Studia Maritima, vol. XXVI (2013)
ISSN 0137-3587

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THE BALTIC SEA AND THE INTEGRATION OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC OF POLAND

Both a historian and a careful observer of the social, economic and political life in our country might seem surprised by the emotional approach Poles assume towards maritime matters, as much in the past as in the past. One could quote numerous distinguished Poles from various époques and representing intellectual, political and professional circles, Poles who perceived the access of their country to the Baltic as instrumental for Poland's general well-being. There are three opinions by three men, each from a different period that seem particularly characteristic in that respect. The first of them comes from Stanisław Karnkowski, Bishop of Kuyavia who, of the King Sigismund Augustus' will, in 1570 imposed on Gdańsk the famous *Statuta seu Constitutiones Carncovianae* only to write four years later that: "They must be blind who see the King's rule as beneficial, with regard to both fame and power, for the Republic of Poland and her provinces. [...] when we have the command of the sea, then we can speak of the position from which to secure justice, peace and defense of the coastline, ports and provinces, so typical of superpowers."[1]

Several centuries later, on February 10, 1920 when the Polish army under General Józef Heller "wedded" the sea, the Speaker of the Seym Wojciech Trąmpczyński said that "the humming Baltic is the most beautiful hymn of our statehood [...] without these lungs inhaling the smell of open sea our country could

[1] Quoted after E. Kotarski: *Sarmaci i morze. Marynistyczne początki w literaturze polskiej XVI–XVII wieku* [The Polish Gentry and the Sea: The Maritime Beginnings in the 16th–17th Century Polish Literature], Warszawa 1995, p. 27.

exist, vegetate but would be no longer live staying always dependent on our neighbours."[2] One cannot but also quote Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski who in 1928, while convincing the audience listening to his speech in the Poznań University hall to the Baltic aspects of the policy of the Second Republic of Poland, said that "the sea is an exceptional debtor. Each genuine asset, each capital, each piece of work returns quickly, and with a usuriously huge interest. The nations which love the sea and devoted their work to it know this well. The interests make new interests, the work gives fruits, not only economic but also many other."[3] Observing the situation in Poland in the interwar period, André Tibal, Professor at the Nancy University wrote that Poles displayed a peculiar feeling that can only be depicted as a mystification of sea access. This situation never changed after 1945, either.

We still consider the sea as a causative both accelerating the development of the country and to a degree integrating at least its economy. Discussing the role of the see in the development of a country we should, regardless of an époque, critically discern the relation of economy and the sea. Twenty five years ago Gerard Labuda proposed to turn the roles of the sea-land dyad. An analysis of a historical process demonstrates that both the level of land economy and the entire state infrastructure determine the use of the sea, not the other way round. The past suggests, however, that the stereotypical thinking about the sea's instrumentality as regards economic development might be difficult to overcome.[4]

The 19th century seem to be an influence as regards the above mentioned mystification of sea access. It was then that the weakening of Poland-to-be's economic ties with the Baltic occurred. Nearly thirty years ago Andrzej Piskozub claimed that in the 19th century the Polish territories did not need the sea access,[5] words which resonated as a reproach with reference to the entire, arduously

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[2] W. Trąmpczyński: *Mowa sejmowa wygłoszona na uroczystym posiedzeniu Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej w dniu 10 lutego 1920 roku* [A Speech Delivered in the Course of a Special Seym Meeting on February 10, 1920], in: M. Rdesiński: *Brama na świat* [A Gate to the World], Gdańsk 1976, pp. 39–40.

[3] E. Kwiatkowski: *Polska morzu. Odczyt wygłoszony w auli Uniwersytetu Poznańskiego 8.XII.1928* [Poland for the Sea: A Speech Delivered in the Poznań University hall on December 8, 1928], in: *Przemysł i Morze* [Industry and the Sea], 1928, pp. 1–16, quoted after idem: *Pisma o Rzeczypospolitej Morskiej* [Writings on the Maritime Republic of Poland], ed. by M.M. Drozdowski, Szczecin 1985, p. 66.

[4] G. Labuda: *Morze w kulturze plemion słowiańskich* [The Sea in the Culture of Slavic Tribes], in: *Morze w kulturach świata* [The Sea in World Cultures], ed. by A. Piskozub, Wrocław 1976, p. 239.

