, "A historic Reconciliation with Poland", p. 9.

the 1980s, "it became apparent that West Germany's eastern policy was in deadlock and it that it would not be able to succeed without a fundamental change in the structure of international relations."¹⁰³

In November 1989, the Berlin Wall was broken down and on 4 October 1990, the GDR was reunited with the FRG. Helmut Kohl faithfully achieved Konrad Adenauer's ideal of German unity within a unifying Europe. Adenauer had seen no problem in pressing ahead on integration, even though it tended to make the resolution of the German question more difficult in the short term, because he was quicker than others to recognise that German unity was not possible without a European unification. In 1989, many changes also took place in both Poland and the other countries of the region, and an independent Polish foreign policy began to develop. In the 1990 "two plus four" negotiations, the external aspects of German unification were debated. Poland was invited to participate and in the end, Poland's western borders were recognized by the four Allied powers and Germany. The border was again acknowledged by the Polish-German border agreement of 14 November 1990, and in the Polish-German Treaty on Good Neighborly Relations and Friendly Cooperation of 17 June 1991, settling the issue on a bilateral basis¹⁰⁴. Germany's particular obligation in the East was to bring Poland into the European integration process as soon as possible. Because the eastward enlargement of the European Union was to be another step in the development of peace and security for Europe.

¹⁰³ Zaborowski, Marcin, "Poland, Germany and EU Enlargement", Center for European Integration Studies, Discussion Paper, 1999, p. 8.

¹⁰⁴ Micgiel, John S., "In the Shadow of the Second Republic" in Prizel, Ilya and Andrew A. Michta (eds.), *Polish Foreign Policy Reconsidered*, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1995, p. 15.

2) Transatlantic Ties (US and NATO, interactions with USSR)

The U.S is one of the biggest ally of Poland and when looking into the details of postwar Polish history, one can realise the role of the U.S behind important Polish events like the Solidarity movement. In the Cold War era, Poland was a satellite of the Soviet Union so it is important to follow the interactions between Russia and the U.S to obtain the whole picture.

The American response to the perceived Soviet threat of world domination has varied since 1946. In the beginning, the American policy was one of "containment," first stated by U.S. diplomat and Soviet expert George F. Kennan in a 1947 article in *Foreign Affairs* entitled "The Sources of Soviet Conduct." He argued that Soviet expansionism might be contained by a strategy of responding to Soviet pressures. This policy appeared to the USSR as one more Western effort to isolate and undermine the Soviet system and the Kremlin adopted a strategy of retaliation against U.S. containment. In 1949, tension between the Soviet Union and the West continued to rise. The Western powers entered into a military agreement leading to the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), designed to establish a military counterweight to the Soviet forces in Europe. NATO, from a British perspective later put forth by NATO's first Secretary-General, Lord Ismay, "was designed to keep the Soviets out, the Americans in, and the Germans down."¹⁰⁵ NATO was a political instrument because it was a collective security organization. But NATO was not primarily aimed at solving the political problems of Europe¹⁰⁶. The U.S. accepted the leadership role on the continent and took the lead in Europe by its' political and economical potential. During the Cold War, European security was guaranteed by the United States through NATO. After the death of Stalin, the Warsaw Pact was established in May 1955 as a

¹⁰⁵ Pond, Elizabeth, *The Rebirth of Europe*, Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 2002, p. 23.

¹⁰⁶ Matei, Sorein, "Nato as an Instrument of American Foreign Policy", 1994, see, <http://www.matei.org/research/nato.html>

response to NATO's admission and the first postwar summit meeting of Soviet and Western leaders was held in Geneva in July 1955.

After the consolidation of power by Nikita Khrushchev in 1956, the USSR embarked on two new strategies. The first involved economic and military competition with the United States for influence in Arab and Third World countries. The second strategy was to divide the Western powers by renewing Soviet pressure to expel the West from Berlin. A new round of Soviet-American confrontations followed, with both sides now possessing nuclear weapons. Khrushchev's new policy had a great impact on Poland. In October 1956, Poland became the first country to challenge Moscow's hegemony and its communist government was in crisis. After this crisis, Gomulka was made the first secretary of the party and relations with the United States began to improve. In this case, Gomulka's rise to power was an example of a limited "self-liberation" process, which was to be sustained by American economic aid. According to John Kennedy, this aid was "too little and too late"¹⁰⁷ but was based on the belief that an American initiative could affect an evolution toward freedom and democracy.

Continuing American aid to Poland was periodically questioned by the US Congress, which wanted to see political results follow economic largesse, creating problems for the White House. In 1960, the election of President Kennedy and his style in politics pleased the Poles. Bridge building under President Lyndon Johnson emphasized trade, the free flow of ideas, visitors, and humanitarian aid. Still, by 1968 political overtures and initiatives toward Poland fell more to the Germans and the French.

¹⁰⁷ John F. Kennedy: Address to the Economic Club of New York, 14 December 1962, see, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jfkeconomicclubaddress.html>

During the 1960s, a return to a policy of full and unquestioning support for Soviet foreign policy objectives and anti-Semitic feelings in Poland caused bilateral relations to slow down. U.S.-Polish relations improved significantly after Gierek succeeded Gomulka and expressed his interest in improving relations with the U.S. A consular agreement was signed in 1972, and in 1974 Gierek became the first Polish communist leader to visit the U.S. Among other things, the visit demonstrated that both sides wanted to promote better relations. Gierek aimed to modernize Polish industry and obtained massive credits from Western countries. In the earlier years of the Cold War, the Western powers had little or no incentive behind the Iron Curtain, but the the Brezhnev-Nixon *détente* of the 1970s made the Eastern bloc, and Poland in particular, very sensitive to Western credits and opinion.

Until 1980, Poland and all of east-central Europe were isolated and one can argue that it had become a “forgotten region”. In 1980, Poland figured larger than ever before in the American policy and the public opinion. Threats of a possible Soviet intervention were discussed in Washington; in addition, the White House and the Vatican also discussed this issue. Solidarity and the Catholic Church had an interwoven relationship. When martial law was introduced in Poland on 13 December 1981, western reactions to it were generally negative but differentiated. The action was strongly condemned by the United States. This was particularly due in particular to personal concern on the part of Reagan whose determination to help Poles fitted well with his proclaimed hostility towards the Kremlin. “Although the extent of Reagan’ commitment to aid Poland in collaboration with the Pope was still shrouded in controversy, there was no doubt that the United States provided aid to Solidarity.”¹⁰⁸ Already on 14 December 1981, President Ronald Reagan called Pope John Paul II and assured him of his deep feelings about the situation in Poland¹⁰⁹. Reagan

¹⁰⁸ Karbonski, Andrzej, “East Central Europe on the eve of the changeover: the case of Poland”, p. 145.

¹⁰⁹ Reagan, Ronald, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*, Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1982, p. 1154 quoted as in Roszkowski, Wojciech, “At the Roots of

promised to continue shipments of food to Poles through private channels but imposed economic sanctions against Poland. He announced that he had sent a personal letter to Brezhnev urging him to allow the restoration of basic human rights in Poland and warning that if repression in Poland continued, the United States would take further steps affecting US-Soviet relations.

In conclusion, after the declaration of martial law, the United States had three simple and publicly acknowledged goals: to obtain the lifting of martial law, to gain the release of all political prisoners, and to achieve the resumption of an open dialogue between the Communist government, Solidarity, and the Catholic Church. Throughout the 1980's the U.S. government worked to fund, equip, and morally support Solidarity.

On 11 January 1982, the North Atlantic Council recommended to its member-countries to impose sanctions on Poland but only a few of them followed suit. Even so, the martial law authorities of Poland were largely isolated. Despite the lifting of martial law and a limited amnesty for political prisoners in 1983, relations with the United States did not improve. In the mid-1980s, Warsaw's determined efforts to prove its loyalty to the Soviet Union made rapprochement with Washington impossible¹¹⁰. Jaruzelski delivered a scathing attack against the United States in a 1985 speech at the United Nations. With the rise to power of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985, the situation began to shift dramatically with the startling and rapid political changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. With the cooperation of President Reagan, arms reduction agreements were signed and the new Soviet democratization wave spilled over into the rest of Eastern Europe.

Polish Transformation", Center of Russian and East European Studies, Seminar in University of Virginia, Rethinking Socialism, 23 March 2001.

¹¹⁰ Library of Congress Country Studies, October 1992, see, <http://www.state.gov>

In mid-1986, the Polish government passed a resolution calling for the release of the last political prisoners in a mass amnesty. Following miners' strikes in the summer of 1988, Lech Walesa and Interior Minister Czeslaw Kiszczak met secretly throughout the fall and winter of 1988, opening a Solidarity-government dialogue. In 1988, however, the United States decided to withhold economic aid until Poland reestablished political pluralism.

On 6 February 1989, representatives of the Communist coalition, the Catholic Church, and Solidarity sat down together to negotiate Poland's future. After the Roundtable Agreement, the United States moved quickly to encourage Polish democratic processes and assist economic reform in Poland. Toward this goal, President Bush initially promised economic assistance, and a three-year package totalling US\$1 billion was proposed later in the year¹¹¹. By the end of 1989, communist domination had ended or was seriously eroded in the former Eastern bloc nations. On 9 November 1989, the East German authorities allowed the opening of the Berlin Wall, and the subsequent destruction of large sections of the wall signalled the end of the Cold War. Gorbachev also made it clear to the leaders of the Eastern European communist states that Soviet troops would no longer be available to keep them in power. This policy triggered the rapid collapse of the communist regimes in all of Eastern Europe, starting in Poland, and spreading to the other countries like Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Romania.

Today Poland is a member of the NATO and has a close relationship with the United States. Poland has given support to the U.S in the Iraq conflict and the U.S has supported Poland for membership in the EU. Although the European Union had some suspicions about Poland's big ally and some saw Poland as a "Trojan Horse", this did not have a negative effect on its Union accession process of Poland.

¹¹¹ Ibid. idem.

CHAPTER 2

THE ATTITUDE OF POLISH DOMESTIC POLICY-MAKING INSTITUTIONS AND PROCESSES TOWARDS EASTERN FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY

“During the decades under-communist rule, Polish politics had been viewed either as a war of “them versus us” (“them” understood to be the communists, “us” as the Polish people) or as a game of factional politics and personal ambitions among the communist elite.”¹¹² In the third republic, these perspectives have changed. We need to analyze the political players in the post-communist democracy to understand the domestic policy of Poland.

I. GOVERNMENTS, PARTIES and the POLITICAL SYSTEM

A) Roundtable Accord

More than by any other factors, the shape of the major political spheres of Polish politics has been determined by free and fair elections, presidential (in 1990, 1995, and 2000) and parliamentary (in 1989, 1991, 1993, 1997 and 2001).

The June 1989 elections in Poland played a crucial role in the collapse of communist regimes across Central and Eastern Europe. These elections came about as a result of negotiations between the Polish Communists and the Solidarity-led opposition, finalized by the so-called Roundtable Accord in April 1989. In the elections, Solidarity won all but one of the seats contested. The communists received their allocated seats in the *Sejm*, but none in

¹¹² Castle, Marjorie; Taras, Ray, p. 95.

the Senate. The outcome of this election reflected the high level of political polarization in Poland throughout the 1980's. While the transitional President of the Republic, General Wojciech Jaruzelski was elected indirectly (by the *Sejm* and the Senate, acting as the National Assembly, on 19 July, 1989), his successor was chosen, for the first time in the history of Poland, by a direct popular vote.

As a result of the roundtable accord, the new democracy found itself with a system combining parliamentary government and a president with significant powers. The *Sejm* was the major legislative body, elected through proportional representation, and the executive was a prime minister. "Thus, the most important elections in Poland were parliamentary; both because the *Sejm* majority created the government and because the *Sejm* had the power to facilitate that government's work or bring it down."¹¹³ The make-up of the Polish parties has changed in the new political era. The Social democracy of the Republic of Poland (SdRP), a more "liberal" party created after the Polish United Workers' Party (PZRP), was dissolved in January 1990. The United Peasants' Party (ZSL) transformed itself into the Polish Peasants' Party (PSL), a name change meant to put some distance between it and its communist-era past.

In May and June 1990, strikes and protests were organized in many parts of the country caused by the pain of economic reforms. People close to the government blamed Walesa, criticizing his anti-government rhetoric as irresponsible and provocative¹¹⁴. While it is true that Walesa clearly attempted to use popular discontent for his own political purposes, "he also used his personal prestige to successfully mediate in a number of these protests."¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 96.

¹¹⁴ Tworzecki, Hubert, *Parties and Politics in Post 1989 Poland*, Westview Press, 1996, p. 53.

¹¹⁵ Matyja, B.Zajac, "Przebudowa państwa," p.18 quoted as in Tworzecki, Hubert, p. 53.

B) The 1990 Presidential Elections and the 1991 General Election

President Jaruzelski maintained a low profile in politics and agreed not to interfere with the policy-making process. In fact, he was more concerned about refurbishing his own historical reputation, particularly defending his decision to impose martial law. As the first step toward rectifying this situation, Walesa's supporters called for the resignation of President Jaruzelski and new presidential elections by universal suffrage, followed by fully democratic parliamentary elections. On 12 May 1990, some groups and several extra-parliamentary groupings, led by Jaroslaw Kaczynski, set up the Central Alliance (PC) to support Walesa's presidential candidacy. Owing to Tadeusz Mazowiecki's reluctance to rid the state and the public economic sector of the Communist leftovers, his government was accused by the PC of excessive "left-wing, pro-Communist"¹¹⁶ tendencies. The communists also criticized Solidarity for betraying the basic agreements reached at the Roundtable.¹¹⁷ PC leaders hoped that an intra-Solidarity opposition would undermine the "leftist" (social-liberal) monopoly, thereby allowing more room for alternative ('right-wing', nationalist and pro-Church) groupings, which had been left out of the process of government formation. By the summer of 1990, Walesa managed to bring together the Solidarity movement behind his bid for the presidency. The "war at the top"¹¹⁸ had been initiated by Walesa and the leaders of the Center Alliance against Tadeusz Mazowiecki, and marked the end of the Solidarity era and reflected personal differences within the Solidarity elite. In mid-July, Walesa's restless campaign for power eventually provoked the formation of an anti-Walesa front, the Citizens' Movement-Democratic Action (ROAD). The ROAD joined forces with the newly formed

¹¹⁶ For the political tendencies in Poland see Zarycki, Tomasz, "Politics in the Periphery: Political Cleavages in Poland Interpreted in their historical and International Context", *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 52, No. 5, University of Glasgow, 2000, pp. 851-873 and for the political divisions in Poland see Krzysztof Jasiewicz, "Polish Politics on the Eve of the 1993 Elections: Toward Fragmentation or Pluralism", *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 4, December 1993, pp. 387-411.

¹¹⁷ See Karbonski, Andrzej, "East Central Europe On the Eve of the Changeover: The Case of Poland", p. 152.

¹¹⁸ For further information see, Zubek, Voytek. "The Rise and Fall of Rule by Poland's Best and Brightest," *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 4, 1992, pp. 579-608.

Democratic Alliance to support Mazowiecki's candidacy. Mazowiecki's supporters claimed that their candidate stood for enlightenment, modernization, and Europe. In contrast, Walesa was portrayed as populist, egoist, authoritarian, chauvinist and traditionalist. In fact, there was an alarming upsurge of anti-Semitism and anti-intellectualism in Walesa's campaign. In August, many deputies and senators supported the call for Jaruzelski's resignation. By September, Walesa was the favorite candidate and the new Solidarity groupings (the Liberal Democratic Congress, the Christian National Union, the Christian Democratic Labor Party, and the Solidarity Peasant Party) and the PC supported him. On the other hand, the Democratic Union (ROAD and the Forum) supported Mazowiecki. Polish-Canadian businessman Stan Tyminski had no political base and he was independent¹¹⁹

As early as September 1990, the *Sejm* debate on the new electoral law began and a regime crisis looked imminent. At this point, President Jaruzelski let it be known that he was ready to step down. The *Sejm* quickly revised the constitution and passed the necessary provisions. Firstly, the President would now be elected for five years by the whole nation in a direct election scheduled for 25 November 1990. In addition, every candidate had to collect 100,000 citizens' signatures to register as presidential candidates. According to the electoral law, the winning candidate had to receive an absolute majority. If this did not occur in the first round, a run-off would be held two weeks later between the two candidates with the highest number of votes.

The people's tendency to turn away from any realistic consideration of the situation was reflected in the results with the unknown Stan Tyminski coming in unexpectedly second with 23% of the votes. This Polish-Canadian executive promised to bring a Western standard of living to all Poles at once without any ideological hesitations. He was an outsider and his success came as a big surprise. Mazowiecki received just above 18% of the vote and was

¹¹⁹ Millard, Frances, *Polish Politics and Society*, Routledge Press, 1999, pp. 82-83.

knocked out in the first round. He considered the defeat as a vote of no confidence in his government and stepped down after the election. In the run-off elections, Walesa¹²⁰ won by 74.25% to Tyminski's 24.75% out of a 53.4% voters' turnout.

In 1990, Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski initiated a two-track eastern policy. By engaging the Soviet republics as equal partners well before the collapse of the Soviet Union, Skubiszewski was the first to initiate an eastern policy for the West to follow.

Against a background of party system fragmentation in the parliament, however, the electoral system for the *Sejm* election was designed to guarantee representation for the new post-Solidarity and for the ex-Communist parties that had not been able to strike roots in society. A liberal parliamentary system was adopted to guarantee all parties a fair chance of winning representation in the first free parliamentary elections of 1991. In October, the *Sejm* decided that the new electoral law ought to be purely proportional. In December, newly elected President Walesa considered two alternatives regarding the formation of the new *Sejm*: the current government would remain in place until the new elections, or a new government would be formed and the elections postponed for at least one year¹²¹. Walesa disappointed many supporters by endorsing the liberal economic option, symbolized by the retention of Leszek Balcerowicz as finance minister in Jan Krzysztof Bielecki's minority government¹²². The rise of unemployment and prices affected the behavior of the workers and caused an economic recession. However, elections could not be held until a new electoral law had been agreed upon. The public mood was markedly pessimistic. Corruption

¹²⁰ For more about Lech Walesa see Voytek Zubek, "Walesa's Leadership and Poland's Transition", *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 40, Jan/April 1991, pp. 69-83; Voytek Zubek, "The Eclipse of Walesa's Political Career", *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 49, No. 1, 1997, pp. 107-124.

¹²¹ Tworzecki, Hubert, p. 53.

¹²² Millard, Frances, *Polish Politics and Society*, p. 84.

scandals and worsening economic indicators contributed to this loss of public confidence. Strikes and protest punctuated the election campaign.

When the Polish people went to cast their votes in the parliamentary elections of October 1991, no fewer than 111 political parties and organizations entered 6,980 candidates for the 460 *Sejm* seats. After the electoral dust had settled, 29 parties or interest groups gained seats in the *Sejm*. Even the most “successful” party, the post-Solidarity UD, won only 12.31% of the vote (62 seats) out of a low 43% turnout. “The essential characteristics of the UD’s style of politics were well summarized by Frances Millard as rational and intellectual, self-consciously anti-demagogic and anti-populist”.¹²³ The ex-Communist coalition SLD came in with the support of 11.98% of the votes (60 seats). SLD was an electoral alliance of several groups, the most important of which was the successor to Communist Party, the Social democracy of the Republic of Poland (SdRP). The government’s new economic team shaped a program known as “the Balcerowicz Plan” aimed at ending hyperinflation and shortages and at creating a market economy as rapidly as possible¹²⁴. It was also opposed to what it saw as the growing influence of the Catholic Church in public life, and was against the proposed prohibition against abortion¹²⁵.

“This parliament was the product of a complicated electoral law awarding representation to parties that won even tiny percentage of votes.”¹²⁶ Evidently, the generous proportional representation electoral formula had done little to check the dispersion of

¹²³ Millard, Frances, “The Polish Parliamentary Elections of September 1993”, *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 3, Fall 1994, p. 841 quoted as in Tworzecki, Hubert, p. 58.

¹²⁴ Sachs, Jeffrey, David, Lipton, “Poland’s Economic Reform”, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 69, No. 3, 1990, p. 48. For more information see, Janine P.Holc, “Liberalism and the Construction of the Democratic Subject in Postcommunism: The Case of Poland”, *Slavic Review*, Vol. 56, No. 3, Fall 1997, pp. 412-420 and Ben Slay, “The Polish Economic Transition: Outcome and Lessons”, *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, Vol. 33, 2000, pp. 49-70.

¹²⁵ Tworzecki, Hubert, p. 53.

