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60 YEARS OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN POLAND AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA – HISTORICAL REVIEW

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The diplomatic relations between Poland and China had been established before World War II. The new stage in the relations has started on October 7, 1949, when Poland officially recognized the People's Republic of China (PRC), which was declared on October 1, 1949.¹ Therefore, in 2009, we had two anniversaries: the 60th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China and the 60th anniversary of establishing the diplomatic relations between Poland and PRC. This gives the opportunity to summarize mutual relations. Those 60 years have been filled with positive stories, which had significant influence on the development of bilateral relations. However, one can also find difficult, even tragic moments during the history of these two nations. Those uneasy moments had also direct impact on mutual relations.

¹ J. Rowiński, *Wahadło, czyli stosunki polityczne PRL–ChRL*, [in:] *Polska–Chiny Wczoraj, dziś, jutro*, ed. B. Góralczyk, Toruń 2009, p. 19.

1. THE INTERWAR PERIOD (1918–1939) AND THE POSTWAR ERA (AFTER 1945)

When Poland restored its independence in 1918, China was immersed in post-revolution chaos. After the Revolution of 1911, which overthrew the Qing dynasty, the attempts to implement multi-parties, parliamentary democracy based on the western model have failed completely. As a result the informal dissolution of the state – that transformed into smaller and greater quasi-state entities controlled by local warlords, sometimes waging wars against each other – took place. These wars ravaged and impoverished China. The central government in Beijing became inert and puppet structure, dependent on current warlord that controlled the region surrounding the capital city. Western powers and the Empire of Japan, which had already established a kind of protectorate control over China during the late 19th century, defended their privileges, using the military garrisons based in the allocated districts of key Chinese cities. Only in 1929, after a series of wars and political maneuvers the party of Guomindang – known in the West as Kuomintang (the party was reorganized in Soviet model) – restored the unity of China, defeating some generals and receiving recognition of its power by others. The capital city was established in Nanjing. The only power that did not submit was Communist Party of China with its peasant's troops. This fact led to historical standoff between Kuomintang's dictatorship and the origins of Communist's dictatorship, because the democratic elements, which did not receive support from the western democracies, were practically eliminated. Although any of great powers did not support resurgence of fully sovereign China, the nation strengthened gradually its position, through the painful, revolutionary processes.

Poland was interested in Chinese affairs due to one important reason. Even in the years of the Imperial Russia on the territory of North-East China (Manchuria), which was Russian "traditional" influence zone, small Polish communities did not form. Those groups played very significant role in the economic development of Manchuria and their number even grew due to the escape of Poles from the eastern areas of the Russian Empire after the Bolshevik Coup d'Etat on November 7, 1918 and the subsequent Civil War. In Manchuria there were Polish schools, parishes,

and societies, so the authorities of resurgent Poland had to deal not only with the issues of already settled emigration (i.e. provide with diplomatic custody, determine legal status of Polish residents) but also enable the return of those Poles, who were in China by accident of history and who did not have sufficient financial resources. They had no Chinese citizenship and they did not want to obtain the citizenship of new Bolshevik's Russia. The main centre of Polish emigration was located in Harbin. The Poles were constructing there an East-China railway and further on they worked on this railway. There was a high school in Harbin named after a writer, Nobel Prize winner Henryk Sienkiewicz. This school was completed, *inter alia*, by: writer Teodor Parnicki, journalist Włodzimierz Wowczuk and diplomat Edward Kajdański. The engineer Stanisław Kierbedź designed the bridge on Sungari River.²

The full scale of diplomatic relations between the government of Poland and the central government of Republic of China, formed by Kuomintang, were established only in 1933 r. The first Polish envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary was Jerzy Barthel de Weydenthal. Before this appointment he was the deputy of Polish government and charge d'affairs of protecting Polish community. Before him Poland was represented in China by Jan Woroniecki and Stanisław Patek – two Polish consulates in Harbin and Shanghai (two biggest Polish population centers) – who worked since the 1920s.