[5] A. Piskozub: *Polska morska. Czyn XX wieku* [The Maritime Poland: The 20th Century Deed], Gdańsk 1986, p. 9.

construed maritime ideology. Also, Józef Stanielewicz presenting the Polish territories' trade relations with the Baltic during the time of the partitions assumes that these relations diminished; as a matter of fact, the Polish relations with the Baltic developed only when Poland stayed under the Prussian rule. Other partitioners proceeded, with various dynamics though, towards retreating from the Baltic trade.[6] Regardless of our assumptions on the transformation processes occurring in the partitioned Poland, her economic ties with the partitioner incrementally got reinforced. Therefore, in 1918 Stanisław Kutrzeba spoke gloomily about Gdańsk and the River Vistula: "along with Poland's partitions 'having partitioned' the course of the River Vistula, the latter lost in its huge significance; Gdańsk's role diminished to that a middle-size town cherished. The economic shifts and railway had contributed to the completion of the process of the Vistula becoming an almost 'dead' river in the 19th century."[7]

Referring to the role the sea played in the integration of the Republic of Poland's territories in the 20th century might be very difficult, mostly because it is at this time that the particularly strong development of maritime ideology and propaganda took place. Both in the inter- and postwar period this development became an important element of the anti-German propaganda. As soon as the end of WWI the German made it explicit that Poland might be denied the sea access if German territorial pretences were satisfied. According to a report of the Baltic Institute, the book *Der Kampf um die Ostsee* by Wacław Sobieski published in 1933, that is, at the time of the increased German power struggle, "presented a history of the Polish struggle, until the contemporary times, to maintain the sea access on the basis that Pomerania had always been a part of the Polish territory."[8] "Pomerania" was then understood as the Gdańsk Pomerania.

When pondering over the role of the Baltic in the integration of the territories of the Second Republic of Poland one cannot omit an emotional approach

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[6] J. Stanielewicz: *Związki handlowe ziem polskich z Bałtykiem w latach 1815–1914* [The Trade Relations Existing Between the Polish Territories and the Baltic in the Years 1815–1914], Szczecin 1991, p. 185.

[7] S. Kutrzeba: *Wisła w historii gospodarczej dawnej Rzeczypospolitej* [The River Vistula in the Economic History of the Former Republic of Poland], Warszawa 1921, p. 51. Cf. also S. Gierszewski: *Wisła w dziejach Polski* [The River Vistula in the History of Poland], Gdańsk 1982, pp. 156 f.

[8] W. Sobieski: *Der Kampf um die Ostsee*, Leipzig 1933; *Dostęp do morza. Zagadnienia pomorskie. Wspólnota bałtycka* [The Sea Access: Pomeranian Questions. The Baltic Commonwealth]. The 4th report of the BI Management submitted to scholarly committees and the General Assembly on June 21–22, 1935, Toruń 1936, pp. 73, 74.

to maritime matters. I have already quoted the Speaker of the Seym, Wojciech Trąmpczyński, yet, General Józef Haller acted equally pompously when he rode his horse into the sea and, tossing a gold ring in the water he said: "Today is a glorious day! It is a day of freedom, for the White Eagle spread his wings both over the Polish land and sea. The nation feels that the hydra which, until that moment, suppressed it, is no more. We are now looking forward to seeing new worlds and free countries."[9] Both Trąmpczyński's speech and Heller's "wedding" with the sea and his "wedding speech" are related by one more fact to have occurred at the time in question. Then the Polish Seym passed a resolution on the construction of the Polish sea port in Tczew (Dirschau) on the River Vistula. On March 26, 1920 the Seym resolved about the National Fleet Committee aimed at the "establishment of a national maritime fund, out of donations." Several years later also General Commissary of the Polish government in the Free City of Gdańsk Henryk Strassburger emphasized such an emotional approach to maritime matters. On coming to power in 1923 Strassburger said that "free access to the Baltic is not a Polish political postulate but a sanctity."[10] Thus, the lofty, even pompous style of speaking about the sea in the Second Republic of Poland prevailed, a topic I shall return to in the later part of this article.

When we try to demarcate the role the sea played in the post-WWI integration of the Polish territories, it turns out the problem must be discussed on several planes. The first of these planes is economy entailing an attempt at answering the following questions: how strong bonds with the Baltic had the Polish territories at the times of the partitions, and whether these bonds were maintained at the times of the Second Republic of Poland, or else a necessity occurred to restore them? The second plane on which to carry on our discussion is the ideological-political perspective which inspires the questions of: whether the prewar Polish political parties postulated an interest in maritime affairs and how they discerned the question of the access to the Baltic? This latter plane also comprised a springboard to a discussion on the political activity undertaken in the final months of WWI and after it ended, an activity aimed at gaining the sea access. It seems we cannot escape the question of the relation of Polish bourgeoisie from Gdańsk, the main port

[9] Quoted after B. Dopierała: *Wokół polityki morskiej drugiej Rzeczypospolitej. Studia historyczne* [The Maritime Policy of the Second Republic of Poland: A Historical Study], Poznań 1978, p. 48.

[10] Quoted after Z. Machaliński: *Gospodarcza myśl morska II Rzeczypospolitej (1919–1939)* [The Economic Maritime Thought of the Second Republic of Poland (1919–1939)], Gdańsk 1975, p. 16.

town of the First Republic of Poland, to the newly revived state, either. Finally, one of the most important factors contributing to an assessment of a degree of integration of the Polish territories was the process of shaping the Polish thought and maritime policy. Thus, the question arises of the existing centre or centres whose impact upon the shape of these two notions can be called decisive.