¹²⁶ Castle, Marjorie; Taras, Ray, p. 97.

voters' choice, rendering the emergence of a majority in the *Sejm* difficult. In particular, the electoral law did not contain a threshold requirement to keep small parties out in district elections. More importantly, even though a plurality system was used in the Senate election, the Senate was no less fragmented than the *Sejm* as 11 parties managed to gain seats there. The largest parties in the Senate, the UD and NSZZ Solidarity, won just 21 and 11 seats, respectively. The difficulty of coalition building became immediately apparent because so many groups were represented in the *Sejm*, and also because of the antagonism towards the SLD¹²⁷. In conclusion, the 1991 elections produced a highly fragmented parliament, which managed to generate three prime ministers, two governments, and its own early departure¹²⁸.

After the 1991 elections, it took about two months to form a coalition government. The first post-1991 government was a minority coalition made up the Christian-National Union, the Centre Alliance and the Peasants' Accord, put together under Prime Minister Jan Olszewski in December. In the *Sejm*, this government received conditional support from the PSL, Solidarity-the trade union, Solidarity of Labor, and some minor groupings. It did not last even half a year and Olszewski failed to receive a vote of confidence¹²⁹. The fall of Olszewski's government was followed by the appointment of Waldemar Pawlak of the PSL as the prime minister designate on 6 June, 1992. On 10 July, he was replaced by Hanna Suchocka of the Democratic Union. The SLD and the PSL failed to address the country's structural and institutional problems and in 1992, there was political stagnation.

The formation of the Suchocka government signified the stabilization and maturation of Poland's fragmented political system. To participate in the governing coalition, each party

¹²⁷ Millard, Frances, *Polish Politics and Society*, pp. 82-83.

¹²⁸ Jasiewicz, Krzysztof, "Polish Politics on the Eve of the 1993 Elections: Toward Fragmentation or Pluralism?", *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 4, December 1993, pp. 387-411.

¹²⁹ *Ibid. idem.*

had to make significant concessions to placate the other coalition partners¹³⁰. Two deputy prime minister positions- one for economic affairs and one for politics- were created to strengthen support for the new government. These posts went to members of the Christian National Union and the Party of Christian Democrats, respectively. Drawing heavily on the experience of the first three Solidarity governments, Suchocka's cabinet included such well-known figures as Jacek Kuron and Janusz Onyszkiewicz (minister of national defense) of the Democratic Union, Jan Krzysztof Bielecki of the Liberal Democratic Congress, Jerzy Eysymontt¹³¹ of the Polish Economic Program, and the independent Krzysztof Skubiszewski (minister of foreign affairs). Members of the Little Coalition received eleven ministerial posts, most of which were concerned with economic policy; the Christian National Union received five cabinet posts, ensuring it a prominent role in social policy issues such as abortion¹³². Poland's fragile party system had brought great uncertainty to the political process, and left many people bewildered and disillusioned. Until the *Sejm* was eventually dissolved in May 1993, Poland's nascent democracy suffered from a deeply divided and fragmented parliament and a rapid succession of vulnerable governments. The situation was one of endless squabbling, fragmentation and rapid polarization.

When the 1990-1993 period is analyzed it becomes clear that the decision-making process and domestic policy had overcome the difficulties of the transition to democracy. During that period, the authorities were trying to stabilize the country and the foreign policy

¹³⁰ Zubek, Voytek, "The Fragmentation of Poland's Political Party System", *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 1, March 1993, pp. 47-71.

¹³¹ Jerzy Eysymontt was the head of the Office of Central Planning. He constructed an economic program, called for continued sacrifice, reduced government spending, and higher prices for traditionally subsidized goods and services. This program clearly conflicted with the government's promises for a rapid breakthrough and a reversal of Balcerowicz's policies. For more information see, Tadeusz Kowalik "The Ugly Face of Polish Success: Social Aspects of Transformation" in Blazyca, George, and Ryszard Rapacki (eds.), *Poland into the New Millennium, Economies and Societies in Transition*, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2001, pp. 33-53.

¹³² "Poland: A Country Study", the Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, see, <http://womanhistory.about.com>

decisions were affected by the internal dynamics. Thus the ex-communist alliance of the Democratic Left (SLD) and the Polish Peasant Party (PSL) was broadly opposed to the "rejoin Europe" policy drawn up by Skubiszewski and determined by the Solidarity coalition. However, this position was "not so much a symptom of a dislike of the West in general but a reflection of fears that too hasty and ill-prepared bids to enter Euro-Atlantic structures might lead to an unnecessary destabilization of the situation in Central Europe."

C) The 1993 General Election

On 19 September 1993, Poland's ex-Communist parties came to power after scoring remarkable victory in the country's general election: The SLD and the PSL emerged from the polls as the largest parties in both houses of parliament, winning 171 and 132 seats, respectively, in the *Sejm*. Both the SLD and PSL doubled the number of votes they received in 1991 and tripled their number of parliamentary seats.

Without any doubt, the electoral system should be blamed for the fact that 34.53% of the electorate was not represented. After all, the new rules were introduced in the first place to end excessive party fragmentation. Moreover, whilst the formula of Hare d'Hondt¹³³ had already favored the stronger parties in the district elections, four larger parties-SLD, PSL, UD and UP- were overrepresented because of the second round distribution of 69 national seats to parties that gained at least 7% of the vote. The fact that the ex-Communist parties controlled almost two-thirds of the seats in the *Sejm* with 36% of the vote meant that the system had significantly distorted the country's political landscape. Because of the coalition

¹³³ The d'Hondt method is a method for allocating seats in party-list proportional representation. This system favors large parties slightly more than the other popular divisor method. The method is named after Belgian mathematician Victor d'Hondt. For more information about the electoral system see, Frances Millard, "Elections in Poland in 2001: electoral manipulation and party upheaval", *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, Vol. 36, 2003, pp. 69-86 and Krzysztof Jasiewicz, "Dead ends and new beginnings: the quest for a procedural republic in Poland", *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 1, 2000, pp. 101-122.

agreement, Józef Oleksy, from the SLD was elected Marshall of the *Sejm*. At the same time, the parties agreed on the Pawlak from the PSL to serve as premier to ease fears that SLD may have take a monopoly on power. For the time being, the SLD-PSL coalition recognized Walesa's preeminent role in defense, internal and foreign affairs as specified in the "Little Constitution"¹³⁴.

However, relations between the coalition partners were difficult from the start. The first dispute erupted over economic policy priorities and the speed of reform. Moreover, the ruling parties differed in their approach to Church-State relations. Mindful of the conservative outlook of rural constituencies, the PSL had tactfully distanced itself from the SLD's pro-market policies and strong anticlericalism.

D) The 1995 Presidential Elections

The major candidates in the 1995 presidential election were from different political fields: the socialist Alexander Kwasniewski, the Christian-democrat Lech Walesa; the liberal-democrat Jacek Kuron and the populist Jan Olszewski and Waldemar Pawlak. However, even before the first round of the election (5 November 1995), a high level of re-polarization of the polity occurred.

"The Social Democrats confirmed their widening appeal in the presidential election, the second to be held by direct popular vote and effectively Poland's first 'normal'

¹³⁴ The "Little Constitution" was passed by the parliament in October 1992. The document was a temporary solution supposed to lay out the basic framework of legislative-executive relations while the parliament was working on the "big constitution." According to the "Little Constitution," Poland was basically a parliamentary republic, but with significant presidential powers. For example, the president shared with the government responsibility for foreign policy and for state security; he could, under certain circumstances, dissolve the parliament and accept resignation of the cabinet; the president also had strong veto powers. For more information see Jakub Karpinski, "The Constitutional Mosaic", *Transition*, Vol. 1, No. 14, 11 August 1995.

presidential election.”¹³⁵ Power was transferred peacefully from Lech Walesa, symbol of the Catholic, nationalist, and anti-Communist orientation, to Aleksander Kwasniewski, symbol of the new, secular and modernizing social democracy. Walesa never actively sought the right’s support in his re-election. With the right going to the polls divided, however, Walesa’s popularity began to surge in mid-September 1995. Yet, his campaign was amateurish and weak in terms of policy content. By contrast, Kwasniewski ran a professional campaign and portrayed himself as a young, dynamic social democrat willing to work with opponents to bring about political stability. The first round of the elections was held on 5 November and resulted in a victory for Kwasniewski over Walesa by a two-point margin (35.11% to 33.11%). The campaign then centered on the style, personality characteristics, professed moral values, and political biographies of the two candidates. In the run-off election on 19 November, Kwasniewski received 51.7% of the vote and won the presidency.

In the presidential election, historical-symbolic divisions played a crucial role. The programmatic aims of continuing reform and accession to NATO and the EU of the two candidates’ were similar. However, their professional moral values and their personalities were different¹³⁶. In addition, Kwasniewski tried to establish good relations with Poland’s neighbors. Poland’s good relations with its neighbors were shadowed only by Belarusian President Alyksandr Lukashenka’s anti-democratic policies. Poland was active in developing on 20 November 1995 a joint Polish-Lithuanian-Ukrainian presidential statement expressing the three countries’ concern over the situation in Belarus¹³⁷.

¹³⁵ Millard, Frances, *Polish Politics and Society*, p. 91.

¹³⁶ *Ibid*, p.93.

¹³⁷ Karpinski, Jakub, “With the Left Fully in Charge, the Polish Right Prepares for 1997”, *Transition*, Vol. 3, No. 2, February 1997, pp. 17-21.

Kwasniewski's election inevitably upset a minority of Poles. In an article in the Catholic weekly, *Tygodnik Powszechny*, Kazimierz Dziewanowski, Poland's first post-communist ambassador to the United States, warned that as a result of Kwasniewski's election the country's "internal stability" raised "serious doubts", possibly keeping it out of the western alliance. However, Kwasniewski showed that his presidency would bring no change in the Western orientation of Poland's foreign policy. Polish-German-French cooperation in the "Weimar triangle" was confirmed in Warsaw on 19 December 1995.

President Kwasniewski paved the way for the adoption of the new constitution. In 1995, the National Assembly, with the support of the governing coalition parties, President Kwasniewski, and the opposition Labor Union (UP) and Federal Union (UW) parties, endorsed a draft constitution. The Right rejected the draft in its entirety and turned the referendum into an electoral campaign. The extra parliamentary opposition demanded the constitutional protection of national and Christian values and used anti-Communist slogans. New Poland, in their view, had to cleanse itself first of its infamous past.

E) The 1997 General Election

The victory of the SLD in the general election of 1993 and the presidential elections helped convince the post-Solidarity parties to merge or fold. With the full restoration of the left in Polish politics, the "Solidarity versus post-Communist" division rapidly regained its significance. As expected, it was felt most strongly by voters of the centre-right who expressed their wish to see all post-Solidarity parties joining forces in a single bloc.

In this respect, the formation of the Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS) in June 1996 was the most significant development. The AWS was an electoral coalition composed of more than 20 or so right-wing parties and groupings dominated by the Solidarity trade union

and headed by its leader, Marian Krzaklewski. On 25 May 1997, the Constitution was approved by 52.71% to 45.09% with a 42.86% turnout. The 1997 Constitution clarified the process of decision-making and coordination by weakening the President's formal powers and strengthening those of the Prime Minister. The lower house of *the Sejm* remained important in producing political consensus and diffusing information. "However, the creation of a specially trained and non-politically recruited Foreign Office was likely to take time."¹³⁸

Referendum on the Constitution further fostered left-right bi-polarization. Above all, the component parties of the AWS united to defeat the SLD at the next general elections in September 1997. Solidarity's superior organizational and financial resources made Krzaklewski and his aides the most influential figures in this hybrid assembly of nationalists, unionists, Catholics, neo liberals, conservatives and peasants. On 21 September 1997, voters went to the polls in Poland's third fully competitive parliamentary election since the end of Communist rule. The left-right division was central in the campaign, at the elite level as well as the level of the mass public. The AWS won the parliamentary elections with 34% of the total vote. This result represented not only an electoral breakthrough for the Polish right but it also confirmed the SLD's predominance on the left of the political spectrum. The AWS negotiated a coalition agreement with the Freedom Union (UW), and Jerzy Buzek's new government won the *Sejm*'s confidence on 11 November 1997.

In October 1997, Walesa founded a new party, Christian Democracy of the Third Republic of Poland (ChDIIIIRP), to relaunch his political career. One month later, Krzaklewski created another party, Social Movement-AWS (RS-AWS), as his new political vehicle in addition to the Solidarity trade union. Afterwards, however, the AWS made little progress in its transformation from what was primarily an electoral alliance into a coherent

¹³⁸ Sanford, George "Parliamentary Control and the Constitutional Definition of Foreign Policy-Making in Democratic Poland", *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 51, No. 5, July 1999, pp. 769-797.

governing bloc. Balcerowicz returned to his former posts of deputy prime minister and finance minister; Bronislaw Geremek became foreign minister; Suchocka was appointed justice minister and prosecutor general; and Janusz Onyszkiewicz got back the defense portfolio he had held in an earlier coalition government.

An analysis of the 1993-1997 period shows that Skubiszewski played an important role in Polish foreign policy. The successes of his eastern policy bolstered the main goal of the post-communist governments of that period of time namely "a common return to Europe". Poland was well on its way to membership in NATO, with most difficult problems solved. Skubiszewski's successors could explain to their eastern neighbors that better relations with Poland would accelerate their own entry to the West¹³⁹. The new foreign minister Geremek followed the same foreign policy approach as Skubiszewski. Poland's NATO membership gained impetus and Geremek worked on the possible effects of Poland's NATO membership on its relations with Ukraine, Belarus and Russia, emphasizing that Warsaw was interested in developing friendly relations with its eastern neighbors.

F) The 2000 Presidential Elections

In the October 2000, Poland's presidential election held none of the suspense of the previous one. Kwasniewski won with a majority of 54 percent of the votes cast. Kwasniewski's major opponent, Marian Krzaklewski, was able to mobilize the core base of the AWS bloc: anti-communists, Catholic fundamentalists, and the nationalist right. However, his poor showing in the elections prompted challenges to his leadership within the AWS and led to the eventual collapse of this bloc. The reelection of a president was a milestone in recent Polish history. The 2000 election also exposed the weakness of the Polish

¹³⁹ Synder, Tim, "Look East, Face West", see, <http://archive.tol.cz/transitions/sept98/lookeast>

right¹⁴⁰. The foreign policy priorities of Poland continued to remain steady after the millennium. In 2001, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Wladyslaw Bartoszewski stressed that the "eastern policy" was not some separate policy but an integral part of the cohesive whole of Polish foreign policy, not an isolated one but parallel to the "return to Europe" concept.

6. The 2001 Parliamentary Elections

On 23 September, the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) defeated the right for the second time in as many years in the 2001 parliamentary elections, coming within fifteen seats of winning an absolute majority in the *Sejm*. The strong SLD-UP centre-left bloc faced a fragmented conservative force. The former governing parties (AWS) and the Federal Union (UW) were no longer represented in Parliament. The German minority continued to have two deputies in the *Sejm*. The SLD-UP formed a coalition with it under Prime Minister Leszek Miller who became leader of a minority government with the support of the votes of a number of independent deputies in the *Sejm*. In the Senate, the SLD-UP has 75 seats; the "Joint List" (essentially the former governing parties) has 15 seats, the PSL 4, the "Self-Defense" Party 2, the LPR 2 and others 2.

In 2003, President Kwasniewski paid tribute to the role of the US in contributing to peace and security in Europe over the past 50 years. He also emphasized Poland's commitment to use enlargement to bring East and West closer together.

As for the latest developments in the Polish domestic politics, the opposition Civic Platform (PO) is the leading party in Poland, according to a poll by TNS OBOP. Twenty nine per cent of the respondents would vote for PO in the next general election, a six per cent lead over the ruling Democratic Left Alliance (SLD). Prime Minister Leszek Miller (SLD) announced that he would step down on 2 May 2004, one day after Poland officially joins the

¹⁴⁰ Castle, Marjorie; Taras, Ray, p. 102.

European Union (EU), because of his low popularity ratings and corruption scandals. Miller had headed the government since 2001 but lost his majority after a split with the Peasant's Party (PSL) in March 2003. The coalition with the PSL dissolved, and the SLD-UP coalition now continues in office as a minority government. However, the SLD has ruled out early elections as a result of Miller's resignation. PO leader Donald Tusk is already contemplating a coalition with the Law and Justice Party (PiS) in the next general elections, scheduled for 2005¹⁴¹.

On 30 March, the President proposed Marek Belka, a former finance minister, to succeed Leszek Miller as prime minister of Poland, saying that, "If he is not approved by the Polish parliament, then the next elections would be held in August." However, Belka was approved by the parliament and he took over on 2 May as prime minister¹⁴². Belka said his government's first priority would be to tackle the country's 20 percent employment rate and planned to maintain Poland's mission commanding a multinational force in Iraq¹⁴³. On 1 May 2004, Poland became an EU member state and European Parliament elections will be held on the 13th of June with Poland voting in those elections.

II- ELITES

Michael Burton, Richard Gunther, and John Higley offer a straight forward and useful definitions of elites as: "persons who are able, by virtue of their strategic positions in powerful organizations, to affect national political outcomes regularly and substantially."¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ The Center for Public Opinion and Democracy, 29 March 2004, see, <http://www.cpod.ubc.ca/polls/index.cfm>

¹⁴² Carter, Richard, "New Polish leader proposed", EUobserver, 30 March 2004

¹⁴³ The Warsaw Voice, Polish and Central European Review, 03 May 2004, see, <http://www1.warsawvoice.pl/news>

¹⁴⁴ Burton, Micheal; Gunther, Richard, and John Higley, "Introduction: Elite Transformations and Democratic Regimes", in Castle, Marjorie; Taras, Ray, p. 104.

Elites were seen as essential “players” of the democratization “game”. In the countries of East Central Europe where problems of statehood did not emerge as a new problem to be solved, elites could focus on democratization and were able to achieve elite unity quickly. In countries where elites had to be involved in other ‘games’ besides democratization – independence, ethnic conflicts, new borders, nationalism, sovereignty and the like – they proved to be less effective in managing the multiple problems of the double or even “triple transition”.¹⁴⁵

Another important question is about the elites and their possible support to the democratization process. Burton, Gunther and Higley assert that “a key to the stability and survival of democratic regimes is ... the establishment of substantial consensus among elites concerning rules of the democratic political game and the worth of democratic institutions.”¹⁴⁶

As of 1998, an overwhelming majority (85 percent) of the political and economic elites (including former communists) polled said that the current system was significantly better than the preceding one; another 12 percent said that the current system was somehow better. In the same survey, 21 percent of the elite respondents agreed that the country’s economic interest could be a reason for limiting democracy. So one can say that the elites have reached a consensus on democratization and that they are united. However, Grabowska found two differences between the elites. The first is their political activity under the communist regime; the second is the role of organized religion in their lives¹⁴⁷. The past,

¹⁴⁵ Offe, C. , 1997, *Varieties of Transition*, Cambridge, MA, MIT Press quoted as in Bozóki, András, “Research on political elites in East Central Europe”, Symposium: “After and Before”, *The State of the Discipline in Central and Eastern Europe* University of Essex, see, <http://www.essex.ac.uk/ecpr/publications.htm>

¹⁴⁶ Micheal Burton, Richard Gunther, and John Higley, “Introduction: Elite Transformations and Democratic Regimes”, in Castle, Marjorie; Taras, Ray, p. 107.

¹⁴⁷ Castle, Marjorie; Taras, Ray, pp. 104-116

especially the communist past, is still very much present in Polish politics. In the new millennium period, the ex-communists and their ex-opponents still constitute a large majority of political elites. "This percentage is lower among politically appointed administrative elites (55 percent in 1998) than among parliamentarians and party leaders (70 percent), but both numbers represented higher ratios than in Polish society as a whole."¹⁴⁸

The other influential group is the former *nomenklatura* as an economic elite. Although its economy is growing, Poland's transition has not been without problems. The privatization process has enabled the former *nomenklatura* to gain control over it, allowing its members to exchange their status of a political elite under socialism for that of an economic elite under capitalism. Although this group is now competing with an emerging class of entrepreneurs, the latter group has so far ignored the political process to focus instead on personal profit¹⁴⁹.

Religion is the other area in which there is an impressive objective difference among political elites. It is true that in Poland Catholicism is the only significant religion at play both on the elite as well as on the mass level. Therefore, one can simplify by saying that Polish elites are divided into two groups: the Catholics with a Solidarity past and the nonreligious people with a communist past. These factors are also strongly associated with the political party to which a member of the political elite belongs. Former communists are to be found in the SLD. Former opposition members are to be found in a variety of parties frequently referred to as post-Solidarity parties.¹⁵⁰ Moreover, the church is an important non-governmental elite in Poland because of historical reasons and laws that give certain rights

¹⁴⁸ Ibid. idem.