The establishment of official, diplomatic relations was preceded by concluding of two treaties: "on friendship and trade," signed by Karol Pindor on May 19, 1928, with the local government of Zhang Zuolin controlling North-Eastern China, after the creation of central government in Nanjing, "the treaty of friendship, trade and navigation" signed on September 18, 1929 by Jerzy Barthel de Weydenthal. On July 1, 1929 an additional protocol was signed. Those two last agreements regulated mainly all the consular matters, mutual rights of Polish citizens in China and Chinese citizens in Poland (which were very few actually), the status of Polish community in China, question of trade and navigation, provided also with mutually granted most favored nation clause. One must admit

² Described in works of E. Kajdański, A. Kosiński, A. Kosińska.

that Polish-Chinese trade relations at that time were in the very early stage of development.

The rapprochement between Poland and Japan during the thirties had considerable impact on deterioration of Polish-Chinese relations. Diplomatic recognition of puppet state of Manchukuo (created by the Empire of Japan in Manchuria seized by Japanese troops, which was form of its' separation from China) by the Republic of Poland (Rzeczpospolita Polska) was considered by Nanjing government as the hostile act and caused the severance of diplomatic relations with Poland.³

In 1937 Japan invaded China and, in 1939 Germany attacked Poland. Both states were situated in the fires of World War II on the same side: Allies which fought against their opponents of the Axis powers. After World War II Poland found itself in the close orbit of Soviet influence, which was against the will of major groups of Polish society. This caused resistance leading even to local insurgencies in the country. In China the civil war started between the military forces of Communist Party of China and the Guomindang army, which ended with the defeat of Guomindang and declaration of People's Republic of China by Mao Zedong on October 1, 1949.

The leaders of Guomindang, together with the remnants of the army evacuated to the island of Taiwan. The United States and the majority of western nations did not recognize People's Republic of China (PRC) authority over the country. They continued to maintain relations with the authorities of Republic of China (ROC) that resided temporarily in Taiwan, acknowledging them as the solely, legal representation of the whole China.

Therefore, both countries Poland and China became practically governed by communists. In Poland this regime was imposed by foreign power, while in China it was set up by domestic, mainly peasants' forces led by CPCh and without large enthusiasm of Moscow, who perceived Mao as "nationalist."

³ M. Nowak-Kielbikowa, *Japonia i Chiny w dyplomacji II Rzeczypospolitej (próba zarysu)*, "Dzieje Najnowsze", t. 1-2, Warszawa 1981, p. 244.

In this specific situation Poland diplomatically recognized new government in China and established diplomatic relations on October 7, 1949.

The fifties, when the Cold War intensified and both nations acted as the “allies” of Moscow, was the period of particularly intense political, economic and cultural cooperation. In February 1950 the first agreement on goods exchange and payments was signed and in 1954 both states concluded an agreement on scientific-technical cooperation. In 1955 Poland and China signed long-term bilateral shipping agreement. Under this agreement the shipping between harbors of Poland and China started and subsequently Chinese-Polish Joint Stock Shipping Company (“Chipol-brok”) was founded with head office in Shanghai and branch offices in Gdynia and Beijing (this enterprise is in business with great success up to this day).

In this period there was the last repatriation of remnants of Polish emigration in Manchuria (many Poles were captured and sent to “Gulag” camps by the Soviets after the seizure of Manchuria by the Red Army in 1945).

The cooperation between both countries tightened even more in 1957, when China supported the “October renewal” in Poland and the efforts of Władysław Gomułka to gain some sort of independence from Moscow were made. China started to distance itself from the Soviet Union. Chinese support had key significance for Poland, and the course of action could have been very different without it (since China supported Moscow’s military intervention in Hungary). With regard to these efforts to prevent similar disaster in Poland, Zhou Enlai, then the Prime Minister of PRC and their most skilled politician, experienced master of diplomatic games, was traveling between Warsaw and Moscow and visited Warsaw in fall of 1957. The First Secretary of KC PZPR (Central Committee of the Polish United Workers’ Party) Władysław Gomułka and the Prime Minister of People’s Republic of Poland Józef Cyrankiewicz paid an official visit to China in 1958. This is important that in joint statement, agreed after the completed talks, both sides expressed the necessity of observing the rule of parity among the socialist states. After disclosure of Chinese-Soviet stand-off Władysław Gomułka tried playing the role of mediator in this conflict (without