At the times of the partitions the interest both in the Pomeranian question and the was slight among the Polish political parties. It was believed that the main obstacle on the road to sovereignty was Russia under the rule of the tsar. On the other hand, the national-democratic party propagating the struggle against the German had a different territorial concept, one which referred to the ideas of Jan Ludwik Popławski and Roman Dmowski. The revived and reconstructed Poland should encompass the west and northern territories, the Baltic coastline included. In 1887 Popławski saw this concept in the following way: "the free access to the sea along with the entire possession of the country's main water artery, the River Vistula, are *sine qua non* of our existence. The whole Baltic basin from the River Vistula to the River Niemen estuary which, together with Silesia, Poland wasted away so inconsiderately must be regained.[11] Also Ignacy Paderewski supported the national postulates as regards Poland's access to the Baltic in 1918, for he considered Gdańsk to be Poland's historical and natural port situated at the estuary of one of the "most national European rivers." These concepts differed from the position on the subject Józef Piłsudski held: he "did not believe in regaining of a doubtful Gdańsk," a loss which could be compensated for with the gain of Lipawa (Libau) and Riga.[12]

The integration of the Polish political orientations with maritime affairs became an issue particularly at the turn of 1921 and 1922 when political and diplomatic efforts both to gain the access to the Baltic and make it official in the form of a legal treaty were undertaken. Contrary to the earlier assumptions, the first stage of securing the Polish interests on the Baltic and with regard to Gdańsk did not end with the signing on November 9 and 11, 1920 of the Polish-Gdańsk convention as in the Treaty of Versailles. The convention required further concrete regulations which were specified in the Warsaw treaty signed as late as October

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[11] B. Dopierała: *Wokół polityki morskiej* ... [The Maritime Policy ...], pp. 17, 18. Cf. A. Wątor: *Ideas of Political Parties on the Problem of Poland's Access to the Baltic Sea in the Early 20th Century (up till 1918)*, "Studia Maritima" 12, 1999, pp. 119–139.

[12] B. Dopierała: *Wokół polityki morskiej* ... [The Maritime Policy ...], p. 30. Cf. S. Mikulicz: *Kłajpeda w polityce europejskiej 1918–1939* [Memel in the European Policy 1918–1939], Warszawa 1976, p. 25.

24, 1921. The treaty regulated e.g. the date of incorporating the Free City into Poland's tax borders for the beginning of 1922.[13]

On the onset of the 20th century, in the final years of WWI in particular when the hopes for advancing the Polish affair visibly increased the growing interest in West Prussia and its future lot could be observed. For politicians, incorporating West and East Prussia into the Polish territories was significant for it secured the future state's northern and western borders and diminished the German jeopardy. Thus, gaining the access to the sea by the revived Polish state was evaluated almost exclusively through the lens of German-Polish relations. Such a perspective seemed justified for it resulted from a long-lasting historical experience.[14] The Polish maritime *raison d'état* caused the actions aimed at reinforcing the Polish state on the Baltic to proceed from the south up to the north (the meridian direction) therefore clashing with the German interests expanding towards the east (the parallel direction). The time of the partitions constituted a period of clear victory both of German and Prussian interests. For Prussia a lifeline, as Otto von Bismarck called it, was demarcated to have begun in Berlin and ended in Królewiec (Königsberg). This line cut in two the basic line of the Polish interests running from Cracow along the River Vistula to Gdańsk.[15]

The birth of the Polish maritime ideology, or, better still, mythology, constituted one of the important factors integrating the Polish society and maritime matters. Typically – although I do not consider it justifiable at all – this ideology is identified with Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski. Still, his numerous elite-precursors did exist. The Polish literature can boast of bearing a marine trilogy authored by Stefan Żeromski (*Wisła* [The River Vistula] – 1918, *Wiatr od morza* [The Sea Wind] – 1922, *Międzymorze* [The Intersea] –1924).[16] In 1925 the writer received

[13] B. Hajduk: *Gospodarka Gdańska w latach 1920–1945* [The Economy of Gdańsk in the Years 1920–1945], Gdańsk 1998, pp. 29–34; B. Dopierała: *Wokół polityki morskiej* ... [The Maritime Policy ...], p. 35.

[14] W. Wrzesiński: *Niemcy w polskiej myśli politycznej 1864–1914* [The German in the Polish Political Thought 1864–1914], in: *Polska i jej sąsiedzi* [Poland and Her Neighbours], ed. by H. Zieliński, Wrocław 1975, pp. 115, 116.

[15] S. Salmonowicz: *Prusy. Dzieje państwa i społeczeństwa* [Prussia: The History of the State and Its Society], Poznań 1987, p. 8. For general remarks see G. Labuda: *Morze i Pomorze w kulturze politycznej Polski (do schyłku XVIII wieku)* [The Sea and Pomerania in Poland's Political Culture (until the Late 18th Century)], in: *Kongres Pomorski. Od historii ku przyszłości Pomorza* (The Pomeranian Congress: From the History of Pomerania into Its Future], ed. by H. Bronk, E. Włodarczyk, Szczecin 1999, pp. 11–58.