¹⁴⁹ Derleth, S. William, p. 297. For more information see, Tadeusz Kowalik "The ugly face of Polish success: social aspects of transformation" and Jan Maciejka, "Private and public sector: new and old patterns of entrepreneurship" in George Blazycza and Ryszard Rapacki (eds.), *Poland into the New Millennium, Economics and Societies in Transition*, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2001.

¹⁵⁰ Castle, Marjorie; Taras, Ray, pp. 104-116.

to the Church. In addition, the Church influences Polish political parties through unofficial links. These political links create a public opinion that the church interferes too much in politics, as shown by the public opinion polls in the 1993 parliamentary elections¹⁵¹.

Religion and economic policy determine the elite's political behaviors. In particular, the role of the state and privatization were the challenging issues. However, the primary aim of Polish foreign policy was membership in the EU. Therefore, both the right and left parties had similar opinions on economic policy, especially after the 1997 election. One can describe most of the parties in terms of the traditionalist versus secularist dimension, but this coincides largely with Poland's historical-cultural cleavage. The policy differences do not sufficiently define the differences between the elites. Poland's historical-cultural cleavage is a vital component on structuring the party system and shaping elite choices in forming new parties.

In the post-communist era, the elites used their influence on domestic policies and on Polish foreign policies. With the collapse of Solidarity's grand political coalition after 1992, most political leaders believed that Poland needed a strong government to lead it through the unfolding historical socio-economic transformation, and also to protect it from what was originally perceived as divided international and domestic dangers. To the east, Poland's new elites feared a rapid revival of Russian imperialism that would threaten to subdue again the society. Also, the elites feared that Russia's new situation would lead to instability and to massive migrations from Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania that would flood Poland. On the other hand, to the West, the Polish elites feared an unrestrained economic competition that could eventually lead to a permanent state of dependency¹⁵².

¹⁵¹ Derleth, S. William, p. 297.

¹⁵² Zubek, Voytek, "The Fragmentation of Poland's Political Party System", pp. 47-71.

President Kwasniewski stated after September 11 that the best possible choice for Poland was to join the EU. In 2002, he said that the EU should be mentioned and shown in more attractive ways than until then but without downplaying any of the disputed issues. However, Poland's willingness to gain EU membership could not be perceived as an exclusive decision of the elite.

II. RELIGION

With the collapse of communism, Poland's new leaders moved quickly to restore good relations with the Vatican and the Polish Roman Catholic hierarchy. In the post-communism era, religious instruction was reintroduced in public schools, and the Solidarity linked governments of 1989-1993 negotiated and signed a Concordat with the Vatican. The Catholic Church in Poland has been in the center of the political arena for decades. One difference in the role of the Church in the Third Republic is that it has been met with greater public skepticism than at any time in the recent past.

In 1990, the Church was very much integrated into public life. In addition, it supported and extended its own Catholic press and broadcasting media to influence public opinion. In 1991, the Church became directly involved in the election campaign by organizing a coalition known as the Catholic Electoral Action, which openly supported ZChN and its allies. Even though this coalition did not achieve a majority in the new *Sejm*, it gained enough seats to become an attractive partner in any coalition government¹⁵³.

¹⁵³ Karbonski, Andrzej, "Poland Ten Years After: The Church", *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, No. 33, 2000, p. 139.

The most recent Concordat¹⁵⁴ was signed in late July 1993 between President Walesa and Pope John Paul II. Its opponents assumed that many of its provisions were in violation of the 1992 Treaty on the EU (Maastricht). The 1993 agreement consisted of twenty-nine articles and began with the assertion that “the Catholic religion is practiced by the majority of the Polish population”. “A similar clause in the constitution of the Second Republic was a source of particular controversy, since at the time Poland had a few sizable ethnic minority and religious groups.”¹⁵⁵ In 1993, the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) and the Polish Peasant Party won parliamentary elections and this slowed down the Concordat. The *Sejm* did not favor a Concordat with the Holy See and decided to delay its ratification until a new constitution was adopted. (Finally the Concordat was ratified in July 1998.) Moreover, on 24 October 1993 it overrode a Senate vote and liberalized Poland’s formerly restrictive law on abortion. Those decisions worsened the already strained relations between the Vatican and the Polish authorities¹⁵⁶. Not only politicians but also the Polish public viewed the 1993 Concordat with divided opinions. According to the SLD draft constitution, Poland is a “secular state”, and “no church or denomination can receive special privileges by any law or international agreement” (Article 7). In contrast, the Senate’s draft began with the invocation of “In the name of God Almighty.” The Senate and Solidarity drafts invoked the Concordat as an instrument regulating relations between the state and the Catholic Church, while the Presidential draft mentioned the Concordat as an option.

In a 1994 October letter and on several other occasions, the Polish Roman Catholic bishops stated their demands for the contents of the constitution. At their 275th plenary session, in a communiqué issued on 18 March 1995, they stated that the new constitution

¹⁵⁴ The Vatican has rarely used the term “Concordat”. The 1925 Concordat brought even Pilsudski in to conflict with the church. See Karbonski, Andrzej, “A Concordat-But no Concord”, *Transition*, Vol. 1, No. 9, 9 June 1995, pp. 13-17.

¹⁵⁵ Castle, Marjorie; Taras, Ray, p. 142.

¹⁵⁶ Karpinski, Jakub, “With the Left Fully in Charge, the Polish Right Prepares for 1997”, *Transitions*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 07 February 1997, p. 9.

should invoke God and defend human life from the time of conception. They preferred the term “tolerance” of the state over “neutrality”.¹⁵⁷ On 4 April, the Constitutional Commission accepted the term “impartiality” and noted that Church and state are “autonomous and independent” and that the Concordat was to regulate relations with the Church¹⁵⁸. In addition, by this decision, the state allowed religious education.

In the 1995 presidential election, more than 9 million Poles cast their votes contrary to the Catholic hierarchy. “Although the Catholic press is not extremely influential in Poland, the popular Catholic national radio station *Maryja* led an intense campaign in support of the president, Lech Walesa.”¹⁵⁹ However, with secular and left support Kwasniewski won the elections. In 1997, the extreme right won the parliamentary elections. In addition, the Pope’s visit to Poland before the general elections influenced public opinion towards the Catholic Solidarity party. This provoked a reaction from all those who opposed turning Poland into a confessional state. Furthermore, such efforts would not be compatible with Poland’s efforts to join the EU and the same would be true with regard to NATO. After the election, however, some positive improvements took place. Some Church leaders asked fundamentalist Catholic politicians to moderate their views and to show more respect for democracy. Moreover, a delegation of nine Polish bishops, headed by Primate Józef Glemp, went to Brussels in early November 1997 to talk to EU officials to support Poland’s EU membership¹⁶⁰. In 2000, religion was still an important factor in the decision-making process. The right wing has been supporting Poland’s EU membership but has been insisting on Polish national values. In those days, one of the leaders of the Christian-National party stated that Poland should be integrated on the basis of “Christian values” versus “leftist” and

¹⁵⁷ Karpinski, Jakub, “The Constitutional Mosaic”, *Transitions*, Vol. 1, No. 14, 11 August 1995, p. 9

¹⁵⁸ Karbonski, Andrzej, “A Concordat-But no Concord”, pp. 13-17.

¹⁵⁹ Karpinski, Jakub, “Poles Divided Over Church’s Renewed Political Role”, *Transition*, Vol. 2, No. 7, 5 April 1996, p. 11.

¹⁶⁰ Hetnal, Adam.A, “The Polish Catholic Church in Pre-And Post- 1989 Poland: An Evaluation, *East European Quarterly*, Vol. 32, No. 4, January 1999, pp. 503-529.

“cosmopolitan” ones¹⁶¹. This statement summarized the general climate of the political atmosphere.

In mid-2003, the Church was vocal in expressing its desire for Poland's EU membership. Both Pope John Paul II and Cardinal Jozef Glemp, the Primate of Poland's Roman Catholic Church, publicly indicated their support for Poland's integration into the EU. However, there were some disputes over the cultural values within the EU. In January 2003, the Church was demanding from the EU that wording must be added to the treaty guaranteeing the country's strict anti-abortion laws against interference from Brussels. On the other hand, the right wing supports the eastern policy of Poland thinks it should collaborate with neighbor countries – such as the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania. It considers this collaboration in very natural because these neighbors are in a similar stage of development and share common past and close cultural ties. According to the extreme right and nationalist wing, the Western countries could bring additional problems to Polish society because they are made up of secular and non-religious societies. On the other hand, the Left has a positive approach towards collaboration with the eastern countries because it sees eastern policy as running parallel with the enlargement of the EU and NATO.

IV. PUBLIC OPINION

In democratic systems, public opinion is an important element because of its effects on the decision-making process. The political parties, NGOs, the family, school, ideology, population, culture, religion, language and the mass media are some important and some

¹⁶¹ Karbonski, Andrzej, “Poland Ten Years After: The Church”, p. 129.

elements that constitute the public opinion. The media in particular are a major factor in creating public opinion as G. Sartori states¹⁶².

Globalization and technological development caused a more transparent foreign policy. The public instead of the elites began to be interested in the foreign policy. Nevertheless, elites still play a crucial role in the decision-making process. The leaders have accepted the importance of the public opinion support and it has been seen as a tool of legitimacy. One can analyze public opinion at three levels in the framework of foreign policy. At the first level, one observes the “passive mass” which is a group of people who do not care about foreign policy issues. They display their unrealistic and emotional reactions in the critical situations like the war times. At the second and medium levels one observes the “active mass” made up by a group of people interested in foreign policy issues. The members of this group are very intellectual and have a high income. In the last level, one observes the “public opinion creators” that consisting of a small number of people¹⁶³.

When analyzing the opinions of the Polish public, we need to attempt to present the international context and explain to what extent events outside Poland influenced the fluctuations of public opinion.

A) Polish Public Opinion about the European Integration

The first years of transformation divided Poland society into two groups: those individuals who could function in the new economic system thanks to age, education, and mental characteristics and those who could not adjust to the new situation. The general

¹⁶² For details see, Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis*, Cambridge University Press, 1976, pp. 299-325.

¹⁶³ Sezer, Duygu, *Public Opinion and Foreign Policy*, Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Yayınları, 1972, pp. 77-80.

support for integration¹⁶⁴, however, was not perceived as being linked to specific expectation of chances available for individuals. At some stage, “general” support for integration was very high (80 percent in 1996), although individual perception of success was not linked directly with integration (28 percent in 1996)¹⁶⁵.

Since Poland formally submitted its application in 1994, the number of Poles supporting EU membership decreased from 77% in June 1994 to 59% in November 1999. The public’s perception of the consequences of integration process became increasingly more realistic, and some evidence shows that Poles are now increasingly skeptical about whether or not they will actually benefit from EU membership compared to the older member states. On the other hand, the opinion in the context of geo-political and historical terms related to general notions, such as “returning to Europe” and ending the post-war division of Europe into East and West, had a positive effect on Polish public opinion. In addition, support for integration correlated positively with the socio-financial status of the interviewees. The higher the level of education and of per-capita income in the family, the stronger the support for integration with the EU. In 2000, the most ardent critics of Poland’s membership in the EU were the farmers, 48 percent of whom were opposed to it, compared with 34 percent who supported it. More often, than in other social groups, the negative attitude toward integration prevails among unqualified workers, although in general there are more supporters of integration. The unskilled workers who were able to function somehow under the communist system have quite pessimistic views about democracy and free markets¹⁶⁶.

¹⁶⁴ For further information about the support for European integration see Slomczynski, Kazimierz M and Goldie Shabad, “Dynamics of support for European Integration in Post-Communist Poland”, *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol. 42, No. 4, June 2003, pp. 503-539.

¹⁶⁵ Karasinska, Maria; Skotnicka Elizbieta; Sobotka, Kazimierz; Swierkocki, Janusz, “Poland”, in Tang, Helena (ed.), *Winners and Losers of European Integration*, The World Bank, 2000, pp. 182-186.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.* idem

The other public opinion research was on the main advocates of Poland's EU membership and Poland's best western European allies because the public opinion changed completely after the Iraq crisis. Especially the media had a very effective impact on public opinion. In the first months of 2004, some differences among the present EU members and the candidate countries were revealed regarding the issues of the military intervention in Iraq and of the European Constitution. Disagreements regarding the European constitution and possibly the differences of opinion about the intervention in Iraq had a considerable impact on the attitude of the EU countries toward Poland. The survey (CBOS) asked the public "Which country is the strongest allies of Poland in the EU?" The Poles mentioned Spain in the first place. The United Kingdom was also mentioned quite frequently, followed by Germany and Italy. In December 1998, CBOS had made a survey about Poland's supporters in its effort to join the EU. A clear majority of the respondents mentioned Germany (59%). Earlier this year, Germany and France were the most frequently mentioned among the states opposed to Poland's membership in the EU¹⁶⁷.

B) Polish Public Opinion about Russia and the Eastern Neighbors

Two political elements were of particular importance for the views of Polish public opinion, namely Russia on the one hand, and the creation of the "Visegrad Triangle" on the other. Since the time the former Warsaw Treaty Organization countries thought of joining NATO, Russia has been their strong opponent. However, especially after 2001, the Russian political elite has acknowledged the fact and stopped opposing NATO's eastern enlargement.

Polish public opinion generally paid attention to the special role played by Russia and drew conclusions that were determined, among other things, by historical events. In 1990, Polish public opinion tended to be negative toward Russia. The majority consensus

¹⁶⁷ "Polish Public Opinion", CBOS, Public Opinion Research Center, ISSN 1233 – 7250, February 2004, see, <http://www.cbos.pl>

was that Russia represented a threat to Poland. In 1997, the Center for Social Opinion Research (CBOS) made a survey titled "What are the current 'external threats' to the independence of our country?" and the respondents listed its three biggest neighbors; Russia (40 percent), Ukraine (4 percent), and Germany (6 percent)¹⁶⁸. In addition, it could be seen that in practice, Poles worry mainly about the peace at the eastern border. In addition, at present, these fears are the lowest in the last ten years. Forty eight percent of the Poles believe that Russia will try to regain influence in this part of Europe, and 26% are afraid that the imperialist tendencies of Russia will increase.

C) Polish Public Opinion about the NATO

NATO membership was supposed to give Poles a feeling of safety, while NATO would gain an important ally, thus enlarging its area of security. It was also assumed that NATO membership would minimize the risks connected with a given country becoming involved in an internal or external conflict.

Public opinion always showed a positive mood but the polls margins declined from 1993 to 1999. This was probably connected first with the Balkan conflicts, and second with part of Polish society becoming aware, that NATO membership meant not only certain benefits but also specific conditions and obligations¹⁶⁹. Although Poland has been a member of NATO since March 1999, there are no NATO military bases in Poland yet. For some time now, the Polish media have been mentioning about a possible relocation of some of the American military bases from Germany to Poland. Shortly before and a year after joining NATO (in 1999 and 2000), most Poles believed that forces of other NATO states should not be stationed in Poland. At present, opinions are more divided. The numbers of the supporters

¹⁶⁸ CBOS – BS 107/107, September 1997, see, <http://www.cbos.pl>

¹⁶⁹ <http://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/99-01/mlyniec.pdf>

and opponents of the presence of NATO bases in Poland are almost equal (40% and 42%, respectively)¹⁷⁰.

D) Public Opinion and Non-governmental Organizations

Foreign policy, traditionally the responsibility of states and their institutions, is increasingly becoming the domain of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as well. The latter are dedicated to support development of a civil society in countries making the transition to democracy promoting economic reform models, democratic institution-building and social self-organization. They also help to foster a culture of freedom and human rights, support education and health care programs in developing countries, and provide humanitarian aid to victims of armed conflicts and natural disasters. NGOs support civil participation and promote the public opinion. In democratic countries, there are many liberal and free NGOs that can also work on political issues. Thus, people in those countries can be active in and reactive to the state's foreign and domestic policies.

NGOs have become effective also in Poland. In February 2000, the Stefan Batory Foundation organized two meetings and further seminars on Poland's neighbors (Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine) devoted to co-operation between Polish NGOs and eastern neighbors. Through these organizations, Polish NGOs have created cultural, political ties with the eastern neighbors and have involved Polish public opinion in foreign policy issues.

¹⁷⁰ "Polish Public Opinion", CBOS, Public Opinion Research Center, ISSN 1233 – 7250, February 2004.

V. THE MASS MEDIA

Independent mass media are very essential to an open and pluralistic democracy and are a guarantee of the democratic regime. In addition, the media are responsible for giving information to the public about the decision-making process and ensuring the participation of the public in that process. In the democratic systems, they must represent public opinion and criticize the government. In addition, the media have an agenda-setting function and may not tell people what to think but certainly what to think about.

If the media start to turn into a voice of the government, it means that they have become a propaganda tool and part of an anti-democratic process. However, giving information to the public and the state's national interest are sometimes challenging issues for the media because governments sometimes do not want to share secrets and national security issues with public opinion. The media are an active player especially in the foreign policy area. States give information to the other states and to the public through the media. Today foreign policy has a complex structure. With the latest technological developments, for the public to reach the information has become easier and faster. Because of that fast data transfer, in a time of crisis, the government must move faster and evolve foreign policy strategies more quickly. Public opinion is an essential element of the democratic systems but leaders must sometimes take decisions without its support.

In the first years after the end of the communist regime, Poland reflected the particular legacies of its own communist experience and the objective difficulties of the transformation process. Despite political turmoil and new economic pressures, the mechanisms of authoritarian control were transformed after 1989 into a new hybrid media system, which were both an indicator of and a contributing factor to the many-sided

processes of democratization¹⁷¹. As with other resources, both the previous system and the transition process shaped the structure of the mass media. "Former communists have retained ownership of certain important magazines and newspapers, for example, the weekly *Polityka* and the daily *Trybuna*."¹⁷²

After the Roundtable negotiations between government and Solidarity in 1989, the independent trade union regained its legal status and gained some limited access to radio and television. In 1989 the daily newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Election Gazette), was established to launch an election campaign and became the largest daily newspaper in Central Europe. "Under the leadership of its editor-in-chief, Adam Michnik, the newspaper has supported a secular and neoliberal line, opposing decommunization policies and emphasizing the importance of "Poland's return to Europe."¹⁷³ Many other newspapers and periodicals are either independent or sympathetic to other political news. For example, the daily *Zycie* has a decided center-right orientation.

Censorship is the main obstacle faced by democratic regimes and as a first step in Poland, censorship by the Central Bureau for the Control of the Press and Public Performances effectively ceased to exist. After the installation of the new government, censorship became increasingly irrelevant and in April 1990 parliament abolished the Bureau.

The broadcasting media were slower to change and more controversial than the other mass media tools. As in the rest of Europe, television has become the primary source of

¹⁷¹ Millard, Frances, "Democratization and the Media in Poland", *Democratization*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 1998, p. 86. For more information see, Rogerson, Ken, "The Role of the Media in Transitions From Authoritarian Political Systems: Russia and Poland since the fall of Communism", *East European Quarterly*, Vol. 31, No. 3, September, 1997, pp. 329-353.

¹⁷² Castle, Marjorie; Taras, Ray, pp. 148-149.

¹⁷³ *Ibid. idem.*

information. But the government was still attempting to influence the media, and only a few commercial radio stations, including the popular *Radio Zet*, obtained permission to broadcast before June 1991. From autumn 1991, the Catholic hierarchy also began to express concern about the media, perceived as lacking objectivity, and the Church achieved a major success with the broadcasting law of December 1992¹⁷⁴ when the Senate restored a controversial clause requiring broadcasters to “respect the religious feeling of their audience and especially to respect the Christian value system”(article 18).¹⁷⁵

Polish journalists have come into conflict with the state over the issues of official secrets and protection of their sources. The ruling coalition proceeded cautiously during the “Olesky Affair”, when its own then prime minister was accused of spying for Russia. From December 1995, the press rushed to provide further details and that affair showed the importance of the role of the media in the decision-making process. The media should be the fourth power in democratic regimes and should be liberal and not under state control, something which was very difficult for Poland as a post-communist state.

In Poland, people still get information from television rather than the press. There are more than 300 newspapers - most of them local or regional, however, fewer than 30% of Poles read any kind of newspaper¹⁷⁶. Moreover, television has a greater influence and is more effective because of its visual aspects. The press is followed by the elites and the elites follow foreign affairs. The public only reacts in exceptional occasions such as war and acts of terror, and follows developments from television. For the country's NATO and EU

¹⁷⁴ The text of the Law is in *Rzeczpospolita*, No. 17, 21 January 1993 and *Rzeczpospolita*, No.18, 22 January 1993 quoted as in Millard, Frances, “Democratization and the Media in Poland”, *Democratization*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 1998, p. 93.