success, unfortunately).⁴ In 1959 the Chairman of Council of State Aleksander Zawadzki paid the visit to China. The Chinese concepts of The Hundred Flowers Campaign in the area of culture, where a variety of views and solutions to national policy issues could thrive beside the “Marxist flowers,” were the subject of fascination of Polish intellectuals, even when those policies were abandoned in China and Mao initiated brutal “The Anti-Rightist Movement.”

In a climate of mutual goodwill the cooperation was developing very well in many fields, especially in mining industry. Both countries also exchanged dancing groups, theatrical troops, exhibitions; numerous groups of students, many writings were translated. The legacy of this period in China was tremendous popularity of “Mazowsze” (State Folk Song and Dance Ensemble) and Chopin music. Having very specific position within Chinese policy, Warsaw became, for years, the only place of official meetings of the envoys of PRC and the USA, which did not maintain bilateral diplomatic relations then (those meetings were held in Harriers Palace at Royal Baths Park).

The course for “communism building” in China, initiated by Mao, in more radical forms than in the Soviet Union, did not stir up an enthusiasm in Poland, not only within the party’s leadership, but also among the intellectuals. The Beijing’s policy of supporting Poland, thus to weaken the internal cohesion of the “Soviet camp” and Moscow’s domination within it, met with an ambivalent reaction: the majority of party’s leadership considered it as breaking “the eternal Polish-Soviet alliance,” however there were also individuals who saw an opportunity to play this situation to increase the independence of Poland.

The intensification of the conflict between Moscow and Beijing at the beginning of the sixties, when the leadership of communist Poland (PRL) had to side with the Soviet Union, caused a significant regress in the bilateral relations. Being on Soviet Union’s side the leadership of PRL was very vocal among the choir of condemnations of other states and satellites’ parties, bearing in mind, that restoring of full domination of Moscow within the “international communist movement” would have very negative

⁴ *Stosunki dyplomatyczne 1944–1982*, informator t. 4, Warszawa 1984, p. 42.

consequences for Poland and would also weaken its position against the Kremlin.

During this particular time Polish-Chinese cooperation across all the areas (except the maritime shipping and railway transport) came to a standstill. The last agreement on cultural, scientific and technical cooperation was signed in May 1964 (within the framework of this agreement then for the last time the exchange of students has occurred and the dance group "Śląsk" [Silesia] visited China. In 1966 the Cultural Revolution erupted in China. The fierce propaganda against the Soviet Revisionism started (apart from previous propaganda against the American imperialism). The nation plunged in the chaotic internal struggles and fell into an almost entire self isolation in all areas. It needs to be reminded that the music of Chopin disappeared from the state radio in Beijing, because he started to be treated as the "western composer." After the incidents in 1967 (all foreign embassies were affected except some few "friendly" ones), Poland recalled its ambassador, lowering the rank of relations (the PRC has made the reciprocal action). During this difficult period Poland, as only one among the "socialist states," maintained the network of consulates (Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou). The Chinese consulate in Gdansk continued its activities.

The Cultural Revolution and especially its "excesses" were not only condemned in Poland by propagandists loyal to Moscow, but they were also received very negatively by the intellectuals. The Peoples' Republic of Poland propaganda against China intensified only after 1971. After the United States approval, the PRC took a place in the United Nations and the surprising visit of Henry Kissinger (1971) and President Richard Nixon (1972) in Beijing began the rapprochement of both powers with the aim of withstanding Moscow. The spectrum of the American-Chinese alliance started to alarm Kremlin. Soviet authorities launched all instruments of pressure to prevent it. During the period of tensions, at the beginning of the seventies, the military option against China was even seriously considered in Moscow, which required an appropriate propaganda introduction for the operation of such magnitude.