[16] On a detailed analysis of the subject see A. Piskozub: op. cit., pp. 26 f. See also *Antologia poezyj marynistycznych* [An Anthology of Marine Poems], ed. by Z. Jasiński, Warszawa 1937.

a literary award for his work in the service of the sea. Other literature experts emphasize *Wiatr od morza* [The Sea Wind] to constitute at once a specific appeal, manifesto, political programme and bugle call.[17]

In the mid-1930s Jerzy Szaniawski's marine literary award was set up. Its first laureate was Janusz Stepkowski. Yet, the Polish interwar marine fiction was not unambiguously positive. In "Morze" [The Sea] of 1938 we read that "our marine fiction is still in its infancy serving propaganda so ardently and immoderately as only a neophyte would."[18] On the other hand, certain pompousness could be discerned in the Polish poetry of the period in question, even when poems on maritime matters and the construction of the Gdynia port were written by such acknowledged poetry writers as Julian Tuwim or Konstanty Ildefons Gałczyński. We can only establish that writers of the later period who began their careers at the decline of the Second Republic of Poland and after WWII referred to these pompous descriptions. In her poem entitled *Wesoła pieśń o Gdyni* [A Merry Song of Gdynia] Nina Rydzewska wrote: "[...] and fingers, blood-stained from ropes, do not hurt at all / And shoulders – tough caryatides do not weigh heavily. / Work is a light wine! / Hurray... Up goes the wall! / We build girders and boats! / We load millions of tons of coal! / We blackened people from port – not nightmares moving creepily / We build tall glass homes."[19]

As regards science, the publications by Franciszek Bujak needs to be mentioned. In 1921 he issued the book entitled *Dziejowe znaczenie morza* [The Historical Significance of the Sea] only to publish in 1934 a fundamental, for marine mythology, work entitled *Kultury morskie i lądowe* [The Maritime and Land Cultures]. In his first book Bujak explicitly states that West European countries became superpowers owing to their allegiance with the maritime culture. According to Bujak, the power of such cultures rested in movement, inherent in the sea, and not in, vital for land cultures, mass. The author was clear about sea trade being a causative for the country's economic development and political power. He feared that, instead of getting fixed at the River Vistula's estuary and the sea coast, the Polish political thought could get dispersed across the vast wilderness

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[17] E. Balcerzan: *Poezja polska w latach 1918–1939* [The Polish Poetry in the Years 1918–1939], Warszawa 1996; R. Karwacki: *Temat morski w prozie fabularnej dwudziestolecia międzywojennego* [The Sea in the Interwar Literary Fiction], Gdańsk 1975.

[18] Quoted after A. Piskozub: op. cit., p. 97. See the same on a broader evaluation of the Polish interwar marine fiction.

[19] *Pomorze i morze w poezji* [Pomerania and the Sea in Poetry], ed. by B. Arsoba, J. Borzyszkowski, Szczecin–Gdańsk 1998, p. 51.

of the eastern territories.[20] In his other work from the 1930s and expressing the spirit of this decade Bujak was even clearer about the division of the contemporary world into two cultures of which the maritime culture impelled development.

Bujak published this work in a series on the maritime outlook that the Baltic Institute issued.[21] The 1935 report of the Institute stated that the work in question significantly influenced the shaping of the maritime ideology in the Polish society and showed the domination of the maritime culture over the land culture. Bujak's book fulfilled one of the Institute's statute tasks as formulated in Paragraph 2 that the aim of the Institute was the "economic, political, ethnic etc. research on the Baltic Coast as regards the Polish interests in it."[22]

Another interesting occurrence also related to the scholarly ideologizing of the sea was the fact of establishing in Cracow in June 1920 of a joint stock company named Bałtyk – Towarzystwo Żeglugi Morskiej [The Baltic – Maritime Navigation Association] animated mainly by professors employed at the Jagiellonian University. The real value of the company's ownership capital was small to the degree that the existence of the company on the market was commented on in Germany as resulting from charitable rather than economic motives.[23]

It needs to be emphasized, too, that as early as October 1918 the sea enthusiasts, Commodore Admiral Kazimierz Porębski among them, established The Polish Colours Association which, in turn, in the mid-1919 would publish a monthly "Bandera Polska" [The Polish Colours]. The Association would quickly boast of more than 2 thousand members and in April 1924 when it numbered ca. 5000 members, would be recreated into The Maritime and Fluvial League with the monthly "Morze" [The Sea] as its organ. In 1930 the organization changed its name to The Maritime and Colonial League at the same time losing its pioneer and propaganda-oriented character that Porębski gave to it. Because of this, some advocates of Piłsudski's policy could not but speak sarcastically about this transformation.[24]

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[20] *Dostęp do morza* ... [The Sea Access ...], p. 26.