¹⁷⁵ Millard, Frances, “Democratization and the Media in Poland”, p. 93.

¹⁷⁶ See, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/country_profiles/1054681.stm#facts

memberships, Polish media tried to create a favorable public opinion. The state's foreign policy, the church and the parties all affected the mass media's coverage.

However, it is impossible to separate the media's role in democratization from other factors working in the same direction, but "their mood-setting qualities, agenda-setting potential, ability to call government to account, and provide opportunities for multi-faceted debate make their role very considerable."¹⁷⁷ In Poland, there is freedom and diversity of information in the media, although laws against deriding the nation and its political system are still in force.

¹⁷⁷ Millard, Frances, "Democratization and the Media in Poland", *Democratization*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 1998, p. 102.

CHAPTER 3

POLAND'S EASTERN FOREIGN and SECURITY POLICIES

SINCE 1990

I- WESTERN AXIS

A) The United States

The rise and fall of great powers in the international system is one of the most challenging phenomena in history and international relations. The United States has been a dominant global power for a century. The global priorities of the U.S have changed after the collapse of the Soviet system with a direct effect on the eastern European countries. However, the economic potential of the EU increased rapidly and its members developed their common foreign and security policy in the axis of Franco-German leadership. If it is able to achieve a strong security policy, the EU might become a dominant and a global actor as a "United States of Europe". On the other hand, the disagreement between the US and the EU over the global security policy may deepen because of the new power balances.

1) US-Poland Relations

During the Cold War, the U.S.A's relations with Poland were somewhat closer than with most East European countries under communist rule. Following the 1989 Roundtable Accord, President George Bush expanded relations with Poland and pledged economic assistance. After 1989, the priorities of Polish foreign policy were defined for the first time by Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski in his exposé delivered before the *Sejm* on 29 April 1990. The main goal of Poland was to gain a good position in Central Eastern Europe

and in Europe and its first priority was the participation in the establishment of a European security system through the CSCE and the development of trans-Atlantic ties.

Contrary to other countries of Central Europe, since beginning of the 1990s security has played a major role in shaping Polish foreign policy. As a result, Poland stressed NATO membership, however, this was not handled in contradiction with the country's accession to the European Union. Both institutions, NATO and the European Union, have been of great significance for Poland and the integration processes into the European Union and NATO have been treated as complimentary. Moreover, from the Polish perspective, the presence of the United States on the European continent has been a guarantee of stability in Europe because it has contributed to the success of the transformation process in Central and Eastern Europe¹⁷⁸. Poland's foreign policy throughout the 1990s was inspired by the vision of serving as a "bridge" between East and West in order to eliminate the vestiges of the rival political and military blocs of the Cold War era.

After Washington became dedicated to pursuing the eastern enlargement of NATO, America became the security guarantor. Poland is a middle-sized power and is important because of the eastward location of its borders. The strategic and the economic significance of the region are increasing because of the energy supply lines and the new strategic plan of the US. Warsaw decided to apply for NATO membership as early as 1992, and Poland and the United States institutionalized their collaboration. NATO membership was the best possible guarantee for security and was also recognition of Poland's participation in the transatlantic community. Poland passed the first test as NATO member in connection with the Alliance's 1999 military operations against Yugoslavia and confirmed its image as one of the United States' major partners in Europe. In June 2001, US President George W. Bush

¹⁷⁸ Podraza, Andrzej, "Central Europe in the Process of European Integration: A Comparative Study of Strategies of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia Towards Deepening and Widening of the EU", Research Support Scheme, 2000, see, <http://e-lib.rss.cz>

chose Warsaw to announce the vision of America's policy and a new stage in NATO enlargement when he was visiting Europe.

In addition, Poland supported its big ally by contributing troops to Afghanistan and Iraq. After 11 September 2001, Poland moved closer to the US than many other West European allies. On 18 September 2001, President Kwasniewski confirmed Poland's readiness to co-operate in the long war on terrorism. The relevant conference took place in Warsaw on 6 November and was attended by 17 presidents or their representatives from the countries of Eastern and Central Europe. They signed a declaration regarding the fight against terrorism and adopted an Action Plan providing for and setting up a foundation to aid victims of terrorism. Poland began to prepare for the operation "Enduring Freedom". This was a vital topic of the program of the visits to the US paid by Marek Siwiec, head of the National Security Bureau, and Minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, and Prime Minister Leszek Miller. On 22 November 2001, the Polish president approved the participation of a Polish military contingent of 300 men in an anti-terrorist military operation in Afghanistan.

Poland continued its policy of rapprochement with the US. When visiting Washington in April, 2001 Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Władysław Bartoszewski received many assurances that US-Polish relations, built on the foundation of strategic partnership, were reaching beyond East Central Europe¹⁷⁹. As the war on terrorism deepened, the White House took a more unilateralist approach, symbolized by President Bush's "Axis of Evil" speech in January 2002. This led to a view both in the U.S. and in Europe that the Bush administration had written off NATO and would work with Britain and any allies who could provide military support. It would also develop a new relationship with Russia and other states, especially in Central and South Asia that could help fight Al-Qaeda. The US administration had a new perspective after 11 September, when President Bush categorized the states as "the enemy" and "the ally" and the Iraq crisis followed.

¹⁷⁹ See interview, Minister Bartoszewski gave to Rzeczpospolita, 9 April 2001.

Under these conditions, the European Union has realized the importance of the CFSP and tried to institutionalize more effectively a common European foreign policy. The Iraqi crisis divided Europe into two halves with Donald Rumsfeld's identification of a new and an old Europe. By "old Europe" he meant on the axis of France-Germany, and the "new Europe" consisted of the eastern European states and the UK, Spain, Italy, Denmark and Portugal. Before the latest Union enlargement, an anti-American, "old European", France hinted that the EU membership applications of the pro-US candidate countries, including Poland, could be reviewed. Therefore, although Poland has been accepted as a full member of the European Union in 1 May 2004, the Iraq war demonstrated that the country's leadership was also anxious to deepen its relations with the US and was prepared to operate as a sort of advocate for American interests in Europe. "Recent developments in relations between Europe and the United States suggest that Poland's role as a regional power will be of even greater consequence."¹⁸⁰ As Janusz Bugaski wrote in his article, Poland can be said "to form the core of 'Euramerica', in stark contrast to the Russian-centered 'Eurasia', in the New Europe and this has provoked consternation and criticism in some of the EU capitals."¹⁸¹

Robert Kagan's argument¹⁸² was that "whilst Europe needs multilateral institutions to compensate for its relative weakness, America, given its far greater power, sees

¹⁸⁰ Zabarowski, Marcin, "Between Power and Weakness: Poland-A New Actor in the Transatlantic Security", Reports and Analyses, Center for International Relations, 2003. See also, Rifkind, Malcolm, "America and Europe – Marriage or Divorce ?", The 2004 Ruttberg Lecture, Centre for Policy Studies, 10 February 2004.

¹⁸¹ Bugaski, Janusz, "Poland: The New European Power", Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C., June 2003, see, <http://www.csis.org>

¹⁸² For more information see Robert Kagan, "Power and Weakness", Policy Review, No. 113, June 2002, available at <http://www.policyreview.org>

multilateral organizations as restraining rather than empowering.¹⁸³ However, there are different perspectives in Europe as in the case of Poland. In Europe, it is the Franco-German axis that determines the European perspective. Moreover, in the debates on the European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI), Poland supported the position represented by the United States and confirmed that it is a complementary component of NATO. NATO was still the best security guarantee of Europe because “the Iraq war exploded the myth that Europe was prepared to speak with one voice on issues touching European security.”¹⁸⁴ Poland counters French attempts in particular to push Washington out of European affairs by developing a singular and distinct European foreign and defense policy. So the development of the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defense Policy should be subordinated to the consolidation of the trans-atlantic tie¹⁸⁵. Poland wants to promote the European security identity but without weakening the US role in the international security system.

2) Iraq Involvement

The commitment by the Polish government to the Iraq war was controversial inside Poland itself. Currently, more than half of the Polish population opposes participation by its troops in Iraq. On 17 March 2003, three days before the war started, President Aleksander Kwasniewski and Prime Minister Leszek Miller demonstrated their disregard for public opinion and stated bluntly at a press conference that they had agreed to send troops. As Defense Minister Szmajdzinski said on 6 May 2003, the US gave an assurance to finance a Polish peacekeeping contingent in Iraq with tens of millions of dollars. The US liked to see

¹⁸³ Zabarowski, Marcin, “Between Power and Weakness: Poland-A New Actor in the Transatlantic Security”, Reports and Analyses, Center for International Relations, 2003. See also, Osica, Olaf, “Poland between America and Europe: Distorted Perspectives”, Tygodnik Powszechny, No. 20, 2001.

¹⁸⁴ Umbach, Frank, “The Future of the ESDP”, Reports and Analyses 20/03, Center for International Relations, 2003.

¹⁸⁵ Cimoszewicz, Włodzimierz, Minister of Foreign Affairs since October 2001, “Poland’s Raison d’etat and the International Environment”, Polish Foreign Policy Yearbook, 2003.

Poland as a leader in the peacekeeping force¹⁸⁶. So Poland undertook the mission to organize the peacekeeping effort in one of the four security zones in Iraq designated by the US. Many analysts, like London-based analyst Charles Heyman of Jane's military publishing group, said that Poland could not be allowed to fail because the "NATO alliance agreed at a meeting in Madrid to provide Poland with backup on intelligence, communications, logistic, movement coordination, and force generation"¹⁸⁷.

In the post-war period, steps have been outlined for Poland to head one of the four stabilization zones in post-Saddam Iraq. In addition, former Polish Finance Minister Marek Belka was slated to become deputy chief of the US Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance for Iraq. "U.S. led efforts to show wide international support for the new order in Iraq moved ahead as at least 10 nations planned to contribute troops to help maintain stability in the country."¹⁸⁸ Various Iraqi groups began to organize local resistance in Iraq and many commentators say that Iraq has become a "new Vietnam". In that period terrorist attacks increased against pro-US countries, and Poland is worrying about it and wants to withdraw their troops as soon as the situation in Iraq is stabilized. On the other hand, it is still working as a peacekeeper in Iraq and as President Kwasniewski stated in March 2004, Poland does not regret supporting Iraq war and believes that there will be a bigger chaos in Iraq if it pulls out its troops. On 21 April 2004, Defense Minister Jerzy Szmajdzinski said that Warsaw hopes to reduce its military presence in Iraq in 2005. He added that Polish and U.S commanders are working now on a re-organization of the Polish led multinational division in Iraq after Spain, Honduras, and the Dominican Republic announced in Spring 2004 plans to withdraw their troops from Iraq. Recently, there has been

¹⁸⁶ Graham, Bradley, "U.S to Help Finance Polish Peacekeepers", Washington Post, May 6, 2003.

¹⁸⁷ O'Rourke, Breffni, "Iraq: Is Poland Up to The Task of Directing A Peacekeeping Zone?", RFE/RL, June, 2003.

¹⁸⁸ Recknagel, Charles, "Iraq: Poland Announces Creation of Mostly European Stability Force", RFE/RL, 06 May 2003, see, <http://www.rferl.org/nca/features>

a feeling in Poland that America was not doing enough to support the Polish effort in Iraq. However, on 27 January 2004, President Bush stated that his 2005 budget request included a \$66 million request to help the Polish military, particularly with airlift capacity, and C-130 aircraft¹⁸⁹.

The US considers Poland as a regional leader and Poland was pleased to be in that position because it answers its national security interest. Moreover, the US gave financial assistance to Poland to consolidate its role in the region. The Polish-American Enterprise Fund (PAEF) was the one of the most important form of this aid. Another form of co-operation, supported by the US was the Polish-American-Ukrainian co-operation Initiative (PAUCI), an economic program based on macroeconomic reforms and the development of small businesses and local government in Ukraine. The U.S supported these co-operative ventures to make Poland an advocate of the interests of its eastern neighbors, Ukraine in particular, in their efforts to forge closer links with the United States, NATO, and the European Union.

Poland contributed to the Iraq operation to control the oil fields and to have a key position in the Central East region, as Polish Foreign Minister Cimoszewicz stated. In July 2003, the foreign minister made it clear that Poland was one of the states that were paying attention to rebuild Iraq. "Access to the oilfields," he announced at a business meeting where Polish firms signed contracts for rebuilding Iraq, was always "our ultimate objective."¹⁹⁰ Iraqi oil was important to Poland for the same reasons it was important to other countries. In addition, it would lessen Poland's energy dependence on Russia. Polish oil companies wanted to expand and become international players, and Iraqi oil was the best way to achieve these objectives.

¹⁸⁹ Press meeting at the Oval Office with President George W. Bush and President Aleksander Kwasniewski, see, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/01>

¹⁹⁰ See "Poland Seeks Iraqi Oil Stake", BBC News World Service, 3 July 2003.

Although Poland has become a strategic partner of the United States in Eastern Europe, Russia still plays a crucial role in international security and President Putin's invitation to Camp David for a summit with President Bush in September 2003 illustrated its importance. But pro-American Poland is playing a leading role as a bridge-builder, intermediary, and connector in the Central and East European region in the framework of its European integration process. "As a result, what has been dubbed Poland's 'instinctive Atlanticism' may prove more of a liability than an asset."¹⁹¹ Poland tries to be simultaneously with America and Europe and also to keep its "east" identity.

"Washington is planning to move military bases from Germany to Poland, indicating that some of the older allies are no longer viewed as fully dependable or their positions are no longer perceived as strategically significant."¹⁹² That it will be a crucial step for the international security system. Poland will remain one of America's closest allies and will support the US. The EU membership of Poland may lessen Warsaw's pro-American foreign policy but the security interests of Poland will counter this probability. "Some commentators believe that Washington is deliberately playing the Polish card against the EU and even against Russia."¹⁹³ So this situation might deepen the challenge between the EU and the USA over security issues.

¹⁹¹ Zaborowski, Marcin and Kerry Longhurst, "America's Protégé in the East: The Emergence of Poland as a Regional Leader," *International Affairs*, Vol. 79, No. 5, October 2003, pp. 1009–1028.

¹⁹² *Ibid.* *idem.*

¹⁹³ Bugajski, Januzs, "Poland: The New European Power", Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C, June 2003.

B) EU-Poland Relations

Throughout the post communist transformation process, the goal of becoming integrated with the West has always been present in Polish politics¹⁹⁴. In September 1989, Poland signed a Trade and Cooperation Agreement with the European Union, which was a non-preferential agreement providing reciprocal most favored nation status. A more important step in Poland's relations with the Union was taken on 16 December 1991, with the signing of the European Agreement. This Agreement is accepted as the legal basis of Poland's relations with the Union. Finally, Poland submitted its application to the Union for full membership on 5 April 1994. In addition, Poland was accepted in 1996 as a member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation. In early 1997, the Polish government published its National Integration Strategy Program to set out a plan to prepare it for EU accession.

In June 1997, the European Commission published its Agenda 2000 report, which included very important decisions for the membership of the Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs). It provided a clearer picture of how the Union could proceed, and proposed that enlargement negotiations could be opened with five CEECs, namely Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovenia, and Estonia. In December 1997, at its Luxemburg Summit, the European Council, with the recommendation of the Commission, decided to start accession negotiations with the five CEECs. On 30 March 1998, accession negotiations between Poland and the EU started. In December 1999, the European Commission adopted a revised version of an Accession Partnership (AP) with Poland¹⁹⁵. Besides the Accession Partnership, the Commission presented regular reports to Poland. Until 2003 these reports

¹⁹⁴ Michta, A. Andrew, "Democratic Consolidation in Poland After 1989", quoted as in Dawisha, Karen and Bruce Parrott, *Democracy in East-Central Europe*, UK, Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp. 66-108.

¹⁹⁵ European Commission, "Accession Partnership 1999: Poland", Brussels, 13 October 1999.

pointed out the progress made by Poland and the problems still to be solved. The accession negotiations with Poland were successfully concluded on 13 December 2002.

In a June 2003 referendum, more than 77 percent of the Polish voters said "yes" to EU membership. However, the latest opinion polls show that this support has fallen well below 50 percent. There were some concerns in Poland about EU membership. Generally, most Poles were afraid that it might not bring the economic advantages advertised by the government during the accession talks. In addition, the Polish farming sector was the most pessimistic sector¹⁹⁶. Poland's unemployment rate has been fluctuating between 18 and 20 percent in the past year, which translates into nearly 3.5 million job seekers. Before 1 May 2004, Poland was dreaming of a "Europe" that can deal with unemployment, exclusion, and corruption. Poland is a large country and still has economic problems, so the absorption of the country will be an economic and political test for the European Union, and an indicator of whether the Union is ready and willing to accept other heavyweights such as Turkey in the future¹⁹⁷.

Poland has actively joined in the debate on the future shape of Europe. The negotiations on the European constitution in the framework of the Intergovernmental Conference were not easy. The constitution and the voting system were the big issues and the referendum held in June 2003 was also affected by these debates. According to Krzysztof Bobinski, director of Unia-Polska, a pro-EU group based in Warsaw, Poles voted in the referendum in favor of the Nice Formula¹⁹⁸. According to the Nice Formula, large member

¹⁹⁶ More than 2 million farms in Poland are small and poorly equipped to compete with West European farmers on an expanded market of 450 million consumers. Initially, Polish farmers will be additionally handicapped by the EU's system of direct farm subsidies. They will receive just 25, 30, and 35 percent of full EU subsidies in 2004, 2005, 2006, respectively. No one can predict how enlargement will affect and alter the Polish agricultural sector.

¹⁹⁷ Fuller, Thomas, "The Absorption of a struggling giant will be a major test for EU", International Herald Tribune, 18 November 2003.

¹⁹⁸ Baker, Mark, "Poland: Warsaw Is Poles Apart On EU Constitution Issue", RFE/RL, 6 November 2003, see, <http://www.rferl.org/nca/features>

States have almost 10 times more voting rights than the smallest member. In comparison, large members have only have five times more voting rights than the smallest country. The voting shares of large member states' voting shares are increasing from 7.5% to 8.4%. On this basis, the countries that benefit the most from the reform are Spain and Poland. Their voting rights might increase from 6.0% to 7.8%. So under the Nice Treaty, Poland, by far the largest of the eight Central and East European countries, will have 27 votes, just two shy of the number that Germany has despite having a population twice as large.

When Poland took a hard line policy in the constitution debate, the EU states reacted negatively to Poland's approach, and most of them termed it as a tough, self-centered and uncompromising. In addition, as Ian Black said, Poland was "gaining a reputation as an awkward partner."¹⁹⁹ Therefore, Warsaw became the newest "troublemaker" of the EU that is loyal to the U.S and it is disdainful of Franco-German plans for European defense²⁰⁰. Poland did not want to be a passive observer of developments in a uniting Europe. Even though, Germany and France warned Spain and Poland in November 2003 that they risked loosing billions of euros of European Union aid if they disrupted talks on a new EU constitution, Poland did not accept a compromise until December. Afterwards, it softened its approach before gaining full membership in the EU. As financier and philanthropist George Soros wrote in a column for Project Syndicate in March, "The most powerful tool that the EU has for influencing political and economic developments in neighboring countries is the prospect of membership."²⁰¹

On 30 March 2004, Polish leaders indicated have that their country will hold a referendum to ratify the EU's Constitution and President Kwasniewski stated it would be

¹⁹⁹ Guardian Newspapers, "Poles Apart", Special Reports, Guardian, 10 December 2003.

²⁰⁰ Wajman, Slawomir, "The Tough Guys From Warsaw", The Warsaw Voice, 19 November 2003.

²⁰¹ Allnut, Luke, "Analysis: Where Does Europe's Enlargement End?", RFE/RL, 3 May 2004.

difficult not to have one on the European Constitution because there had been a referendum on Polish membership of the EU.²⁰² Therefore, Warsaw began to make some conciliatory statements indicating that an agreement could be reached soon on the issue of vote weighting. According to Jerzy Surdykowski, former consul general in New York, the EU is no longer the tempting and colorful supermarket. Now the candidates entered into the EU and faced this reality. "The EU has problems with itself, with its behemoth bureaucracy, sluggish growth, ageing population."²⁰³ Although Poland has recently taken a differing view on several European Union issues- like the Common Agricultural Policy, voting system, budget policy etc. - with the core member states of the EU, it determined its priority to rebuild a special trust in its relations with Germany and France. The core member states effectively control the EU budget, and this motivated Poland to seek a compromise.