Walking away from the policy of Cultural Revolution in China did not reflect in the Polish mass media. They continued to publish only negative news about China, informing mainly about floods and earthquakes.

The normalization of Polish-Chinese relations occurred only in the mid-1970s, when Chinese leadership started to implement more pragmatic policies. More intense economic cooperation was impeded by transition of PRC onto the settlements in Swiss franc (CHF). In August 1981, the authorities of China, initiating fundamental reforms in the country – transition to free market economy and “opening to the world” – symbolically encouraged the reformist leadership of PRL, with the First Secretary of Polish Communist Party (KC PZPR) Stanisław Kania. China offered Poland a loan of USD 100 million in the form of pork meat shipments (meat was a deficit commodity back then in Poland and this loan was eventually reduced to USD 40 million after martial law was imposed in Poland on December 13, 1981). The official representatives of China on all occasions repeated more openly than before that China does support the strengthening of Polish sovereignty. One must mention that by a strange coincidence on December 13, the session of Chinese-wide Assembly of People’s Representatives (parliament) concluded its proceedings and formally approved of winding-up “people’s communes” in the country and returning to the family’s farms, which was the milestone in dismantling of the system inherited after the Mao era.

The efforts to encourage Poland’s independence and weaken its reliance on Moscow were not put on hold even during the martial law period and pointed to the necessity of implementing fundamental reforms in our country (Polish leadership remained deaf to these suggestions from Beijing, while the “Solidarity” – the first non-communist party-controlled trade union in a Warsaw Pact country – did not even realize of gradual processes of withdrawing from communist system in the economy and social life occurring then in China). The factor that supported some closing in of both states was also the necessity to resist “excessive” democratic aspirations of their own democratic intellectuals and far sharper critics of too slow reforms – as it was seen in Beijing leadership. The PRL leaders, isolated by the western democracies, started to appreciate the high, international position of the PRC and also saw the opportunity to increase its international credibility by the development of relations with Beijing. In such circumstances the visits of high-ranking officials occurred: in 1986 general Wojciech Jaruzelski, as the Chairman of the Polish Council of State

and, in 1987 the Prime Minister Zbigniew Messner. In 1988 the Prime Minister of China and one of the reform initiators – Zhao Ziyang paid the visit to Poland. Parliament Speakers also paid a visit. Flight connection between Warsaw and Beijing was launched and mutual, economic cooperation started to grow; bilateral trade grew to USD 1 billion. It has to be mentioned that an official Chinese publications from this period described the clandestine “Solidarity” as the “national-liberation movement” (out of Moscow’s domination). So it was considered as “morally just.” The interest in this movement among Chinese intellectual circles was very vivid and Lech Wałęsa became the most famous Pole in China (among Marie Skłodowska-Curie and Nicoalus Copernicus of course).

2. THE POLITICAL RELATIONS AFTER THE BREAKTHROUGH OF 1989 IN POLAND

The political changes that occurred in Poland after 1989 had very significant influence on Polish-Chinese relations, including the events of June 4, 1989, i.e. general elections in Poland and opening fire to protesters by soldiers on Tiananmen Square. The bloody events in Beijing reverberated strongly especially throughout Poland, which was just celebrating, with some sort of disbelief and various concerns, its first days of freedom. This event engraved itself on Polish society’s public awareness deeply, especially on Polish elites. It was seen usually in very partisan way, as the suppression of the first “green shoots” of democratic movement by the brutal communist regime, which did not try to realize that it was admittedly the most tragic and bloody, and important by its internal and external ramifications, episode during the difficult and deliberate process of dismantling the communist system in China. The Communist Party of China (CPC) admittedly was still holding the power within the one party system and the question of reforms scale was sparking very fierce controversies within the leadership, but yet the way of transforming into free market economy that was initiated, was leading inevitably to some form of authoritarian system that we can see many examples of in the developing world. In South Korea, Indonesia, Singapore and in Taiwan basically

such regimes secured an unusually fast economic growth and as it was proven by the events in some of those nations they opened the way for further democratic changes that are coming naturally with the social development, urbanization, modernization of the country and forming of the middle class.