[21] Ibid., p. 76.

[22] J. Borowik: *Pięć lat pracy Instytutu Bałtyckiego (1927–1932)* [The Five Years' Work of the Baltic Institute (1927–1932)], Toruń 1932, p. 5. Cf. also B. Piotrowski: *W służbie narodu i nauki. Instytut Bałtycki w latach 1925–1939* [In the Nation's and Science's Service: The Baltic Institute in the Years 1925–1939], Poznań 1991, p. 11. Cf. also K. Faszcza: Instytut Bałtycki [The Baltic Institute], "Przegląd Zachodniopomorski" [The West Pomeranian Review] 2010, No. 4.

[23] Z. Machaliński: *Gospodarcza myśl morska* ... [The Economic Maritime Thought ...], p. 46.

[24] A. Piskozub: op. cit., pp. 99 f.

Therefore, Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski and his maritime ideology did not come across a vacuum when they cropped up in the mid-1920s. His postulates, strongly economic in character, aimed at introducing active maritime policy and economy. In this light it is justifiable to support the research by Bogdan Dopierała on the foundations of the Polish maritime policy to have been created by Czesław Klarner under the circumstances caused by the Polish-German customs war of the end of 1925. By the end of June 1925 Klarner presented the programme of state maritime policy as Prime Minister Kazimierz Bartel's government programme. The assignment of the portfolio of the Minister of Industry and Trade to Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski became a key issue as regards the realization of Polish maritime plans. Kwiatkowski's contributions to these plans merits must be viewed in two ways. The first of them is related to economy and found its reflection e.g. in the consistent development of the Gdynia port. The other way of looking at the said contributions is via the fact of his propagating maritime ideology, an activity which seems underrated with regard to Kwiatkowski. He attempted at convincing the Polish society that Poland would become a modern country only when she created her own maritime economy. Also, he considered the sea to be a causative of the country's fast development. This is how Kwiatkowski lectured the audience listening to him in the Poznań University hall in 1928: "the sea is an exceptional debtor. Each genuine asset, each capital, each piece of work returns quickly, and with a usuriously huge interest. The nations which love the sea and devoted their work to it know this well. The interests make new interests, the work gives fruits, not only economic but also many other."[25]

Kwiatkowski's views on the goals of the Polish maritime economy were similar to those Bujak held on the issue. Similarly to Bujak, Kwiatkowski postulated the departure from the land orientation towards the maritime orientation. He wrote in his *Dysproporcje* ... [Disproportions ...]: "Throughout ages, and against the circumstances and needs, we were a nation of farmers [...] through centuries we were stuck in land issues, today we need to find space for maritime questions [...]. Thus two psychological attitudes, that of an agricultural and land society and that of a society made by the merchant and the seaman, are finally confronted."[26] Though it is difficult to evaluate Kwiatkowski after one statement only, one cannot agree to an opinion that his speeches obfuscated the interwar

[25] E. Kwiatkowski: *Polska morzu* ..., quoted after idem: *Pisma* ... [Writings ...], p. 66.

[26] E. Kwiatkowski: *Dysproporcje. Rzecz o Polsce przeszłej i obecnej* [Disproportions: On Poland in the Past and Now], Warszawa 1989, p. 303.

Poland's economic reality and stirred up vain hopes. On the other hand, Bogdan Dopierała critically assesses Kwiatkowski's role in the creation of the interwar Polish maritime economy.[27]

Nevertheless, the maritime propaganda created by the above mentioned and other persons entailed a huge identification of the Polish society with maritime matters. This phenomenon was also perceived by the then observers of the political life. Professor André Tibal of the Nancy University pithily commented on this identification writing that Poles displayed a peculiar feeling that can only be depicted as a mystification of sea access.

In the 19th century the trade relations of the Polish territories and the Baltic were significantly and without doubt changed. Andrzej Piskozub is an ardent supporter of the thesis that "although the old Poland adjoined various stretches of the Baltic coastline on different stages of her history, she never had to practice maritime economy."[28] Such a conclusion has been formulated both by Roman Wapiński and Bogdan Dopierała. On the other hand, Piskozub's thesis has been confirmed by Józef Stanielewicz's monograph on the 19th century trade relations the Polish territories and the Baltic.[29]

On one hand, the structure of export from the Polish territories as compared to the times of the Republic of Poland did not change. The export to western markets of agricultural and forest products still dominated. Yet, to a large extent, this export was made hindered, not only because of the partitioners' protectionist policies but also due to the protectionism of the main consumers of Polish products (e.g. corn duties in England since 1817). On the other hand one needs to remember that at the times of the partitions Szczecin rather than Gdańsk became the destination harbor for some of the Polish territories.[30] This is because, due to partitions, the River Vistula artery was slowly turning into a dead thoroughfare, whereas the River Oder was modernized by Prussia, however late, to become a communication route.