Following ratification of the Treaty of Accession, Poland joined the EU on 1 May 2004. One can say that Poland has joined the EU at a time when the Union is in turmoil about Iraq, its constitution, its institutions, and its weighted decision-making structure. On the other hand, Poland's support for the Iraq operation, aimed to ensure a crucial role in the international arena and also in the region as well as in the EU, damaged Warsaw's relations with France and Germany. The new member states of the EU, including Poland, are following the American line and their own vision of security is much more linked to NATO and Washington. They are opposed to a separation of the EU and NATO. "They do tend to oppose any attempt at weakening the EU-NATO link, or any attempt at weakening the US role in European security."²⁰⁴ Poland is a very large and strategically important country for the European Union, so it was very difficult to exclude Poland from the enlargement process.

²⁰² Frydrych, Marcin, "Poland Ready For Referendum on Constitution", EUobserver, 25 March 2004.

²⁰³ Financial Times, "Foreign Policy: Poland Needs to Redefine Its National Interests as Pro-Western Consensus is No Longer enough", Europe Intelligence Wire, 22 April 2004.

²⁰⁴ Druker, Jeremy, "New Members, New Challenges for EU Defense Policy", International Relations and Security Network, Security Watch, 06 May 2004, see, <http://www.isn.ethz.ch>

On the other hand, Poland's loyalty to the United States has created different opinions and concerns in Brussels about Warsaw's dependability to the EU. Some EU diplomats have even dubbed "Poland as an American vassal or Washington's 'Trojan horse' in Europe, indicating a fear that through Warsaw and other Central European capitals the White House will acquire substantial influence over EU policy."²⁰⁵

Poland was turning into a regional partner of the United States also in policies towards Ukraine and other countries of the region. In the American perspective, Poland's importance appeared to grow not only in view of Poland's role in the East, but also of the processes within the EU.

1) The Eastern Dimension

Poland's EU membership will have a profound impact on its relations with its eastern neighbors. From the very beginning of the accession negotiations, its priority has been to prevent the eastern border from turning into a new curtain. Poland has joined the EU not to turn her back on her eastern neighbors but on the contrary, to promote the cause of their integration with Europe. Therefore, Poland's ambition is to contribute to the Union's policy towards its future eastern neighbors. "The Polish *raison d'état* makes it imperative to tighten up these neighbors' European affinities, support their European aspirations and prevent divisions in Poland's part of Europe."²⁰⁶ All political forces are aware of the big weight of Poland's eastern neighbors in the context of national security, political and economic interests, but also history and culture.

²⁰⁵ Bugajski, Janusz, "Poland: The New European Power", Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C., June 2003.

²⁰⁶ Cimoszewicz, Włodzimierz, "Poland's *Raison d'état* and the New International Environment", Polish Foreign Policy Yearbook, 2003.

For years, Western European countries have looked at the East of Europe as a source of threat. This threat from the East is now gone and the West has now switched its attention to the Middle East as the main source of strategic threats to Europe. These include international terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and regional conflicts. However, Eastern Europe should not be overshadowed by the shift of Europe's strategic interests, as it remains important for the future of the entire continent. Particularly after September 11, 2001 security ranks high in EU priorities and its external relations. As a result of the EU enlargement, the importance of co-operation in justice and home affairs with the Union's eastern neighbors will increase even further due to their common border.

The Polish Government recently outlined some ideas which could form a starting point for the "eastern dimension" of the Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy- a coherent, comprehensive framework for the EU external eastern policy towards countries like Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova. Poland put forward the proposals in a form of a non-paper that was submitted to the EU and Eastern European countries in January 2003. In May 2003, Poland submitted another document entitled "The New Neighbors - a framework of relations" which developed the content of its earlier proposal. Poland's role is to act as a lobbyist for the EU widening further east, for example to include Ukraine, because after the enlargement the Ukraine and Belarus have become the EU's nearest neighbors in the east. Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova have potential possibilities for closer cooperation with the European Union. "Ukraine is perhaps the only country in the region that because of its size and potential influence could realize its aspirations in Europe without membership in NATO and the EU but through close cooperation with them."²⁰⁷ Given a stronger involvement of the EU member states, there are chances for this potential to evolve faster in the future. Except for the countries mentioned so far, the EU's "eastern dimension" should not encompass any

²⁰⁷ Reiter, Janusz, "Poland" in Rotfeld, Adam Daniel (ed.), *The New Security Dimensions Europe after the NATO and EU Enlargements*, Report of the Frösunda Conference, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Frösunda, 20-21 April 2001.

other post-Soviet countries in Southern Caucasus or Central Asia. The EU should develop a different mechanism of cooperation with those countries mainly in the area of security and the energy sector²⁰⁸. The EU harbors some suspicions about the CIS and bringing Poland into the EU will give it a badly needed impetus to work out an “eastern Dimension” in an area of western CIS, which is Europe's last gray area²⁰⁹.

Poland emphasizes the need for regional co-operation and not only bilateral links between the EU and individual Eastern neighbors and so the EU's eastern policy should be based on a region-oriented strategy²¹⁰. Poland is particularly active in the Visegrad Group and the Baltic Sea States Council. Implementation of the “eastern dimension” seems to be also one of the potential areas of Poland's close cooperation with Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, and owing to such initiative, this cooperation will get stronger in the future.

Relations with Russia may pose a challenge to the EU's “eastern dimension”. It is a fact that the EU can hardly contemplate Russia's membership in the Union. It is equally hard to treat Russia like Belarus and Ukraine, and Putin's presidency demonstrates that a dynamically changing Russia may become one of the EU's key political partners in global politics²¹¹. In the framework of the “eastern dimension”, there are four areas in Russia that

²⁰⁸ Cichoński, Jacek-Marek and Kowal, Paweł, “Poland and the EU's Eastern Dimension” in Kowal, Paweł (ed.), Bohdan Ambroziwicz (translation), “The EU's ‘Eastern Dimension’-An Opportunity for or *Idée Fixe* of Poland's Policy?”, Centre for International Relations, Warsaw 2002, see, <http://www.csm.org.pl/en/>

²⁰⁹ Financial Times, 10 June 2003. See also Kuzio, Taras, “Poland Revives Itself as a ‘Great Power.’”, RFE/RL, Poland, Belarus, Ukraine Report, Vol. 5, No. 27, 22 July 2003.

²¹⁰ Speech by Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, “The Eastern Policy of the European Union”, Paris, Institute of Political Science, April 22, 2004.

²¹¹ Cichoński Jacek-Marek and Paweł Kowal, “Poland and the EU's Eastern Dimension” in Kowal, Paweł (ed.), Bohdan Ambroziwicz (translation), “The EU's ‘Eastern Dimension’-An Opportunity for or *Idée Fixe* of Poland's Policy?”, Centre for International Relations, Warsaw 2002, see, <http://www.csm.org.pl/en/>

have potential energy (pipelines), security (borders), Kaliningrad, and Chechnya²¹². Poland has an opportunity to give its views about the Kaliningrad enclave²¹³ so this would improve the “eastern dimension” of the EU.

2) Core Countries: Germany and France

“German-Polish relations after 1989 are a model for an intensifying European integration.”²¹⁴ Poland’s desire to “return to Europe” has led to the creation of a legislative framework that aims to ensure the rights of the German minority. “The German minority has pursued a dual strategy of empowerment: firstly, it has successfully participated in democratic forces at all levels in Poland.”²¹⁵ During the 1990s, “The road of Poland to the European Union leads through Germany” was the most popular phrase²¹⁶. In 17 June 1991, the German-Polish Treaty on Good Neighborly and Friendly Co-operation was signed which includes several articles relating to the treatment of the German minority in Poland and the Polish minority²¹⁷ in Germany.

²¹² Andrey S. Makarychev, “Europe’s Eastern Dimension Russia’s Reaction to Poland’s Initiative”, PONARS, Policy Memo, No. 301, November 2003.

²¹³ Kaliningrad was a former German city called *Königsberg* that became a Russian oblast in 1946 after the Second World War. The majority of the population is Russian, and there are few ethnic Germans.

²¹⁴ Feldmann, Eva and Seven Bernhard Gareis, “Poland’s Role in NATO: The Significance of Foreign Assistance for the Stabilization of Eastern Europe”, *Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 1998 quoted as in Paquette, Laure, *Nato and Eastern Europe After 2000*, Nova, 2001, p. 40.

²¹⁵ Fleming, Michael, “The Limits of German Minority Project in Post-communists Poland: Scale, Space and Democratic Deliberation”, *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 31, No. 4, December 2003, p. 402.

²¹⁶ Lebioda, Tadeusz, “Poland, die Vertriebenen, and the road to integration with the European Union” in Cordell, Karl (ed.), *Poland and the EU*, Routledge, 2000, p. 165.

²¹⁷ For further information on German minorities see, Kamusella Tomasz, “Asserting Minority Rights in Poland”, *Transitions*, Vol. 2, No. 39, February 1996 and Michael Fleming, “The New Minority Rights Regime in Poland: the Experience of the German and Jewish minorities since 1989”, *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol. 8, No. 4, 2002, pp. 531-548.

In addition, Poland joined the Weimar Triangle and it was the only country in Eastern Europe so far which integrated into such a "Euro-Trio".²¹⁸ Weimar group was established in the German city of Weimar in 1991, aimed at assisting Poland's emergence from Communist rule. The group is intended to promote co-operation between France, Germany and Poland. It exists mostly in the form of summit meetings between the leaders. Poland and Germany signed an agreement on military cooperation on 25 January 1993, which covered all aspects of exchange of information and military cooperation. For Poland, Germany was the window to Western Europe and for Germany; a stable democratic Poland was a vital security asset at its eastern periphery. Bilateral relations with Germany were also a temporary alternative to NATO because united Germany was under the security wing of NATO and it was no longer a threat to Poland but had a channel between Poland and NATO.²¹⁹

For several reasons, Polish fears of Germany and the Germans continued to decline during the middle of the 1990s. A declaration of the Bundestag on 29 May 1998 stated that "the expellees and the German minority in Poland are the bridge between Germany and its eastern neighbor".²²⁰ "German Chancellor Helmut Kohl emphasized his support for Polish membership in the EU and NATO on a visit to southwest Poland in June 1998, a year marked by a convergence of foreign policy and common interests."²²¹

After 1999, German-Polish relations entered in a stage of normalcy and were defined as a "community of interests." Co-operation would influence the quality of European

²¹⁸ Guérin, Valérie- Sendelbach and Rulkowski, Jacek, "Euro-Trio France-Germany-Poland", *Aussenpolitik*, Vol. 3, 1994.

²¹⁹ Rachwald, Arthur, "Looking West" in Prizel, Ilya and Andrew A. Michta (eds.), "Polish Foreign Policy Reconsidered: Challenges of Independence", St.Martin's Press, 1995, p. 135.

²²⁰ Lebioda, Tadeusz, p. 178.

²²¹ Kranz , Jerzy, "Poland and Germany", *Polish Quarterly of International Affairs*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 1998 quoted as in Paquette, Laure, "Nato and Eastern Europe after 2000", Nova, 2001, p. 40.

integration so Poland tried to strengthen its relations financially and politically²²². The main events in Polish-German relations in 2002 were the first official state visit in Germany by President Aleksander Kwaśniewski and the fifth annual intergovernmental consultations. Kwaśniewski put forward a proposal to draw up a comprehensive program for the development of the Polish-German borderlands. In 2002, Germany was Poland's leading trade partner while France was Poland's main foreign investor. This is yet another reason for building a good partnership. "The Gdańsk declaration of the two Presidents, issued in October 2003, is an example of a constructive approach to solving such problems."²²³

In 2002, Germany put emphasis on Poland's accession to the European Union and joint action within the enlarged Union, including in its eastern policy. In addition, the integration of Polish agriculture and the Kaliningrad problem were the other important issues for Germany. At the end of that year, Polish-German relations were satisfactory for both sides as Poland and other candidate countries finalized the negotiations on the date and terms of accession to the European Union²²⁴.

France always perceived EU enlargement as a threat rather than a chance for the promotion of French interests. It would like to build a strong Europe without an American influence. Therefore, France did not support NATO enlargement and harbored some suspicions about the pro-American central and eastern European candidate countries, including Poland. France strengthened its relations with Germany and revived the Franco-German alliance for a "strong Europe". Before the last enlargement, the EU states experienced some problems in the process of drafting the Europe's first constitution²²⁵. The

²²² Czech, Marcin, "Relations with Germany", Polish Foreign Policy Yearbook, 2000, p. 124.

²²³ Cimoszewicz, Włodzimierz, Government information on the Polish foreign policy in the year 2004, presented at the session of the Sejm, January 21, 2004, see, <http://www.mfa.gov.pl>

²²⁴ Pomianowski, Wojciech, "Germany", Polish Foreign Yearbook, 2003.

²²⁵ The Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) started in Rome 4 October 2003 with the aim of agreeing a new European Constitution to replace the current EU treaties.

Franco-German alliance put its weight on this debate. According to the core countries, Poland and the other candidates would be weak partners and would not be equal players in the EU game. However, Poland had a word to say on European issues. Except for the constitutional debate and the agriculture problem, the other important discussion point was about the Polish initiative to insert a preamble recognizing Europe's "Christian" heritage²²⁶.

The most contested issue was the new voting system that has pitted Germany-which has most to gain from the new system-against Poland and Spain-who have the most to lose. Poland did not remain silent and put on pressure to solve on the issue of vote weighting. It opposed the system which determines the balance of power in the EU, and wanted to keep the current Nice Treaty that gives Poland a great weight than allowed by its population. The Franco-German alliance used the "EU membership" card to persuade Poland to make a compromise.

In 9 May 2003, during the Weimar Triangle Summit in Wroclaw, the Presidents of the Republic of Poland and the Republic of France and the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany adopted a joint declaration. They confirmed the significance of the Weimar Triangle, which will continue to serve the purpose of "further strengthening the ties of cooperation between the three nations and states at all levels and in all areas". As a framework of dialogue and cooperation between the three partners, the Weimar Triangle might initiate and propose ideas for the benefit of an enlarged Union. From this perspective, France and Germany decided to invite Poland to join in the discussions on the development of common policies, in particular the Common Agricultural Policy, the economic and social cohesion policy, and the transport policy. Also Chirac, Kwasniewski, and Schröder agreed that they would step up measures aimed at reaching agreement on the development of European foreign and defense policies by engagement in regular trilateral consultations.

²²⁶ Taras, Ray, "Poland's Diplomatic Misadventure in Iraq", *Problems of Post-Communism*, January/February 2004.

On 13 December 2003, talks on an EU Constitution broke down without any agreement. A few days later, six EU countries wanted to limit future EU spending that would have badly hit Spain and Poland²²⁷. One might say that the discussion of the constitution is linked to the economic and financial hesitations of the core countries. Germany did not support Poland in the constitutional debate and Poland's role in the Iraq war changed the positive and close relationship between them. After Poland's entry into the EU, Germany's strategic importance has changed because the border of the Union moved from Germany to Poland's eastern border. With the latest EU enlargement, the centre of gravity of Europe has moved to the east. However, Germany remains the main donor and financial partner for Poland. It has specifically threatened to use its influence to reduce EU funds to Poland if the latter resisted a rebalancing of votes. In addition, one should remember that until November 2009 Poland will have only two votes less than Germany in the EU Council of Ministers.

C) NATO-Poland Relations

Polish Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski paid an official visit to NATO Headquarters in Brussels on 21 March 1990 and launched the official contacts between Poland and NATO. Poland's official cooperation with NATO began in December 1991 when, at the Rome summit, nine countries from CEE (including Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia) and South Central Europe (SCE) were invited to join the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC).

In 1992, Poland's membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was declared a strategic goal of Polish security policy. At that time, the Committee of State

²²⁷ For more information on this discussion see Rafal Trzaskowski, "From candidate to member state: Poland and the future of the EU", Occasional Papers, EU Institute for Security Studies, September 2002 and Jens-Peter Bonde, "An EU Constitution short of one line", EUobserver, Comment, 16 December 2003.

Defense adopted two documents: "Foundations of Poland's Security Policy and Security Policy" and "Defense Strategy of the Republic of Poland."²²⁸ Since the formal dissolution of the Warsaw Pact in 1991, "Poland has existed in a security vacuum created in East-Central Europe by the implosion of the Soviet empire and by the reunification of Germany within the framework of NATO and the EU."²²⁹ Poland has defined the goal of NATO membership as a vital national security interest but at the same time tried to avoid opposition toward Russia because of the geopolitical importance of that country. In December 1993, Foreign Minister Andrzej Olechowski outlined Poland's national security interests. According to him, the security vacuum was creating a dangerous situation in east-central Europe, and a refusal by the West could even create more instability not only for Poland but also in the whole region²³⁰. In late 1993, Poland redoubled its efforts to be included in NATO, the more so, "because Russia's military agreements with Belarus and its unyielding pressure on Ukraine raised the possibility that Moscow would restore its control over the two 'near-abroad' republics."²³¹

In 1994, the U.S. turned down the application of the Visegrad Group states for NATO and President Bill Clinton proposed a new formula called Partnership for Peace (PfP) for the candidate countries. Poland accepted PfP as a road map to reach NATO membership. However, there were still some open questions about how a state was to move from partnership in the PfP to full NATO membership. In the spring of 1994, after the disappointment of NATO's refusal to consider them, nine former Soviet states, including Poland, signed an agreement with the Western European Union (WEU) granting them

²²⁸ Pastusiak, Longin, "Poland on Her Way to NATO", *European Security*, Vol. 7, No. 2, Summer 1998, pp. 54-62.

²²⁹ Michta, Andrew A., "Safeguarding the Third Republic: Security Policy and Military Reform" in Prizel, Ilya and Andrew A. Michta (eds.), "Polish Foreign Policy Reconsidered, Challenges of Independence", St. Martin's Press, 1995, p. 74.

²³⁰ Michta, Andrew A., p. 75.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

associate partnership status with the organization. After 1994, Poland reconsidered its security policy. It would protect its independence and national interest while trying to have a strong economic and political relationship with Russia. Because it was clear that Poland's position and importance depended on its role and position in the east. After Poland's inclusion in the NACC and PfP, association with the WEU presented another test for the country's eventual admission to NATO²³². In April 1995, the US House of Representatives passed a resolution supporting NATO expansion into Eastern Europe. In response, Russia threatened to scrap both the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START-2) and the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaties if the Visegrad four- Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia- were granted accession to NATO. To counter Russian influence, Poland redoubled efforts to secure speedy admission.

In late May 1997 at the NATO summit in Sintra the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) was created with forty-four members to replace NACC as another step toward closer cooperation. Finally, in July 1997 at its Madrid summit, NATO extended its invitation for full membership to Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary but left out Slovenia and Romania²³³.

The United States supported Polish NATO membership especially in 1998 when President Bill Clinton expressed strong support for Poland's effort in building ties with its neighbors and efforts to promote stability, democracy, and free market economics throughout Central and Eastern Europe. According to Clinton, Poland's contribution to the international effort to create stability in the Former Yugoslavia was a positive step. Moreover, the U.S promoted trilateral economic cooperation between the United States,

²³² Taras, Ray, *Consolidating Democracy in Poland*, Westview, Boulder, 1995, p. 248.

²³³ Steves, F., "Poland and the International System: External Influences on Democratic Consolidation", *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, Vol. 34, 2001, pp. 339-352.

Poland, and Ukraine²³⁴. In 1999, just before its admission to NATO, Poland believed that, as a member of NATO, it could be even better placed to improve relations with its eastern neighbors. According to Polish foreign minister Bronislaw Geremek, Ukrainian independence was deeply rooted in the Polish national interest, and Ukraine saw Poland's accession to NATO as a chance for its own security. On the other hand, Belarus was displeased by NATO's enlargement. Belarusian officials, and particularly President Alyaksandr Lukashenka, were clearly opposed to NATO's eastward enlargement and saw it as a threat to their country's security²³⁵.

The NATO-Russia Founding Act of 1997 was signed prior to the Madrid Summit to appease Yeltsin. On 12 March 1999, Poland formally joined NATO. With its accession, it had achieved a key objective of its foreign and security policy. Although Russia underwent a big decline in its international influence, its shadow was still over the region as Geremek stated. All along, Moscow had strongly opposed Poland's entry into NATO but had no choice but to accept it. Poland is also interested in a comprehensive involvement in the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). Together with other members of NATO, it urges that cooperation between the ESDP and NATO be as close as possible. "As a result of Poland's accession and an enlarged NATO Alliance, Poland became both the glue and backbone of the ESDP."²³⁶ One can argue that the ESDP relieves significant overseas presence requirements of U.S. forces.

Although there is still a debate about Poland's security options, Warsaw is clearly favors balancing both the "European" and "Atlantic" options of security and defense co-

²³⁴ Joint Statement, U.S.-Polish Relations, 10 July 1998.
See <http://www.fas.org/man/nato/national/980710-nato.htm>

²³⁵ Weydenthal, Jan de, "Foreign Minister Comments on Poland's Eastern Policy After its Entry into NATO", RFE/RL, 1999.