The transformation of political system in Poland met with very critical opinions on the Chinese side and overthrowing of communist party's power was described as the "dangerous precedent." This depiction was correct, as the course of events in the Eastern Europe showed. Polish public opinion was shocked by the usage of tanks against the youth and the number of casualties, and spontaneously reacted with the condemnation of Chinese authorities. This perception did not even affect the beginning of the second stage of reforms in China in 1992, which was ignored by the Polish media which maintained the vision of China formed in the tragic year of 1989.

According to the strategic vision of Chinese foreign policy Poland started to be seen as a peripheral country of Euro-Atlantic geo-political area. So the relations with Poland became the far margin of PRC policy. For the Chinese side Poland was neither an attractive economic partner that could offer the newest technologies and capital investments nor the partner in the political dialogue. Poland was situated on the peripheries of Chinese policy against the region of Central-Eastern Europe. The Encyclopedia of "50 Years of the People's Republic of China," published in Beijing in 1999 devoted only three lines for Poland, it was within the chapter dedicated to the relations with the nations of Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Aleksander Kwaśniewski, the President of Poland, was the last on the list of the heads of the states visiting China in 1997.

Poland could not utilize and benefit from the interest of vast parts of Chinese society in the transformation that occurred in Poland after 1989. Our relations with China were excessively burdened by historically justified anticommunist sentiments dominant then in Poland. This has not been changed by the visit in China of the president Aleksander Kwaśniewski in November 1997. China was and still is ruled by the party that calls itself communist (however it has withdrawn from spreading out of the com-

munist ideology and has accepted the solutions strikingly contrary to them).

Despite the difficulties mentioned above and entangling the relations with China into the internal, very partisan, political struggles (to some extent the relations towards Poland had also some internal political implications in China) a political dialogue was not stopped during the nineties. Poland was visited by: Li Ruihuan, the Chairman of Chinese People's Consultancy Conference, deputy Minister for Economic Affairs Li Lianching, and also other ministers and deputy ministers, and in China Polish visits was called by: Prime Minister Waldemar Pawlak, the speaker of Polish parliament Józef Oleksy, deputy Prime Minister Henryk Goryszewski. In 1995 the visit of then Prime Minister Li Peng to Poland was cancelled in last minute. The reason behind it was the real threat of anti-Chinese demonstrations and hostile publication in the Polish press. In August 1998 in Warsaw the consultations were held on a level of deputies' foreign ministers. Both parties made an exchange of views on global, regional issues and also conducted the review of bilateral relations. Such consultations have been held since 1998, in turn, one year in Beijing, another one in Warsaw. The 1998 consultation revealed very significant disagreement between two sides, both on global and bilateral questions. Moot points were: the development of cooperation between Poland and Taiwan and excessive – according to China – publications of Polish media on the issue of human rights observance in China.

On October 1998 in Warsaw Polish-Chinese government's session was held on economics. Both parties were wondering how to decrease an enormous trade deficit on Polish side (it was close to USD 1 billion, due to very small Polish export to China). Approach to economic cooperation with PRC required a comprehensive strategy; also using the opportunities resulting from the cooperation on the Chinese market with the European Union partners (this is particularly important because of their strong position on the Chinese market and looming perspective of Polish membership in the EU as it was in 1998). One has to mention the fast developing and institutionalized, as a framework of ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting), cooperation of European Union with the countries of Asia-Pacific region. The European Union has a special program addressed for China, consist-

ing of investments, development of trade, trainings and exchange of experts. The main foundation of American policy towards China is the development of cooperation that, along with China's modernization, will intensify and deepen social-economic changes in China; this is also widely accepted with the EU political leadership.