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[27] B. Dopierała: *Wokół polityki morskiej* ... [The Maritime Policy ...], pp. 290 f.

[28] A. Piskozub: op. cit., p. 8.

[29] J. Stanielewicz: *Związki handlowe* ... [The Trade Relations ...], pp. 49 f.

[30] More on the subject cf. J. Stanielewicz: *Rola portów bałtyckich Szczecina, Gdańska i Królewca na tle zaplecza i przedpola portowego w latach 1815–1914* [The Role of the Baltic Ports of Szczecin, Gdańsk and Königsbergas Compared to the Hinterland and Port Foreground in the Years 1815–1914], Szczecin 1976; E. Włodarczyk, *Rozwój gospodarczy miast portowych pruskich prowincji nadbałtyckich w latach 1808–1914* [The Economic Development of Port Towns in the Prussian Baltic Provinces in the Years 1808–1914], Wrocław 1987.

Turnover of the Szczecin and Gdańsk Ports and Hinterlands in 1913

Markets	Szczecin		Gdańsk	
	turnover (thousand tons)	%	turnover (thousand tons)	%
West Prussia	97	1,2	955	24,8
East Prussia	12	0,1	550	14,3
West Pomerania	2,404	28,3	111	2,9
Great Poland	499	5,9	374	9,7
Silesia	2,939*	34,5	698	18,1
Brandenburg	1,188	14,0	37	1,0
Berlin	717	8,4	41	1,1
Other German Provinces	445	5,2	80	2,1
Kingdom of Poland	21	0,2	590	15,9
Russia	2		400	10,4
Galicia	32	0,4	4	0,1
Czech Republic, Austria, Hungary	136	1,6	9	0,2
Other Countries	16	0,2	–	–
Total	8,508	100	3,849	100

* Including iron ores loads for the Ostrawa-Karwin Basin.

Source: J. Stanielewicz: *Związki handlowe* ... [The Trade Relations ...], p. 178.

Further weakening of the ties the Polish territories had with the Baltic took place in the late 1870s and was conditioned by the partitioners' – Germany and Russia alike firm protectionist policy. We can therefore state that by the end of the 19th century the Russian partition visibly departed from the Baltic trade. On the other hand, the Prussian partition developed stronger ties with the Baltic. For communication reasons, this partition also chose Szczecin rather than Gdańsk, let alone Królewiec (Königsberg) as its destination harbour.[31]

We can thus give justice to the statement that before 1914 the Polish territories developed visibly strong ties with the partitioners' economy. Outlets for articles produced within the Polish territories as well as the 19th century-construed communication system, railways in particular made for the partitioners' economic relations to be continental in character. The weakening of trade relations with the Baltic which took place during the period of the partitions resulted in the situation where the question of the access to the sea was of marginal significance for the politically and economically active part of the 19th century Polish society.

[31] J. Stanielewicz: *Związki handlowe* ... [The Trade Relations ...], p. 178.

While evaluating the early 20th century economic ties the Polish territories had with the Baltic one cannot but discern that the former Prussian partition economic circles preferred performing sea trade via Szczecin or Hamburg rather than through Gdańsk. This conviction entailed concrete actions. In 1920 Cyryl Ratajski, a coowner of a chemical plant in Poznań intervened in Berlin so as to accelerate a raw material delivery, via the Szczecin port, to his own factory. For the purpose of developing the Polish export of some goods, two Poznań industrialists: Józef Wdowiński and Marian Namysł purchased storage squares in the Szczecin port. "An average Great Poland dweller – the then newspaper articles read – knew well the Polish ports to be Gdańsk but first and foremost Szczecin."[32] In Poznań any attempts at redirecting good export by sea from Szczecin to Gdańsk (e.g. the establishment of the "Żegluga" [The Navigation] enterprise, or the resolution on the construction of the Warta-Vistula Channel passed by The Poznań City Council) encountered a resistance on the part of Great Poland's economic circles. A representative of the Polish government, engineer Bernard Zakrzewski assured Stoecker, the German Commissioner for Clearing the Settlements of Fluvial Fleet that, for Great Poland, both Szczecin and Hamburg were the most important ports. The Polish government also supported other economic undertakings serving maintaining these ties (e.g. The River Odra Navigation Association seated in Katowice). One of the then prepared memorials even suggested that, like Czechoslovakia, Poland should be granted a special zone in the Szczecin port.[33] Such an attitude was supported by the German economic circles, too, claiming that Great Poland's or Silesia's ties with German markets were strong to the degree that new political borders could not break them.

The appearance of the above mentioned concepts resulted from the difficulties with the final determination both of Poland's sea border and the detailed principles as regards her functioning in the Free City of Gdańsk. The first mature and specific economic intentions of the maritime Poland appeared in the years 1919–1921 and were presented by the Head of the Department for Maritime Affairs, Vice-Admiral Kazimierz Porębski. His concept of Poland's farming the sea was based on the realistic evaluation of the situation as created by the Versailles

[32] B. Dopierała: *Konfrontacje i przypomnienia. Szkice z dziejów upadku niemczyzny na Pomorzu Zachodnim* [Confrontations and Reminiscences: On the Fall of the German Culture in West Pomerania], Poznań 1962, p. 27; idem: *Kryzys gospodarki morskiej Szczecina w latach 1919–1939* [The Crisis in Szczecin's Maritime Economy in the Years 1919–1939], Poznań 1963, pp. 129 f.