²³⁶ Eisold, Daine E., "NATO Enlargement: Poland's Response: Is the United States getting what it bargained for?", Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, No. 99, Harvard University, 2000, see, <http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu>

operation. NATO remains the fundamental platform of transatlantic cooperation and the North Atlantic Alliance is still the main guarantor of Poland's security. Poland, which always felt itself sandwiched between Germany and Russia, saw its geostrategic situation changed after NATO membership. Warsaw lost its security hesitations with its NATO membership. "Furthermore, it was hoped that full NATO engagement in Eastern Europe would prevent the US to return to isolationism."²³⁷

1) The Eastern Policy of NATO and Polish Reaction

At NATO's Prague Summit in November 2001, the agreement of the 19 NATO member states to expand membership to 26 within two years by inviting seven nations to join the alliance was the most important decision taken. It was a major step toward ending the division of Europe which resulted from World War II and the Cold War. However, "unlike the first post-Cold War enlargement of 1997, the enlargement raises serious questions about the governance of the alliance. Going from 16 to 19 is one thing, but going from 19 to 26 is not only quantitatively different, but qualitatively as well."²³⁸ U.S. Senator Christopher Dodd has described the greatest challenge facing NATO after Prague as that of "reconciling an expanding membership with the ability of the organization to act cohesively and expeditiously".²³⁹ At the Prague Summit, the only unwelcome guest was Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma, and the big question was about Ukraine's future role in the alliance and Europe.

Over the past few years, NATO has transformed itself and its enlargement is part of the building of its new identity. On 3 September 2003, Poland assumed command of the

²³⁷ Ananicz, A, Poland-NATO Report, Rzeczpospolita, 23 October 1995 quoted as in Steves, F., pp. 339-352.

²³⁸ Goldgeier, J., "Not When, But Who", NATO Review, Spring 2002.

²³⁹ Dodd, C.J., "NATO: The More the Murkier", The Washington Post, 27 November 2002.

Multinational Division (MND) Central South in Iraq as part of the international stabilization force and NATO is supporting Poland in a variety of ways²⁴⁰. The Alliance has taken on a responsible role in Afghanistan, the NATO Headquarters have granted support to Polish activities in Iraq, where NATO could play an even more prominent role in the future. As Polish foreign minister Cimoszewicz put it, "NATO is becoming an institution capable of a selective fulfillment of its tasks even in distant corners of the world."²⁴¹ Poland has been put in charge of one of the four stabilization sectors in Iraq. Polish Ambassador to NATO Jerzy Nowak stated that this would show Poland's "leadership potential." In the Polish-led sector, 1,800 Ukrainian troops work together with 2,200 Poles peacekeeping forces²⁴². Poland supports the concept according to which NATO must focus its attention on areas from where the threat is originating and it is clear that the threat for the alliance has moved to Middle East. Moreover, Poland supports the "open door" policy of the Alliance and thinks that a credit should be given to the Ukrainian reforms, as well as to Kiev's contribution to the stabilization of Iraq. Poland is involved in the work of the NATO-Ukraine Commission and the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council. In the case of the Russian Federation, Poland also wants to be an active participant in the process of formulating the Alliance's policy toward Russia.

Poland promotes the closest possible ties between NATO and Ukraine. "Fully aware that for a variety of reasons, Ukraine could never join NATO, the Poles encourage a pro-Western orientation by Ukraine to check Russian influence over Kiev."²⁴³ Warsaw also

²⁴⁰ NATO Press Release, 3 September 2003.

See <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2003/09/mil-030903-nato01.htm>

²⁴¹ Cimoszewicz, Włodzimierz, Government information on the Polish foreign policy in the year 2004, presented at the session of the Sejm, January 21, 2004, see, <http://www.mfa.gov.pl>

²⁴² Kuzio, Taras, "Poland Revives Itself as a 'Great Power'." Poland, Belarus, Ukraine Report; RFE/RL, Vol. 5, No. 27, 22 July 2003.

²⁴³ Piotrowski, Marcin Andrzej and Arthur R. Rachwald, "Poland: Returning to Europe" in Mattox, Gale A., and Arthur R. Rachwald (eds.), *Enlarging NATO-National Debate*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, London, 2001, p. 124.

supports Ukraine's NATO membership. "Both Poland and Ukraine see the Ukrainian contribution to the Iraq War as a way to earn U.S. support for Ukraine's inclusion in the third round of NATO enlargement in 2007."²⁴⁴ In the past Poland also supported the Baltic States of-Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia- which have now become NATO member states. On the other hand, some analysts in the Central and East European states believe that Russia still does not accept Ukraine as an independent state or as a real partner.

NATO officials say niche contributions will be a key part of a new rapid-deployment force that the alliance unveiled in October 2003. The force currently has 9000 troops and will be expanded to 20,000 by 2006. Poland is a big country and with an eastern border with Ukraine and Belarus, it faces greater security threats than the other new NATO members like the Czech Republic. Thus, it does not have the luxury of only specializing in a few niche areas. "Poland is not small enough to specialize," said Bronislaw Komorowski, deputy chairman of the Sejm's National Defense Committee. "It is a frontier country in NATO and cannot afford to eliminate certain elements of its armed forces. Being a frontier country, we must have a military prepared to defend our territory-land sea and air."²⁴⁵ Consequently, Poland aspires to play a leading role in Central and Eastern Europe.

"On November 2003 NATO announced that an important new Joint Warfare Training Centre would be based in Poland-the first NATO facility ever to be located in any of the former Warsaw Pact states."²⁴⁶ The prospect of U.S bases in Poland raises the question of Russia's reaction. Before NATO was enlarged in 1999 to include Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary, it was agreed that no NATO bases would be located on the territories of

²⁴⁴ Kuzio, Taras, "Poland Revives Itself as a Great Power", Poland, Belarus, Ukraine Report; RFE/RL, Vol. 5, No. 27, 22 July 2003.

²⁴⁵ Whitmore, Brian, "Poland, Czech Republic Take on Different NATO Roles.", RFE/RL, 17 December 2003.

²⁴⁶ Horsley, William, "Analysis: Eastern Europe reborn", BBC News, 6 November 2003.

the new member states. Under this condition, the authorities in Moscow agreed not to oppose the inclusion in the alliance of Russia's former satellite countries and members of the Warsaw Pact. Unofficial reports indicate that the Putin administration has already approved to the U.S. Army's presence in Poland²⁴⁷. On 29 March 2004, NATO formally accepted seven new nations- Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia- into the military alliance, extending the Alliance's frontiers to the Russian border and holding out the possibility for further expansion. Washington stressed the threat of terrorism and its expectations of getting a support for its Afghanistan and Iraq operations²⁴⁸.

II. EASTERN AXIS

A) Eastern Europe

1) Poland- Russia Relations

Poland entered the 21st century with an unprecedented feeling of security and its people are no longer destined to live under the constant danger of being dominated by their big neighbors, Germany and Russia. Reconciliation with former enemies is not only a chance to forget the past; it also provides the foundation for the building future policies on the main axis of European politics, the East-West axis. In this respect, Poland has an important mission to fulfill because it is a natural bridge between Western Europe and the East.

Russia has the potential to become again a specially important country in the future. The importance of Russia is not only due to the historical reasons but also to its geographic location, tremendously large natural resources, and its military capability. After the latest

²⁴⁷ Warsaw Voice, 21 January 2004.

²⁴⁸ Radio Free Europe, Feature Article, 29 March 2004.

EU enlargement, the importance of Russia increased because the country has now become an important neighbor of the Union. The Union should focus on democratization in Russia on “soft security” issues mainly related to the border protection, visa regime (Kaliningrad); on “hard security” issues related to the two-way cooperation model for crisis management and peacekeeping missions; and lastly on the improvement of the economic relations concerning to the energy sector²⁴⁹. NATO-Russian relations remained high on the alliance agenda after the April 2004 NATO enlargement because NATO’s “near abroad” went beyond Russia’s “near abroad”, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer as the alliance’ new secretary-general put it²⁵⁰.

Poland’s relations with the East changed dramatically after the demise of the USSR and Warsaw could now pursue an active policy of reconciliation toward its eastern neighbors. Between May and July 1992, Poland signed bilateral treaties with Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, Latvia, and Estonia.

In Russia, there was period of instability and uncertainty after December 1991. President Boris Yeltsin initiated in 1992 a reform process to integrate to the West, and Russia began a process of democratization with flexible relations with the Eastern European countries. It joined Western organizations such as the Council of Europe and entered into treaty arrangements such as START I, consistently showing that it wished to be taken seriously as a diplomatic power upon which the world could rely. The dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), the treaty between Poland and the Russian Federation in 1992, the withdrawal of Russian armed forces from Poland, and clarifying Russian statements about the murder of Polish officers in Katyn during World War II have ushered in a new relationship between the two countries.

²⁴⁹ Katarzyna Pelczynska-Nalecz, “Russia, a Top Neighbour to the European Union” in Kowal, Pawel (ed.), Bohdan Ambroziewicz (translation), “The EU’s ‘Eastern Dimension’-An Opportunity for or Idée Fixe of Poland’s Policy?”, Centre for International Relations, Warsaw 2002, see, <http://www.csm.org.pl/en/>

²⁵⁰ Hoagland, Jim, “The Great Divide Over Putin”, Washington Post, 18 January 2004, p.7.

In the early 1990s, Poland faced a double foreign policy challenge. While its foreign policy was aimed at “return to Europe”, it could not afford to isolate its large and powerful eastern neighbors. However, Russia’s potential instability kept Poland at a safer distance from Moscow. Poland expanded its “two-track policy” of relations with the central government in Moscow and the emerging independent republic leaderships, especially Ukraine, Belarus and the Baltic states. Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski and his Russian counterpart Andrey Kozyrev agreed on a Declaration of Friendship and Cooperation on 16 October 1990, stating that no territorial claims would be made, and signed a Polish – Soviet state border agreement on 16 August 1945²⁵¹. Bilateral relations with the Russian Federation were initiated in 1990 by the signing of the above mentioned documents. In February, Skubiszewski declared that the speedy dissolution of the Warsaw Pact was one of the aims of Poland’s eastern policy. Finally, the Treaty on Friendly and Good-Neighborly Relations between Poland and the Russian Federation was signed on 22 May 1992. This treaty did not contain any controversial security provisions. The Soviet troop’s withdrawal from Poland began in November 1992, and the last remaining troops left by the end of 1993. At the same time, at the beginning of 1992, the Government of Jan Olszewski already stated openly that NATO membership was Warsaw security policy objective.

In the aftermath of the parliamentary elections and the referendum on Russia's new constitution on 12 December 1993, Russian policies became more assertive and conservative in both domestic and foreign policy. The reformist Prime Minister Igor Gaidar was defeated because his liberal and western policy was viewed as useless. Moscow redefined its near abroad to include not only the former Soviet republics, but potentially its former Warsaw Pact allies as well as Ukraine. “Even the ‘westernizing’ or ‘atlanticist’ Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev began to adopt a more nationalist position, the entire East European zone

²⁵¹ Spero, Joshua, “Déjà Vu All Over Again: Poland’s Attempt To Avoid Entrapment Between Two Belligerents”, *European Security*, Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring 1992, pp. 97-98.

became for him a sphere of Russia's vitally important interests."²⁵² The Russian government dedicated to the rebirth of Russia as a great power and to the defense of its traditional interests²⁵³. In that period, Russia adopted a stance that was in opposition to NATO's eastward expansion and to Moscow's other international commitments such as the START II disarmament agreement.

In 1994, Russia had a strong interest in blocking Poland's efforts to join NATO²⁵⁴. Generally, it perceived NATO's eastward expansion into Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, as well as its possible further expansion into Ukraine and the Baltic States, as part of an aggressive western policy aimed at isolating Russia both militarily and economically. "The NATO debate exacerbated the need for a revitalized *Ostpolitik* for Poland."²⁵⁵ It was in Poland's interest to have a more effective eastern policy and to build new bridges. In December 1994, former foreign minister Andrzej Olechowski stated that "We are looking for a formula capable of uniting Europe, without excluding the United States or isolating Russia."²⁵⁶ There was a fear in those days in Poland that a Russian disengagement from Europe might cause "a Russian isolation" and it may lead to "a German-centered configuration"²⁵⁷. Olechowski had his own vision of eastern policy, based on the belief that the economic side was very important. He thought that launching of pragmatic cooperation would generate disagreements in the security sphere. The official policy guidelines of the

²⁵² Bugajski, Janusz, "Russian Interests in the New Eastern Europe", Donald W. Treadgold Paper Presentation, Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington, 29 April 2002.

²⁵³ Afanasyev, Yuri N., "Russian Reform Is Dead", *From Foreign Affairs*, March/April 1994, see, <http://www.foreignaffairs.org>

²⁵⁴ Swieboda, Paweł, "A Delicate Balancing Act Between East and West", *Transitions*, 11 August 1995, pp. 23-24.

²⁵⁵ Garnett, Sherman W., "Poland: Bulwark or Bridge", Spring 1996, p. 78.

²⁵⁶ Olechowski Andrzej, "Europe's Unification Challenge", *Polityka*, No. 50, 10 December 1994 quoted as in Prizel, Ilya, *National Identity and Foreign Policy*, p. 111.

²⁵⁷ Prizel, Ilya, "Warsaw's *Ostpolitik*: A New Encounter with Positivism" in Prizel, Ilya and Andrew A. Michta (eds.), *Polish Foreign Policy Reconsidered: Challenges of Independence*, St. Martin's Press, 1995, p. 114.

minister outlined in the *Sejm* in May 1994, stated that relations with Ukraine, improvement of Polish-Russian Relations and the enhancement of regional confidence and security were the main priorities of Poland²⁵⁸.

With the victory of Aleksander Kwasniewski in December 1995, Polish-Russian relations were consolidated. Kwasniewski continued Poland's west oriented foreign policy in the framework of good relations with the East. He demonstrated that Warsaw's pro-western policy was firm, and Russian hopes about changes in Polish foreign policy were shattered after the new Polish presidential elections. Both Poland and Russia made efforts to improve relations but misunderstandings continued. The offer by Polish Defense Minister Stanislaw Dobrzanski to form a joint Polish-Russian brigade and the offer by Russia to build an access to Kaliningrad through to Poland's so-called "Suwalki Corridor" evoked Polish memories of Nazi demands for an extra-territorial corridor to Danzig and led to sharp reactions in Poland²⁵⁹. In 1995, economic relations between Russia and Poland improved significantly and the two countries signed the "Yamal pipeline deal, an agreement which committed the two states to build a pipe line from northern Russia's Yamal fields to Germany, and Poland to double its purchases of Russian natural gas over the next twenty-five years."²⁶⁰ However, political relations in the early 1995 cooled off because of the Chechnya conflicts and the dispute over the Catholic Church in Moscow.

In January 1996, Yevgeniy Primakov replaced Andrey Kozyrev as foreign minister and proved to be more pragmatic than dogmatic in his initial policy statements. With the appointment of Primakov, Russia took a more active role toward its former satellites and its

²⁵⁸ For more see Marek Calka, Poland's Eastern Policy in 1994, Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy 1995, Warsaw 1995, pp. 50-51.

²⁵⁹ New Europe, 29 September-5 October 1996, p.14 quoted as in Prizel, Ilya, National Identity and Foreign Policy, p. 136.

²⁶⁰ New Europe, "Poland signs Landmark Gas Deal with Russia's Gazprom", 29 September-5 October 1996, p. 23 quoted as in Prizel, Ilya, National Identity and Foreign Policy, p. 132.

new policy makers criticized the lack of a coherent policy toward Eastern Europe. After Yeltsin's reelection in mid-1996, the performance of the government and the decision making process, including foreign policy, deteriorated. Russia faced severe economic problems, with a catastrophically inefficient military and few dependable allies around the world.

In early 1997, Russia recognized the reality of NATO enlargement and signed the Foundation Act on Mutual Relations, Co-operation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation on 27 May 1997. After the September 1997 Polish parliamentary elections, the center-right cabinet of Jerzy Buzek took office and sought to enhance the political relations with Russia. At that time Russia entered in a period of political instability and Poland had good relations with the West. In March 1998, Warsaw started the accession negotiations with the EU and this development also had an impact on Polish-Russian relations, as Moscow wanted to know the consequences of the EU enlargement. In that period, the new prime minister, Bronislaw Gremek, began talks with Russia on bilateral and regional security problems, especially those related to the CIS region. In March 1999, Poland's accession to NATO did not bring about any significant change in Polish-Russian relations but Poland had gained a valuable security guarantee. After joining NATO, Poland, felt in a good position to initiate a post-enlargement dialogue with Russia. In 1999-2000, relations between Poland and Russia cooled down because of an espionage affair, ongoing historical disputes, and Russia's uneasiness with Poland²⁶¹.

In the mid-2000, Jerzy Buzek's cabinet came forward with a new strategy towards Russia and declared that Poland would support democratic changes and a pro-European orientation in the post-Soviet states and would resolve the historical issues in Polish-Russian relations. On 13 June 2000, a document titled "Guidelines on Polish Policy towards Russia"

²⁶¹ Wallace, Helen and Alan Mayhew, Sussex European Institute, "Poland: A Partnership Profile", OEOS Policy Paper, Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), "One Europe or Several?" Program, April 2001, see, <http://www.one-europe.ac.uk>

was adopted. According to this document, Polish-Russian relations were seen in the perspective of future Polish-EU membership. On 13 June 2001, another document titled "The eastern policy of the European Union in Perspective of its Enlargement to the States of Central and Eastern Europe-the Polish perspective", reflecting Poland's vision of future EU eastern policy, was prepared in Poland. The document stressed that the security dialogue should be enhanced with Ukraine and stability in the CIS countries should be promoted.

With President Vladimir Putin's new policy, Russia's attitude towards Poland changed. Bilateral relations improved, but most of the problems remained unsolved. This applied especially to the case of Kaliningrad where the visa regime was the main issue raised by Russia after Poland declared that it would introduce a visa requirement in summer 2001. Because Poland will join the Schengen Agreement in 2007, causing some problems with regard to the border controls, visa regime, and customs agreements in the Kaliningrad region. Kaliningrad residents will need Schengen visas for overland transit across Lithuania and Poland in the expanded EU, to avoid any situation increase in illegal trade.

After the September 2001 presidential elections, the coalition government formed by Leszek Miller declared its desire to give a new impetus to Polish-Russian relations. In December 2001, during Miller's visit to Russia, a declaration on economic, trade, financial, and scientific-technological cooperation was signed. The terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001, have already changed the course of international affairs. President Putin made clear that it was in Russia's interest to create a new agenda for Moscow's relations with the West. Warsaw officially supported the proposals to create a new formula between NATO and Russia. When the Russia-NATO Council was established on 28 May 2002, it was welcomed in Poland. Poland and Russia also wanted to develop a security dialogue with regard to soft security threats. After September 11, hard security issues regained importance and Washington has established security relations with Russia, so the EU had to choose a complementary security policy with that of the US.

In 2002, Polish-Russian relations were good in the political sphere and very bad in the economic sphere. While Poland needed economic ties because of its gas and oil imports from Russia, Russia did not put much emphasis to its economic relations with Poland. In 1997, according to some estimates Poland was getting 90 per cent of its oil from Russia²⁶². In January 2003, an agreement on important issues of energy cooperation between Poland and Russia was reached. After 1 May 2004, Poland pursued a common EU energy policy as a member state of the Union. One can thus argue that as an EU member state, it will have a greater room for maneuver in its relations with Russia. But Poland still needs to participate in a partnership with Russia, including the energy dialogue and bilateral the economic relations must still improve.

Russia recognized the EU's enlargement on 22 April 2004 and said it was ready to extend bilateral relations with the ten new member states, including Poland. But the Eastern Dimension of the EU will strengthen Poland's importance in the region. The eastern expansion of the EU opened a new era in Russia's relations with the rest of greater Europe. Russia has now become a neighbor of the EU and the EU wants to cooperate with Russia, while EU membership for Russia remains unlikely²⁶³. "The ongoing ideological battle between Westernizers and Eurasianists perennially keeps Russia at some distance from the Western world, even if Moscow has declared Europeanization to be a priority."²⁶⁴ Poland has the potential to be come a regional leader in the framework of the eastern dimension of the EU and the EU will loose its sensitivity towards Russia's demands and concerns especially

²⁶² Davydov, Yuriy, "Russian Security and East-Central Europe", in Baranovski, Vladimir (ed.), *Russia and Europe- The Emerging Security Agenda*, Oxford Press, 1997, p. 376.

²⁶³ Yasmann, Victor, "Analysis: Russia and the EU -- A Problematic Future", Feature Article, RFE/RL, 05 May 2004.