People's Republic of China is now very important partner in political dialogue among all main worlds' powers and many international issues cannot be resolved without their commitment. China has a permanent seat within the UN Security Council with veto power. Even though Western nations have been often vocal critics of China's internal conduct in terms of human rights observance, most of them also admit significant progress that has been made in this area during the last twenty years. This was the main reason for lack of support by most of the UE nations for the resolution's draft condemning the PRC for human rights abuses (the draft was submitted together by the USA and Poland during the session of UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva in the spring of 1999). It is worth mentioning that since 1989 such resolution have never found sufficient the number of votes to pass them. The human rights issue is definitely one of the most important for Polish-Chinese relations due to an enormous sensitivity of this area among the polish political establishment. This is well understood based on recent Polish historical experience; however it is completely in odds with political tradition of China, where such issues were not present. This is causing the situation where the Confucian China and the majority of Asian nations wonder why the West is so keen about this issue. Those nations also remember well the Western powers behavior and their striking breach of human rights in Asia not so long time ago.

In 2004 an important change in Chinese perception of Poland occurred, when Poland joined the European Union. Poland is no longer seen as a marginal state of the Eurasian hemisphere. The proof of this change was the visit to Poland of Chinese leader Hu Jintao in 2004. During the visit following documents were signed: Common Statement between Poland and China, Intergovernmental Agreement on Economic Cooperation, Agreement on Cooperation between Ministries of Education of Poland and China for period of 2004–2006, Memorandum of Cultural Coopera-

tion between the Ministries of Culture of Poland and China for the period of 2004–2006 and Agreement on Copper Export by KGHM Company to China. In 2003 President Hu Jinhao, who was attending the events celebrating the 300th anniversary of St. Petersburg, met with President Aleksander Kwaśniewski.

Both parties expressed in a common statement that the “One China” principle is the foundation for building mutual relations, with Taiwan and Tibet as an inalienable part of China.

The contacts between the parliaments of both states became very vivid. In Polish parliament (Sejm) of then term Polish-Chinese Parliamentary group was set up. It counts 47 members from both houses (Sejm and Senat). Until April 10, 2010 the Chairman was Grzegorz Dolniak, who tragically died in the Polish president’s plane crash in Smolensk. In Chinese parliament (Pan-Nation Congress of the People’s Representatives) of the 11th term exists two men Chinese-Polish Parliamentary Group of Friendship with Zha Peixin as a chairman.

Both parliaments made exchanges of high level delegations. On 22–28 of September 2003 the speaker of the upper house of the Polish parliament – the Senate – Mr. Longin Pastusiak paid a visit to China. The speaker of the lower house of Polish parliament – the Sejm – Mr. Józef Oleksy visited China in 1994. The chairman of Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference Mr. Li Ruihuan paid a visit to Poland in 1996. In May 2007 the speaker of Chinese parliament Mr. Wu Bangguo visited Poland. There were also contacts between the Commissions of Foreign Affairs, Sport and Culture, National and Ethnic Minorities, Environmental Protection of Polish parliament with their Chinese counterparts.

The visit of the Chinese Prime Minister, Mr. Zhao Zhiyang, took place in 1987. From Polish side there were two visits of Polish Prime Ministers. In 1994 it was Waldemar Pawlak, and in 21–24 October, 2008 Prime Minister Donald Tusk. Furthermore during the ASEM Summit in Helsinki the then Prime Minister Jarosław Kaczyński met with Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao. During the summit in Hanoi, when Polish delegation became famous due to technical problems with the government’s plane TU-154M, then Polish Prime Minister Marek Belka met with Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao.