[33] B. Dopierała: *Kryzys gospodarki* ... [The Crisis ...], p. 137.

conference resolutions. Porębski's activity was also good in that he assembled a small yet professional group of former navy and merchant marine officers from the partitioners' fleets as well as people related to shipbuilding.[34] Due to a very difficult financial situation of the state, a full realization of these intentions could not bring the results as expected.

Starting from 1925, a breakthrough can be observed in the maritime history of the Second Republic of Poland. Although, as I have already pointed out, the maritime policy programme was accepted in the mid-1926, yet, the state and state economy concentrated on maritime affairs only after the Polish-German customs war of 1925.[35] Kwiatkowski did not hide that the customs war which the German imposed upon Poland "effected in the long run advantageously, both for the country (i.e. Poland) and her". The speculations of "The Frankfurter Zeitung" that "one way or the other Poland emerges from this war deadly wounded. Her shed blood will take both her strength and independence away from her. Then, us and Russia together will finish her off."[36], did not come true.

One additional effect of the said customs war was also linking the Gdańsk port to the Polish markets. The Polish decisions concerning the construction of the Gdynia port and the Herby Nowe-Gdynia main line were objectively necessary. They created new factors for the linking of the Polish coastline with Upper Silesia and constituted a significant argument for the rivalry carried out against Szczecin and other ports in the Polish customs area. We can also mention at this point a suggestion by some researchers that the German Minister of Foreign Affairs Gustav Stresemann became an indirect inspirer of the Polish maritime policy.[37]

From 1926 on both German economic circles and German diplomatic representatives in Poland began seriously analyzing the consequences of constructing

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[34] K. Porębski: *W sprawie reparacji tonażu przeznaczonego dla Polski z 14.I.1919 roku* [On the Reparation the Tonnage for Poland of January 14, 1919], "Nautologia" [The Nautology] 22, 1987, No. 3, pp. 21–23; idem: *Memoriał w sprawie morskiej z 2.III.1919 roku* [A Maritime Memorial of March 2, 1919], ibid., pp. 30–31; idem: *Memoriał o zadaniach i pracach Departamentu dla Spraw Morskich z 1.XI.1919 roku* [A Memorial on Tasks and Works of the Departament for Maritime Affairs of November 1, 1919], ibid., pp. 34–38; Z. Machaliński: *Admirałowie polscy 1919–1950* [The Polish Admirals 1919–1950], Gdańsk 1993, pp. 44–84.

[35] K. Błahut: *Polsko-niemieckie stosunki gospodarcze w latach 1919–1939* [The Polish-German Economic Relations in the Years 1919–1939], Wrocław 1975, p. 43; C. Łuczak: *Od Bismarcka do Hitlera. Polsko-niemieckie stosunki gospodarcze* [From Bismarck to Hitler: The Polish-German Economic Relations], Poznań 1988, pp. 169 f.

[36] Quoted after E. Kwiatkowski: *Dysproporcje* ... [Disproportions ...], p. 214.

[37] B. Dopierała: *Wokół polityki morskiej* ... [The Maritime Policy ...], pp. 242 f. Cf. W. Grabska: *Ekonomiczna ekspansja Niemiec na wschód w latach 1870–1939* [Germany's Economic Expansion to the East in the Years 1870–1939], Wrocław 1964, pp. 51, 52.

the Gdynia port and coal main. Reports sent to Auswärtiges Amt and the Ministry of Economy included information on the port development, planned turnover, port charges, train connections and transport tariffs as well as on the development of the Polish merchant marine. All of these points of development were referred to as dynamically growing.[38]

It was surprising that within a short, three years long (1925–1928) period Poland transformed her status of an rivaling object into one of a subject. She became a partner who ceased to passively expect or ask for good economic cooperation conditions and began to actively shape, even dictate them. Poland's undertaking such a struggle was an inevitable state necessity. It was grounded in both economy and politics – in so doing the state aimed at interrupting Szczecin's natural, after all, ties as a German port with its newly independent Polish hinterland. Redirecting the goods from Szczecin port to Gdynia and Gdańsk became a political problem of the highest significance. As I have already mentioned, the polarization of positions and the acceleration of actions so as they went in the said direction were provoked by the customs war.