²⁶⁴ Mihkelson, Makro, "Russia's Policy toward Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, and the Baltic States" in Bugajski, Janusz and Marek Michalewski (eds.), *Toward an understanding of Russia : new European perspectives*, New York : Council on Foreign Relations Book, 2002.

with regard to the visa dispute²⁶⁵. Russia wants to have a non-visa regime with Europe but the EU has set some conditions.

2) Poland- Ukraine Relations

Eastern policy is not a separate but an integral part of the entire Polish foreign policy, closely connected to its other components. In implementing it, Poland strived to turn its links with the West into an asset for building new, partner-like relations with the East, and its good relations with the East into a contribution to the integration of the European continent. Foreign minister Skubiszewski signed the Declaration on the Principles and Basic Direction of Polish-Ukrainian Relations in Kiev on 13 October 1990, and Poland was the first state to support Ukrainian sovereignty. This was a reaffirmation of Marshal Pilsudski's famous statement that "without an independent Ukraine, there cannot be an independent Poland"²⁶⁶.

On the occasion of Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk's first visit to Warsaw in May 1991, he gave notice that Poland would be an equal partner for Ukraine, whereas Russia was trying to speak to Kiev from a position of "elder brother"²⁶⁷. "Polish analysts initially envisioned that their country would serve as a 'bridge' between Ukraine and Europe, while many Ukrainian nationalists saw Poland as an escape hatch from Russian domination."²⁶⁸ Since then support for maintaining Ukrainian independence has become one of the top

²⁶⁵ Makarychev, S. Andrey, "Europe's Eastern Dimension, Russia's Reaction to Poland's Initiative", Program On New Approaches To Russian Security, PONARS Policy Memo 301, November 2003.

²⁶⁶ Karatnycky, Adrian, "A Polish Voice", *New Leader*, 15 June 1981 quoted as in Roman, Wolczuk, "Ukrainian-Polish Relations Between 1991 and 1998: From the Declarative to the Substantive", *European Security*, Vol. 9, No. 1, Spring 2000, p. 130.

²⁶⁷ Terry, Sarah Meiklejohn, "Poland's foreign policy since 1989: the Challenges of Independence", *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, Vol. 33, 2000, pp. 7-47.

²⁶⁸ Prizel, Ilya, *National Identity and Foreign Policy*, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 139

priorities of Poland's eastern policy, as Warsaw wanted Ukraine to be stable, democratic, market-oriented and progressive in its relations with the West.

On May 1992, the Treaty on Good Neighbors, Friendly Relations and Cooperation was signed between Poland and Ukraine. During that period, Poland did not want to be a bone of contention in the Russian-Ukraine conflict. Because Russia was still an important country, Poland's close relations with Ukraine could damage Warsaw's relations with Moscow. Poland had to follow a well-designed foreign policy because of its real concern about a possible change of the regional security balances based on a Russian-German axis²⁶⁹. In addition, Russia was for Poland a more important trade partner than Ukraine. However, one can say that Polish efforts to support Ukraine's stability would also be a catalyst for its integration to the West. In sum, Poland tried to create a balance between supporting the sovereignty and independence of Ukraine and Belarus while maintaining good relations with Russia and the West.

On its part, Ukraine could not jettison its close ties of Russia. It had major handicaps due to its economic weakness and dependence on Russia for fuel and energy, the size of its minorities, and the weakness of its state structure²⁷⁰. Ukraine just could not remain independent without a "strategic partnership" with Russia. It also needed to work out a strategy between the West and the East because it did not want to be a bulwark between them²⁷¹. In 1993, Prime Minister Hanna Suchocka described "strategic partnership" with Ukraine as one of the priorities of Polish foreign policy. This declaration however,

²⁶⁹ Prizel, Ilya, "Warsaw's *Ostpolitik*: A New Encounter with Positivism" in Prizel, Ilya and Andrew A. Michta (eds.), *Polish Foreign Policy Reconsidered. Challenges of Independence*, St. Martin's Press, 1995, p. 114.

²⁷⁰ Kaminski, Antoni, "East-Central Europe Between the East and the West", *European Security*, Vol. 3, No. 2, Summer 1994, p. 308.

²⁷¹ Sherr, James, "The Dual Enlargements and Ukraine" in Lieven, Anatol and Dimitri Trenin (eds.), *Ambivalent Neighbours: The EU, NATO and the Price of Membership*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, January 2003.

overshadowed the agreement with Russia on the Yamal gas pipeline. Ukraine perceived the Yamal pipeline as Moscow's attempt to reduce the Ukrainian monopoly on Russian gas transit to Europe. According to some authors, this issue froze Polish-Ukrainian relations for more than one year. During that period, conflicts between Ukraine and Russia have increased. Ukraine began to search for alternative regional security options to buttress its independent and wanted the join Visegrad Group. In addition, Ukraine proposed the creation of a collective security zone for Central and Eastern Europe, a concept known as the "Kravchuk Plan". This proposal aimed to create a bridge between Western Europe and Russia that would develop a broad transatlantic security system. It has found little support in the Central and Eastern states as well as U.S. and Russia because it looked like an anti-Russian alliance. Poland did not accept these proposals because it had decided to join NATO.

Historical issues also adversely influenced bilateral relations. The Ukrainian side wanted Poland to officially condemn the "Wisla" operation²⁷² and compensate Ukrainians who suffered in Poland. In the summer of 1994, Leonid Kuchma won the presidential elections and this created some concerns in Poland. Ukraine also had some concerns about Poland's NATO membership, but this did not mean breaking up security co-operation with its eastern neighbors²⁷³. "Kuchma favored a go-slow approach to NATO's expansion because he feared a rapid expansion would leave Ukraine in a grey zone."²⁷⁴ Ukraine suggested to extend the Weimar Triangle and to create a nuclear and free zone in Central and Eastern Europe, but Poland ignored this suggestion. On the other hand, Poland supported

²⁷² In 1947, the Government of Poland forcibly deported over 140,000 Ukrainian from the indigenous Ukrainian territories of eastern and south-eastern Poland. Code-named the "Operation Vistula" (Akcja Wisla), the deportation was carried out without warning or consent of the victims by Polish Army and security units. See *The Ukrainian Weekly*, No. 19, Vol. 70, May 12, 2002.

²⁷³ Calka, M., *Relations with Ukraine*, Yearbook of Polish Foreign Policy, 1995, Warsaw, pp. 119-120.

²⁷⁴ Burant, Stephan R., "Poland's Eastern Policy: 1990-1995", *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 43, No. 2, March/April 1996.

Ukraine's accession to the Central European Initiative, the Council of Europe, and the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA)²⁷⁵. In November 1994, trying to avoid international isolation and economic collapse, Ukraine acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as a non-nuclear state.

From 1995-96 on, there was a significant strengthening of co-operation as Polish policy- fostered a so-called "strategic partnership" with Ukraine. In 1995, Warsaw began to draw Ukraine closer to European institutions while it pursued NATO accession. Warsaw became a strong advocate of Ukrainian membership in the Council of Europe, and in September 1995, Ukraine welcomed Warsaw's efforts, to support its membership of the Central European Initiative. Poland lobbied NATO members to conclude an accord between the alliance and Ukraine, and the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership with Ukraine was signed at the July 1997 NATO summit in Madrid. In June 1996, President Kuchma appealed for Polish support for Ukrainian aspirations to join the European structures and Poland responded in a joint declaration that included an agreement on visa-free border traffic and another on the protection of cultural goods. But Warsaw rejected Ukraine's request for CEFTA membership because Kiev could not fulfill all the necessary conditions. This recent Ukrainian-Polish rapprochement was in the national interests of both countries. As stated in a joint declaration signed by the two presidents in June 1996: "The existence of an independent Ukraine helps to consolidate Polish independence, while the existence of an independent Poland helps to consolidate Ukrainian independence."²⁷⁶ This interdependence is explained not only by geographic and historical considerations, but also by the geostrategic interests of both countries.

²⁷⁵ For more information see, Martin Dangerfield, "Is there a revival of regional integration in Eastern Europe", *European Business Review*, Vol. 95, No. 1, 1995, pp. 4-12.

²⁷⁶ Joint Declaration by the President of Ukraine and the President of the Republic of Poland, Warsaw, 25 June 1996.

In May 1997, both states signed a “Joint statement on Accord and Reconciliation” in which the victims of past conflicts were honored. In July 1997, Ukraine signed the Charter on Distinctive Partnership with NATO and by this document; Kiev supported the inclusion of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary in the NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC) even before those three countries joined the Alliance. Kiev had some questions about the consequences of EU enlargement and Warsaw sought to ease those concerns through bilateral meetings. On 29 October 1998, the Polish-American-Ukrainian Cooperation Initiative (PAUCI), a trilateral co-operation, was signed. This document reflected agreement on a framework for a cooperative effort to make use of Poland’s experience in support of Ukraine’s economic and democratic transition and European integration. In June, Kuchma described Polish-Ukrainian relations as very good and said that relations with Poland were one of his country’s priorities and that the Polish experiences gained in the process of political and economic transition were very important for Ukraine. Poland supported Ukraine’s efforts and tried to integrate Ukraine into the West, however Ukraine was inactive in its integration process and its effort was not sufficient in the transition period. In 2002, after a new formula for NATO-Russian relations was developed, Ukraine’s declaration on its will to join NATO in the future was welcomed by the Alliance. At the Prague Summit, the adoption of the Action Plan for Ukraine was welcomed by Poland.

“Poland has become a natural partner in Ukrainian *Westpolitik*, so Poland plays for Ukraine a role parallel to that which Germany plays for Poland.”²⁷⁷ Poland acts as an advocate for Ukraine in its effort to interact with the EU. “Whilst Polish foreign policy makers realize that Ukraine’s membership of EU is a distant prospect, Poland wants to anchor Ukraine in Europe through wide-ranging bilateral and multilateral initiatives.”²⁷⁸

²⁷⁷ Dybczynski, Andrzej, “The European Union and Ukrainian-Polish Relations” in Cordell, Karl (ed.), *Poland and the EU*, Routledge, 2000, p. 185.

²⁷⁸ Wallace, Helen and Alan Mayhew, Sussex European Institute, “Poland: A Partnership Profile”, OEOS Policy Paper, April 2001, see, Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), “One Europe or Several?” Programme, see, <http://www.one-europe.ac.uk>

Ukraine maintains a better relationship with NATO than with the EU. The European Union, on its part, has not met Ukrainian expectations. Ukraine has less political importance within the EU and, as a result, looks more towards NATO as a connection to the West. Ukrainian policymakers know that EU expansion poses more serious problems such as border policy for their country than NATO enlargement. In the immediate future, Poland also fears that the introduction of the Schengen regime on Poland's eastern border will be perceived in Ukraine as a sign that Warsaw is turning its back on Ukraine and that the eastern border will turn to "a new iron curtain"²⁷⁹. The EU wants to implement this border policy mainly because of soft security issues. It wants to keep out narcotics and criminals originating from either Ukraine or transiting that country, but such a policy might re-isolate Ukraine. This isolation could harm the eastern dimension of the EU and Poland's eastern policy because Ukraine remains has an important because of its energy potential. Ukraine wanted financial support from Poland to complete the Odessa-Brody oil pipeline. In the spring of 2002, the first projects for a future pipeline to Gdansk were presented and as a result, Ukraine became a crucial energy bridge for the European Union countries.

In July 2003, Presidents Kuchma and Kwasniewski delivered speeches to apologize for historic misdeeds.²⁸⁰ It was a major improvement in Polish-Ukrainian relations because there is a Ukrainian minority in Poland (0.6%) and Polish minority in Ukraine (0.3%)²⁸¹ and they are a sensitive issue for both countries' domestic and foreign policy. Also, with regard

²⁷⁹ Wolczuk, Kataryna, "Poland's Relations with Ukraine in the Context of EU Enlargement", ESRC One Europe or Several Programme, Briefing Note 4/01, CREES, the University of Birmingham, April 2001.

²⁸⁰ Krushelnycky, Askold, "Poland/Ukraine: Painful Chapter of Shared Past Commemorated, But Many Find It Difficult to Turn Page", RFE/RL, 11 July 2003, see, <http://www.rferl.org>

²⁸¹ CIA, The World Factbook, see <http://www.cia.gov>

to the minority issue, one of the biggest problems is how to overcome negative stereotyping, so these joint efforts should be continued by these two neighbor states²⁸².

Poland gave considerable support to the U.S in the Iraq crisis and Ukraine also voted to contribute to this military action. Afterwards, the Polish sector was divided between Polish, Ukrainian, and Spanish-led forces. Both Poland and Ukraine see this Ukrainian contribution as a way to earn U.S. support for Ukraine's inclusion in the third round of NATO enlargement in 2007. "In this sense, Poland seeks to return to its historic role as a 'great power', which complements its strategic support for stability on its eastern border through EU widening and further NATO enlargement."²⁸³ As the largest new member of the EU, Poland hopes to be a good model and a regional leader towards Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine and to promote democracy, economic development, and stability beyond Poland's eastern borders.

3) Poland-Belarus Relations

Poland's eastern policy has been difficult primarily with Belarus, which under the rule of President Alexandre Lukashenka is descending into self-isolation and drifting to the political periphery of Europe. In Warsaw's relations with Belarus, Polish policy is based on the assumption that the independence of that country is in the interest of Poland. The level of bilateral political dialogue is restricted, though this does not apply to many other areas of cooperation. Poland remained convinced as to the need for an active policy towards both to the authorities and to the people of Belarus.

²⁸² For further information see Karl Cordell (ed.), *Poland and the EU*, Routledge, 2000; George Sanford, "Democratization and European Standards of National Minority Protection: Polish Issues", *Democratization*, Vol. 4, No. 3, Autumn 1997, pp. 45-68 and also Micheal Fleming, "The New Minority Rights Regime in Poland: The experience of the German, Belarussian and Jewish Minorities since 1989", *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol. 8, No. 4, 2002, pp. 531-548.

²⁸³ Radio Free Europe, "Poland Revives Itself as a Great Power"; *Poland, Ukraine, Belarus Report*, Vol. 5, No. 27, 22 July 2003.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990, foreign minister Skubiszewski visited Belarus but the visit ended with a diplomatic scandal as Belarus refused to sign a declaration on mutual relations. One year later, on October 1991, Polish-Belarusian relations improved and the Declaration on Good Neighbors, Mutual Understanding and Co-operation was signed. On 23 June 1992, the Treaty on Good Neighbors and Friendly Co-operation was signed and mutual relations were established. Poland saw security guaranties for itself in the success of democratic and market reforms in Belarus and in the consolidation of Belarus' independence. In 1992 Poland became Belarus' first non-CIS trading partner. Belarus was in a deep political crisis and was dependent from Russia in 1994. Relations with Belarus were not very close, particularly after the presidential elections in the summer of 1994 when Aleksandr Lukashenka took the office, and bilateral relations became strained. In addition, Belarus in 1994 joined the Treaty of Collective Security of the CIS states and afterwards took a position towards the NATO's eastern enlargement similar to that of its close ally Russia. As Belarus preferred to integrate with Russia, its relations with the West became cooler. In 1996, Poland adopted a strategy of "critical dialogue" towards Belarus because the latter was is Poland's neighbor and Warsaw did not want to isolate Minsk. This situation risked to worsen the situation of the Polish minority in Belarus and Minsk might totally integrate with Russia. For Poland, Belarus only played a role in terms of minority rights and economic co-operation.

During the 1990s, President Lukashenka regarded European integration as Western imperialism and saw Poland as a watch tower in the middle of the Slavic heartland. He did not want to be a part of Europe and tried to limit contacts with Poland to trade but he has not been entirely successful. Until 2000, nothing changed in Belarus and the "critical dialogue" continued. Poland rejected Belarus' proposals, such as the signing of a NATO-Belarus Charter in 1997. In 2001 Lukashenka again won the presidential elections in a dubious manner. Afterwards, Poland decided to change its policy towards Minsk by starting a

dialogue and trying to improve its bilateral relations. As a first attempt, foreign minister Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz met with Belarussian counterpart Mikhail Khvastou in November 2001 and in March 2002. He declared Poland's desire in terms of improved human rights and democratic principles but Belarus' cooperation was insufficient. Russia still keeps Minsk at some distance, because at present it does not need the additional economic problems and political responsibility that could result from a deeper integration with Belarus. At the same time, however, Moscow keeps Belarus facing firmly to the East and nobody in the West seems interested in dealing with Belarussian President Aleksandr Lukashenko, which makes it easy for Russia to control him²⁸⁴.

It is argued that the EU should follow a stick and carrot approach to encourage democratization in Belarus. At the governmental level, access to the EU should continue to be conditional on improvements in the Lukashenka regime's regard for civil liberties and democratic freedoms. At the same time, the Union should engage directly with civil society organizations in Belarus to increase its links with the people of Belarus. The current government cannot last forever and the EU must foster relations with the country's future political leaders and the next generation of Belarussian²⁸⁵.

Poland plays an active role towards both the countries of Eastern Europe in the framework of the EU's eastern policy. "The desistance from such a policy or the failure to develop a concept for it will signify the inclusion of both Ukraine and Belarus into the Russian sphere of influence."²⁸⁶ A lack of Polish interest in those countries and the failure to

²⁸⁴ Mihkelson, Makro, "Russia's Policy toward Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, and the Baltic States" in Bugajski, Janusz, and Marek Michalewski (eds.), *Toward an Understanding of Russia : New European Perspectives*, New York : Council on Foreign Relations Book, 2002.

²⁸⁵ Grabbe, Heather and Tewes, Hennin, "Though Love For Our Eastern Neighbours", Centre for European Reform, London, 27 June 2003, see, <http://www.cer.org.uk/articles/>

²⁸⁶ Kazanecki, Pawel "Belarus, Poland and the EU's 'Eastern Dimension' points for debate" in Kowal, Pawel (ed.), Bohdan Ambroziewicz (translation), "The EU's 'Eastern Dimension' -An Opportunity for or *Idée Fixe* of Poland's Policy?", Centre for International Relations, Warsaw, 2002, see, <http://www.csm.org.pl/en>

involve Lithuania, Czech Republic or Slovakia in activities in those countries would mean putting a growing distance between the two spheres in Europe. Polish policy towards Belarus will be guided by the objective of consolidating its independence and sovereignty in international relations, as well as supporting the structures of civic society. To attain these goals, Poland will try to make broader use of the possibilities inherent in the partnership programs of NATO and the European Union. However, President Lukashenka's statements, such as saying that "No one is waiting for us in Europe" are particularly discouraging to the public. Moreover, Russian President Putin makes great efforts to praise the opportunities open to Belarus through integration with Russia while failing to support a democratic transition in Belarus²⁸⁷.

B) Baltic Relations

1) Northern Dimension

The Northern Dimension covers the entire area of Northern Europe, namely the Northern EU member states, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Iceland, Norway and the Russian Federation. It is a coordinating and supporting mechanism and is complementary to already existing programs implemented by the EU and its member states in Northern Europe. It addresses the specific challenges of the relevant regions and aims to increase cooperation between the EU member states, the relevant EU candidate countries and Russia. The Northern Dimension is implemented within the framework of the Europe Agreements with the Baltic States, the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Russia, and the European Economic Area regulations. The areas for cooperation under the Northern Dimension are the environment, nuclear safety, energy cooperation, the Kaliningrad enclave, infrastructure,

²⁸⁷ Boris Tarasyuk, "On the Future of Europe", Policy Papers, Stefan Batory Foundation, Warsaw, 20-21 February 2003.

business cooperation, justice and home affairs, social development, and other spheres. The Northern Dimension operates through the EU's financial instruments available for the region: Phare, Tacis and Interreg. The Northern Dimension seeks to use these financing instruments for projects which provide benefit. It also aims at addressing soft security issues such as special harsh climatic conditions, environmental challenges and border crossing facilities.

The EU considers the Northern Dimension a very useful tool for the development of its relations with Russia. The increased importance of Northwest Russia for the enlarged EU (incorporating Poland and the Baltic States) was one of the main ideas behind the initiative. Russia was at the center of most priorities included in the Action Plan, such as energy, transport, environment and nuclear safety, and the fight against organized crime.

With the enlargement of the Union to Poland and the Baltic States, the importance of the Northern Dimension increased. The Baltic Sea is now surrounded by EU member states, and the EU's common border with Russia has expanded. According to Urban Alin, the Chairman of the Swedish parliaments International Committee, the EU's Eastern Dimension project does not conflict with the Northern Dimension project. According to him, "the Eastern Dimension will not be in competition with the Northern Dimension, they will rather compliment each other." It is obvious that the two projects need to complement each other because the Eastern Dimension deals with hard security issues while the Northern Dimension is concerned with soft security issues.