The visits of Foreign Ministers was also took place. In December 2000 Chinese Foreign Minister visited Poland. In 2001 the first visit of Polish Foreign Minister Władysław Bartoszewski in China took place. On 28–30 March, 2006 Polish Foreign Minister Stefan Meller visited China and was welcomed by Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing. During the annual sessions of UN General Assembly there were meetings of foreign ministers of both nations. Those meetings occurred over 2003, 2004, 2006. Such meetings also took place on ASEM summits in Hamburg (May 2007, Anna Fotyga – Yang Jiechi) and in Hanoi (May 2009 Radosław Sikorski – Yang Jiechi). We had also visits on the level of deputy prime ministers: Andrzej Lepper and Chen Zhili and Hui Liang Yu from the Chinese side have to be mentioned here. On 14–17 of January 2008 – on the invitation of deputy prime minister Waldemar Pawlak – Zeng Peiyan, deputy prime minister of China responsible for economics paid a visit to Poland. In August and September 2008 on the occasion of Beijing Olympics and Investment Fairs in Xiamen the visits were paid by deputies of Prime Minister: Waldemar Pawlak and Grzegorz Schetyna. In 2007 the visits to Poland were made by the Chinese ministers of railway and culture, China was visited by Polish ministers of culture, labor, building and transportation. At the turn of February and March 2009, Sławomir Nowak, a personal envoy of Prime Minister Tusk, a high ranking official of his Chancellery has paid a visit to Shanghai, Guangzhou and Beijing. In June 2009 Polish minister of infrastructure Cezary Grabarczyk has visited Beijing and Shanghai. Polish minister of defense Bogdan Klich has paid a visit to China in December 2009. During the visit, in Beijing, both ministers have signed an agreement on cooperation in the area of defense.

Due to the Polish participation in the EXPO 2010, in Shanghai, many visits were scheduled. Deputy Minister of Economy – Rafał Baniak participated in the opening ceremony of the Expo (April 30, 2010). During the celebration of Polish Day (May 22, 2010), Polish authorities were represented by the Minister of Culture and National Heritage – Bogdan Zdrojewski, while China's hosting honors were fulfilled by Yuan Guaixin, former ambassador to Poland and Slovakia (he worked in the Chinese consulate in Gdansk in the 1970s).

Very important role for Polish-Chinese relations play consular ties – regulated by bilateral consular convention from 1984. In China three Polish General Consulates operate currently – in Shanghai, Guangzhou and since 1997 in Hong Kong. In Gdansk there is a General Consulate of the PRC. This diplomatic post had its 50th anniversary in December 2010. The consulate operates in the area of the following provinces: Pomerania (Pomorskie), Kuyavia and Pomerania (Kujawsko-Pomorskie), Western Pomerania (Zachodnio-Pomorskie), Warmia and Mazury (Warmińsko-Mazurskie). It is managed by General Consul – currently Xiang Shaosheng. Consulate cooperates with the universities of the coast region, including the University of Gdansk. Consulates play a vital role in promoting contacts and economic cooperation. They also provide services for travelers (business, education and tourism).

An important part in the bilateral relations is played by direct contacts between Polish and Chinese cities, provinces. Most of those ties have been established over the last few years. Currently there are already 23 such agreements (7 out of them are related to “provinces-provinces” ties). One can mention here: Gdańsk – Shanghai, Szczecin – Guangdong, Tarnobrzeg – Guangxi, Olsztyn – Heilongjiang, Łódź – Henan, Poznań – Shenzhen (SSE), Warszawa – Harbin, Opole with Inner Mongolia.

3. POLISH-CHINESE ECONOMIC RELATIONS⁵

The legal and treaties’ foundations of Polish-Chinese economic relations are based on many bilateral agreements. The most important among them are:

- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Poland and the Government of the People’s Republic of China on Commerce and Trade – Warsaw, September 13, 1993;
- Agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation with Prevention of Fiscal Evasion, signed in Beijing, on June 7, 1988;

⁵ Extensively on economic relations, Poland China writes in his chapter of this book Ewa Oziewicz.