The Polish successes as regards the port rivalry with Germany were significant. When in 1928 the former Minister of Communication in the Reich took over the position of the Head of the Szczecin-Prussian Port Community, he announced that he had come to Szczecin in order to destroy Gdynia from this place. On the other hand, in the autumn of 1933 the same Minister made an offer to the Polish consul in Szczecin to reach a compromise, even commence a cooperation.[39] At this point one cannot but point to a few Polish successes in the Polish-German rivalry. During the war the Polish economic circles directed their attention both to the Czech transit and the gaining of goods originally designed for Czech steelworks. In the years 1931–1933 Czech steelworks accepted the Polish offer and obliged themselves to exporting, via the Gdynia port, of at least 500 thousand tons of ore per year, a move that at once entailed the pulling away of Swedish ores from Szczecin to Gdynia. This export direction was advantageous also for the Swedish navigation lines which could thus assure for themselves freights of Polish coals in Gdynia. The struggle for the Swedish transit was not limited to obtaining ore though. By the end of 1932 the Polish ports sent their first cotton shipments to the northern parts of the Czech Republic. In this way, Gdańsk and

[38] Bundesarchiv Berlin, Reichswirtschaftsministerium, 9751, pp. 5–13.

[39] Archiwum Akt Nowych w Warszawie, Konsulat RP w Szczecinie [The New Files Archives in Warsaw, The RP Consulate in Stettin], 251, p. 29: a maritime report for 1933.

Gdynia protested the presence not only of the Szczecin port but also the ports of Hamburg and Bremen.[40]

In 1936 Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski evaluated the above depicted situation in the following way: "Gdynia constitutes an exceptionally significant symbol of the programme of the newly revived Poland. We can without doubt enjoy, even boast of the fact of Gdynia becoming, within a few short years, one of the most important Baltic ports; of the fact that in these first dozen or so years, and despite all difficulties, we did not waste away the regained international rights to Poland's sandy shore; of Gdańsk as a Polish port undergoing a significant economic development showing, and at the time of a serious economic crisis at that, the turnover twice as big as it had in its best prewar years even though it is cut off from Poland's economic hinterland. [...] We need to understand that it is precisely via Gdynia, Pomerania and Silesia that the midrib runs of the Polish economic life, and that cutting through this midrib will paralyse the whole body."[41]

The above presented discussion can be concluded as follows:

– at the moment Poland regained her sovereignty an unambiguous political will existed to assure the access to the Baltic to the revived state, this despite the differences as to the territorial concepts of this access;
– the creation, by numerous opinion-forming Polish circles, of the maritime ideology became a tangible element of not only the struggle for the sea access but also of its use;
– the construction of the Gdynia port, a basis for the development of the Polish foreign trade became an important element of the Polish sea farming.

Yet another Polish success was also Gdynia's assuming the leading role among the ports on the southern Baltic as well as winning in the rivalry with the German ports claiming the rights to maritime servicing of the hinterland within the borders of the Second Republic of Poland.

Translated by Beata Zawadka

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[40] E. Włodarczyk: *Der Wettbewerb zwischen den deutschen Häfen und die Häfen des polnischen Zollgebietes um das polnischen Hinterland in den Jahren 1919–1939*, in: *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Ostseeraumes*, hg. v. H. Wernicke, Hamburg 2002, pp. 337–353.

[41] E. Kwiatkowski: *Gdynia symbolem buntu* [The Defiant Gdynia], "Morze" [The Sea] 1936, No. 3, pp. 4–6, quoted after idem: *Pisma* ... [Writings ...], pp. 130–131.

MORZE W INTEGRACJI ZIEM II RZECZYPOSPOLITEJ

Streszczenie

W chwili odzyskania przez Polskę niepodległości istniała jednoznaczna polityczna wola zapewnienia odrodzonemu państwu dostępu do Bałtyku, pomimo różnicy w koncepcjach terytorialnych tego dostępu. Istotnym elementem nie tylko walki o dostęp do morza, ale przede wszystkim o jego wykorzystanie stało się stworzenie ideologii morskiej przez liczne opiniotwórcze kręgi polskiego społeczeństwa. Ważnym elementem polskiej uprawy morza stała się budowa portu w Gdyni, który stanowi podstawę rozwoju polskiego handlu zagranicznego. Polskimi sukcesami były też uzyskanie przez Gdynię dominującej roli wśród portów południowego Bałtyku i wygranie konkurencji z portami niemieckimi roszczącymi sobie prawo do obsługi morskiej zaplecza w granicach II Rzeczypospolitej.

THE BALTIC SEA AND THE INTEGRATION OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC OF POLAND

Summary

From the moment Poland regained her independence there existed an unambiguous political will to ascertain the access to Baltic to the newly revived nation, this despite the differences existing in the territorial concepts of the said access. The creation by numerous opinion-forming circles of sea ideology became one of the most significant element of not only the struggle for the access to the sea but also for its future use. Another important element of the Polish sea-cultivation was the construction of the Gdynia port, a basis for the development of the Polish foreign trade. Also, Gdynia's gaining the dominant role among the ports of the south Baltic and winning the competition with the German ports claiming the right to maritime servicing of the hinterland within the bounds of the Second Republic of Poland.