As leader of the Eastern dimension project, Poland needs to have good co-operation with the Baltic States to solve the debates with Ukraine and Russia which have borders with the new enlarged European Union. Poland needs to promote the Northern Dimension to be successful in the Eastern dimension project.

2) Poland-Lithuanian Relations

Throughout the 20th century, the relationship between Poland and Lithuania has been a peculiar one. For nearly 400 years, the two countries were part of the same state, namely the Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth. The policy of Vilnius and Warsaw implemented in the 1990s has oscillated between arguments arising from differences in the interpretation of their common history. The issue of the Polish minority in Lithuania has also been a cause of the disputes between Poland and Lithuania relationship in the 1990s.

According to estimates, there are approximately 20,000 Lithuanians living in Poland whereas the number of Poles in Lithuania is estimated at 258,000²⁸⁸. Lithuanian fears of Polish cultural and territorial expansion were reflected in the authorities' distrust of the Polish minority, which had not supported Lithuanian aspirations to independence in the crucial years 1989-91. The attitude of the Polish minority was determined mainly by the fears caused by the national policy of the independent Lithuanian state. However, the argument between the Lithuanian authorities and the Polish minority did not affect Warsaw's attitude towards Lithuanian attempts to regain independence. In 1990 and 1991, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicated that the independence of the Republic of Lithuania was an undisputed foreign policy objective. In 1990 and 1991, various minority issues and historical arguments have persisted and affected the character of the mutual relations of Poland and Lithuania²⁸⁹. The Declaration of Friendly Relations and Good-Neighborly Cooperation was signed by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of both countries on 13 January 1992. This joint communiqué was confirmed the recognition of the existing borders between Poland and Lithuania and their acceptance of European standards of minority rights.

²⁸⁸ "National Minorities in Poland: 1994 Information Guide", Warsaw, 1995, p. 11.

²⁸⁹ For more information see Stephan R Burant, "Polish-Lithuanian Relations: Past, Present, and Future", *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 40, May/June 1991, pp. 67-84 and Jakup Karpinski, "Poland and Lithuania Look Toward a Common Future", *Transitions*, Vol. 3, No. 6, 4 April 1997.

The character of the relationship between Poland and Lithuania during the years 1992-94 can be best described as one of deadlock. It was apparent that there were no significant incentives to make either party change this situation. At that time, neither the development of economic relations nor the aspirations of both countries to join the European structures prompted either of them to alter its stance. In 1993, Lithuania's Minister of National Defense, Audrius Butkevicius, described NATO, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), and WEU as the most important partners in the area of security and gave a positive signal towards the West.

Lithuania and Poland were able to sign a treaty of "good neighborliness" in April 1994 because of the election of former communists in both of the two countries and the perception of a growing Russian threat. It took a long time for the two countries to overcome their historic legacies and after 1994, "they have evolved into partners providing mutual support in the face of Russian demands for passage rights to Kaliningrad, and Poland has started to advocate Lithuanian membership in NATO."²⁹⁰ In 1996, a debate on foreign policy and state security came to the fore in Lithuania because of the pessimistic view of possible integration into NATO and a questioning of the West's goodwill towards the Baltic States. NATO preferred not to include their membership in its agenda and tried to find different solutions such as a "Baltic Action Plan" put forward in September 1996 by the United States. On 26 November 1996, the presidents of the three Baltic States approved several documents regarding NATO enlargement and their common interest to join the Alliance.

Immediately after winning the elections, in 1997, former opposition politicians of Lithuania confirmed their willingness to continue the ongoing process aimed at Lithuania's membership of NATO and the European Union. At the same time they stressed that Lithuanian foreign policy had reached a critical stage. President Vytautas Landsbergis stated

²⁹⁰ Prizel, Ilya, *National Identity and Foreign Policy*, Cambridge University Press, 1998.

that "With the forthcoming 1997 decisions and the selection of candidate states from Central Europe for talks on membership of NATO, Lithuania will witness growing intimidation and anxiety tensions." Under these conditions, Lithuania gave prime importance to its relations with Poland because the latter would be a bridge for Vilnius' integration into the European Union and NATO.

During the visit of Lithuanian Foreign Minister Algirdas Saudargas to Warsaw in January 1997, even though the problems of national minority problem was still vivid, particular importance was given to the future prospects of political cooperation. According to the Polish Foreign Minister Dariusz Rosati, Poland would do its best to facilitate the inclusion of Lithuania in the first group of countries to begin negotiations for membership of NATO and the EU. On its part, the Russian Federation did not seem inclined to limit its military presence in the areas bordering Lithuania and Poland and the Kaliningrad district remained one of the most militarized regions of Europe. In addition, Russia put pressure on Lithuania and Poland to take into consideration Russian interests because there were no direct transport and communication links between Belarus and the Kaliningrad enclave. In the long term, the Kaliningrad district, situated between Lithuania and Poland, may continue to pose a serious problem. On the other hand, the participation of Poland and Lithuania in wider cooperative programs in the area of security and certain economic programs may carry the risk of increased tension in their relations with Russia.

There is no doubt that Warsaw has continued to support the aspirations of Lithuania and the other Baltic states to join European institutions. In practice, this might take the form of cooperation between Poland and Lithuania within the framework of various regional arrangements, including the Central European Initiative and CEFTA. Poland pays more attention not only to its closest neighbor, Lithuania, but to the other Baltic states as well; and Lithuania treats neither cooperation with Latvia and Estonia nor regional security cooperation as factors that diminish its chances of being admitted to NATO. After the NATO

enlargement in 1999, Poland became a NATO member state and promised to be an advocate of Slovakia, the Baltic States, and Ukraine, and NATO membership of Poland gave an impetus to Polish-Lithuanian relations. In addition, Lithuania expressed its will to contribute to the activities of the Alliance. In March 2004, Lithuania, together with the other two Baltic States, Estonia and Latvia, became a member of the North Atlantic Alliance.

Poland's and Lithuania's membership in the EU along with Lithuania's accession to NATO opened new perspectives for cooperation between the two countries. Lithuania and Poland should actively collaborate in the framework of EU financial assistance for the realization of the same projects, first of all those related to the development of infrastructure. They have a common aim to overcome as soon as possible social and economic differences between "old" and "new" members of the EU. In addition, Poland and Lithuania must strengthen regional cooperation, put forward joint proposals for EU's and NATO's eastern policy, and take an active part in its realization.

3) Polish Relations with Latvia and Estonia

Latvia and Estonia are the closest partners in the Baltic region. However, Polish-Estonian and Polish-Latvian relations do not have the special importance of Polish-Lithuanian relations. Although they are not Poland's cross-border neighbors, both of them attract the interest of Polish foreign policy-makers. Poland and these two countries share joint efforts to expand Euro-Atlantic structures eastward and to develop Baltic co-operation. Poland also strived to establish closer economic co-operation with both countries.

Both Estonia and Latvia viewed Poland as a good neighbor whose experience in economic and political reform could facilitate their own transition and promote their integration into Western Europe. Poland's relations with Latvia were more intensive than in the case of Estonia, which stems from Latvia's closer location and larger population.

a) Latvia

Diplomatic relations between Poland and Latvia were restored on 30 August 1991. In 1992, Poland and Latvia signed an Agreement on Friendship and Co-operation and foreign minister Skubiszewski also signed important accords on trade, travel, and minority rights. In 1993, Poland signed an agreement on the mutual support and protection of investment projects. Moreover, a free trade agreement was signed in 1997.

The issue of citizenship for non-Latvians became the main social and political problem in Latvia after it regained its independence. Until 1998, 23,000 Poles were living in Latvia and did not have Latvian citizenship. The strict requirements of citizenship not only hurt the Russian minority but also Poles experienced some difficulties²⁹¹.

On 1 May 2004 Latvia, together with nine other countries – Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, Malta and Cyprus – became a full-fledged member of the European Union. In 1995, it applied for admission to the European Union. Two years later the European Commission drafted its first assessment of the readiness of the candidate states to start accession talks with the European Union and the accession process could begin. Latvia started its accession talks in spring 2000 and concluded them in December 2002 in Copenhagen. Since signing the EU Accession Treaty in Athens on 16 April 2003, Latvia has already participated as an observer in the EU decision-making process.

²⁹¹ For more information see Nils Muiznieks and Ilze Brands Kehris, "The European Union, Democratization, and Minorities in Latvia" in Kubicek, Paul J. (ed.), *The European Union and Democratization, Europe and the Nation State*, Routledge, 2003.

b) Estonia

Poland recognized the independence of Estonia on 26 August 1991. Historically, the relations between Estonia and Poland have been characterized by good mutual understanding. There have been many common features in the history and development of Estonia and Poland, and both are considered successful reforming countries. They also share common standpoints concerning the enlargement of the European Union, and Poland has consistently expressed its support for Estonia's accession to NATO.

Like in the case of Latvia, Poland and Estonia signed an Agreement on Friendship and Co-operation in 1992 and one year later an agreement on the mutual support and protection of investment projects. Poland tried to improve its economic ties with Estonia and the first meeting of the Polish-Estonian Trade Free Committee was held in 1999. Poland consistently supported both countries' efforts to join NATO and the European Union. Especially Poland supported their membership of NATO in 1999 and used its political influence in the Alliance to support the eastward expansion.

C) Visegrad Group

In the early 1990s, three central European countries, namely Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, essentially re-oriented their foreign policies after the disintegration of the USSR. At the summit of the presidents, prime ministers and foreign ministers of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Austria, Italy and Yugoslavia held in Bratislava on 9 April 1990, President Vaclav Havel argued about the necessity of "co-ordination return to Europe"²⁹². By regional integration, "a new kind of 'East-East' international politics initiated for joining

²⁹² Lukae, Pavol, Visegrad Co-operation -Ideas, Developments and Prospects , Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs, Slovak European Policy Association, Spring 2001.

Europe.”²⁹³ On 15 February 1991, a declaration on co-operation among the Republic of Poland, the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic and the Republic of Hungary was signed by their prime ministers in Visegrad, Hungary in pursuit of European integration.

The three countries gradually developed closer ties among themselves in the form of the so-called Visegrad cooperation. Externally, they established strong connections with both NATO and the EU. These two international organizations in turn became the dominant factors in the shaping of their respective foreign, security, and economic policies. In December 1992, the four countries nonetheless signed in Krakow the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA), and in the years 1993-1997, their economic co-operation and integration within CEFTA compensated for the actual absence of regional co-operation in politics.

Following the split of Czechoslovakia on 1 January 1993, the Czech Republic and Slovakia emerged as the two new successor states and Slovakia also became a member of the Visegrad Group.

In 1997, after Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary were invited to join the North Atlantic Alliance at the NATO summit in Madrid, they tightened their co-operation in the area of security. In the same year, the European Council approved the decision to start the negotiations on the accession of these three countries to the European Union, and they further broadened their co-operation further in the framework of their integration process. In September 1998, the democratic forces won the Slovak parliamentary, ending the end self-isolation of Slovakia under prime minister Vladimir Meciar. Slovak prime minister Mikulas Dzurinda announced his country's intention to join NATO and to bring Slovakia in the mainstream of European co-operation. However, the Kosovo conflict and NATO's

²⁹³ Tokes, Rydolf L., "From Visegrad to Krakow: Cooperation, Competition, and Coexistence in Central Europe", *Problems of Communism*, November/December 1991.

intervention in Yugoslavia in the spring of 1999 temporarily delayed the development of regional co-operation in Central Europe.

On 14 May 1999 in Bratislava, a summit meeting of the prime ministers and foreign ministers of Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia adopted a document entitled "The Content of Visegrad Co-operation" outlining the main areas of cooperation between the four countries. The Bratislava Summit was held to reactivate co-operation within the Visegrad Group (V4) but like in the past, no institutional structures to coordinate the Group's work were established. Instead, that co-operation would be based on regular meetings of representatives of the four member states.

With regards to foreign policy, the V4 partners declared to their intention co-operate actively to guarantee security and stability in the region, help Slovakia join the North Atlantic Alliance, and lend active support to that country's pro-European aspirations. They were sending the West a clear message that they were co-operating, and instead of wars like the Balkans, they pursued partnership and common goals.

During the Visegrad summit in Budapest in early November, 2001 or during the V4 Prime Ministers meeting in Tale, Slovakia, in June 2003, official declarations were made to the effect that co-operation would be continued after the four countries would join the European Union. Moreover, the leaders of all four countries agreed that continued co-operation would be profitable; and work started a new Visegrad declaration. In December 2003, different statements were made. The President of the Czech Republic, Vaclav Klaus, formerly the country's prime minister, described the co-operation as an artificial, false and unnecessary grouping. On the other hand, Polish President Kwasniewski said that Poland wanted to change slightly the formula and scope of the Visegrad Group's activities.

EU reality will probably force the group to keep co-operating. However, in the accession process there was no political co-operation between the Visegrad countries. Especially Poland did not find support behind its stand on the Nice voting system issue, but all the new members are likely to face similar problems in the EU. In fact, the voice of a group of countries carries more weight than the voice of a single state. Budapest also initially suffered a diplomatic setback for its idea of having "minority rights" mentioned in the EU treaty, but this it has been included by now.

After 1 May of 2004, the Visegrad Group became an internal regional grouping within the European Union. Poland would like to see a consolidation of the central eastern region's identity in the enlarged Union, and the Visegrad Group could play a useful role in this regard. Poland gives considerable importance to working together with the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary in lobbying for common interests in the Union, and in developing regional cooperation.²⁹⁴ The Eastern dimension of the enlarged Union could be one of the future tasks for the Visegrad Group. According to Slovak President Rudolf Schuster, the group should help other countries, such as Ukraine, to integrate into Europe. In addition, it also must focus on adjustments to open the border areas of Schengen and investments in infrastructure in Central Europe.

The V4 states should be flexible and able to suspend co-operation because the European Union's structure does not allow internal regional structures. On the other hand, Brussels welcomes regional co-operation in the framework of EU policies. Although these four countries are now competitors rather than allies in the European Union, their group can be complementary to the EU and the V4 countries can support each other in the Union. If the group dissolves, its member states including Poland have nothing to gain. On the other hand,

²⁹⁴ Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Government information on the Polish foreign policy in the year 2004, presented at the session of the Sejm on January 21, 2004, see, <http://www.mfa.gov.pl>

there are issues on which they, particularly Poland, must to co-operate, such as the joint protection of their eastern borders or the fight against smuggling and illegal migration. Coordinated action will make it easier for the Visegrad countries to deal with these issues. Ukraine has a common border with three of them and illegal workers are a major problem for both the group and the EU. Poland needs to improve its' relations with Ukraine and the other Visegrad countries must promote Poland's efforts to integrate Ukraine to the West. The success of this co-operation will be advantageous for both the future of the Visegrad Group, for the EU, and for Poland. Moreover, the popular support for the Visegrad group clearly shows that the Poles, Slovaks, Czechs and Hungarians want the V4 group to continue²⁹⁵.

²⁹⁵ See Falkowski, Mateusz,; Patrycja Bukalska, Grzegord Gromadzki, "Yes to Visegrad", Analyses and Opinions, The Institute of Public Affairs, No. 16, November 2003.

CONCLUSION

In the post-cold war era, after the collapse of the Soviet system, worldwide power balances changed and the United States has been the dominant global power. Also the economy of the European Union has developed and the EU became an alternative big power along the U.S. The image of the East has changed from a source of threat to one of potential markets.

The eastern countries should be integrated to the west and should be stable and democratic countries. Western institutions like NATO and the EU gave importance to their enlargement process to include the ex-communist countries.

Poland has geopolitically and historically played a crucial role in the Europeanization process. It has had a mission as a regional leader and a model for the other CEE countries, on the other hand, it tried to be involved in the westernization process and sought since 1989 to integrate the West. In the post-cold war era, Poland got rid of its historical fear of being sandwiched in between Russia and Germany.

Germany was accorded priority in Poland's European foreign policy. The Polish government considered cooperation between Poland, Germany and France within the "Weimar Triangle" to be an important element of its foreign policy. Germany has played an important role in Poland's foreign policy, based on the understanding that "Poland's road to Europe leads through Germany". Now, Poland is already a NATO member and more recently it became an EU member state in May 2004. After Poland's entry into the EU, Germany's strategic importance changed because the border of the Union moved from Germany to Poland's eastern border. With the latest EU enlargement, the centre of gravity of Europe has moved to the east. Moreover, Germany did not support Poland in the EU's

constitutional debate and Poland's role in the Iraq war affected the positive and close relationship between the two countries. However, Germany remains the main donor and financial partner for Poland. It has specifically threatened to use its influence to reduce EU funds to Poland if it resists a rebalancing of votes. On the other hand, the Weimar Triangle is still active and Poland, Germany and France will strengthen the ties of cooperation in the framework of their arrangement. In 1991, this group was established to integrate Poland into Europe and today it will be function as a catalyst to create cohesion between Poland in the EU.

Poland will play a key role in promoting political relationships between the Union and its eastern neighbors. It has a major interest in actively engaging and steering its eastern neighbors toward democracy. In the post-cold war era, despite Poland's western oriented policy due to its eastern-oriented policies, Poland always tried to have its relations with the East to be a part of the West. After its accession to the NATO and the EU, Poland's responsibilities in the region increased. After the latest EU enlargement, the borders of Poland became the eastern borders of the EU and this situation made Poland's status more important in the field of soft security issues. Moreover, the EU wants to have a two-track policy towards its eastern neighbors. While the EU will not include Ukraine and Russia in the Union in the near future, good economic and political relations with these countries will be important for Brussels. Ukraine has an important geo-strategic position between Russia and Europe and this will continue in the transition period. Poland promotes the closest possible ties between NATO and Ukraine and encourages Ukraine's pro-Western orientation to check Russian influence in Kiev.

The EU should focus on the soft security issues mainly related to border protection, visa regime, and the improvement of economic relations in the energy sector. The Baltic Sea is now surrounded by EU member states and the EU's common border with Russia has expanded. The Union has an "eastern dimension" and a "northern dimension" to contend

with problems like energy, transport, environment and nuclear safety, and the fight against organized crime. The EU looks at the northern dimension as a very useful tool for the development of its relations with Russia. With Union enlargement Poland and the Baltic States, the importance of the northern dimension has increased. The eastern dimension is a complimentary approach to the northern dimension. Poland is a leader of the Eastern dimension Project and needs to have good co-operation with the Baltic States to resolve the debates with Ukraine and Russia. It needs to promote the northern dimension to be successful in the eastern dimension project.

On the other hand, Poland is a major ally of the US and the latter, also considers Poland as a regional leader, and Poland was pleased to be in that position because it corresponds to its national security interest. The EU does not meet the security interests of Poland and Warsaw still feels safe under the security umbrella of the U.S and NATO. Moreover, Poland contributed to the Iraq operation to control the oil fields, and this would lessen Poland's energy dependence on Russia. One can argue that co-operation with the US is a part of Poland's potential regional status as a regional leader for CEE countries. The core countries of the European Union are some what suspicious of Poland's future position in the Union as a close ally of the US. Poland is a big morsel for the EU to digest due to its large population, its ability to block EU decision, and its geostrategic position in the region. On the other hand Poland has favored the European security identity but without weakening the US role in the international security system.

Poland needs to be a counter-weight to Ukraine because otherwise new borders of the EU could become a "blue curtain" that may isolate the East. If Ukraine integrates with Russia and Kaliningrad, this may cause more illegal border-crossing problems. The EU puts emphasis on the Kaliningrad enclave and does not want to isolate it as a Russian island in the Union. Russia wants to have visa-free access to the Union and believes that visa

requirements could be abolished as early as 2007 so that Russian citizens could travel freely to and within the EU.

Kaliningrad's cross-border problems and implications of crime, pollution, and health issues also became EU problems with the accession of Lithuania and Poland to the EU. A new system of legal transit between Kaliningrad and the Russian mainland was established on 1 July 2003. Practical implementation has been working well and the number of Russian transit passengers quickly returned to its previous level. As part of this solution, it was agreed that negotiations between the EU and Russia regarding readmission should be intensified. At the beginning of September 2003, the European Commission adopted a proposal that envisages a new type of "local" visa for residents of border areas in countries such as Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus who need to travel short distances into the EU. Russian citizens will be able to travel through Lithuanian territory by using transit documents.

Poland will continue its regional co-operation as a member of Visegrad Group because the latter has become an internal grouping within the European Union. The V4 countries (Hungary, Slovakia and Czech Republic) also promote Poland's efforts to support the integration of Ukraine to the West because that country shares a common border with Poland, Slovakia and Hungary.

Poland is a key country for both the EU and US, and its transition to the democracy is a good model for the other eastern countries. During its transition period, Poland's dual foreign policy decisions fall between the East and the West. Although it completed its integration process, Poland still needs to have a well-formulated eastern policy to increase its importance in the international arena.

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