- Agreement on the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investment, signed in Beijing on June 7, 1988;
- Phytosanitary Agreement signed in Beijing on June 22, 1994;
- Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation, signed in Beijing on April 13, 1995;
- Agreement on Civil Air Transport, signed in Beijing on June 20, 1995;
- Agreement on Cooperation for the Mutual Recognition of Tests, Certificates and Marks of Conformity of Products Concluded between the Polish Centre for Testing and Certification and the State Board of Control of Goods Export and Import of the PRC, signed in Beijing, December 15, 1995 (not yet in force);
- Agreement between Bank Handlowy S.A. in Warsaw and Bank of China on opening the credit line to enable financing of Polish investment export to China, signed on May 1996;
- Agreement between the Government of the PRC and the Government of the Republic of Poland on Cooperation in Maritime Transport, signed in Warsaw on October 1996;
- Agreement on Cooperation in ensuring the health conditions for products of animal origin, which is the subject of mutual trade between the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Economy of Poland and the Ministry of Agriculture of PRC signed in Beijing, on November 1997;
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Poland and the Government of the PRC on Economic Cooperation signed on June 8, 2004 in Warsaw. The agreement envisaged the creation of a joint commission for economic cooperation, compatible with European Union law. The agreement came into force on April 27, 2005;
- Memorandum of understanding between the Minister of Transport of Republic of Poland and Minister of Communication of People's Republic of China on cooperation in the area of building motorways infrastructure and inland navigation, signed on September 11, 2007.

After a political breakthrough of 1989 in Poland there were significant changes of trade exchange with China. Poland unilaterally retracted from

settling transaction by means of clearing; instead, it imposed foreign exchange settling. This move, though generally justified, in terms of trade with China had a disastrous impact. Polish export to China was based on governments orders. Chinese companies, when having free choice option, started purchasing the goods of much better quality from Japan, the US, Canada, Australia and Western Europe. Foreign trade sales between Poland and China decreased dramatically from USD 1 billion in 1986 to USD 80 million in 1990.

Table 1. Polish-Chinese trade (data in USD million)

Year	Export	Import	Balance
2000	97,3	1 378,5	- 1 281
2001	180,4	1 620,3	- 1 439
2002	206,0	2 075,0	- 1 869
2003	248,6	2 855,7	- 2 607
2004	556	4 065	- 3 509
2005	590,68	5 469,13	- 4 878
2006	749	7 698	- 6 949
2007	986,5	11 639,1	- 10 652
2008	1 278	16 502	- 15 224
2009	1 467	13 602	- 12 135

Source: Data from the Polish Ministry of Economy

Preliminary trade data from 2009 indicate that one of the outcomes of global financial crisis was bringing to a stop long term negative trends in trade between Poland and China: as a result of fast growth of Polish export and decrease of Polish import from China – for the first time in many years the trade deficit of Poland has been trimmed.

STRUCTURE OF FOREIGN TRADE EXCHANGE

The structure of trade is not favorable for Poland. The main Polish export good is now copper. The main Chinese goods are machines and industrial equipment, including technologically advanced electronic and telecommunication devices. Poland is the largest trade partner of China in Central-Eastern Europe (CEE) region. Although Polish share in Chinese foreign trade is very symbolic. The import share does not exceed 0.14 % of total and export share 0.71 %.

Chart 1: Polish export to China in 2009 (Polish data)

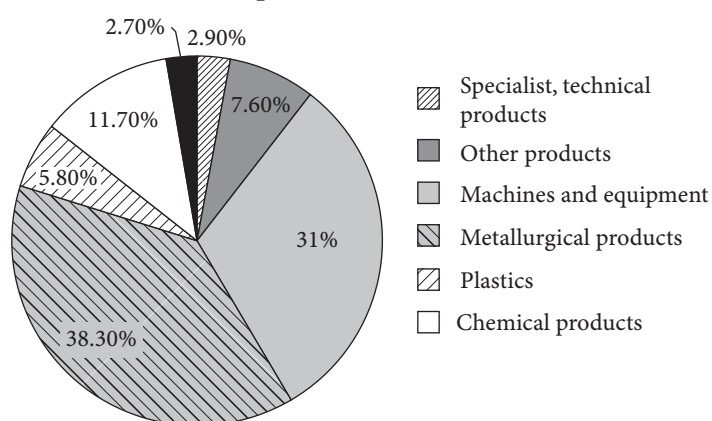
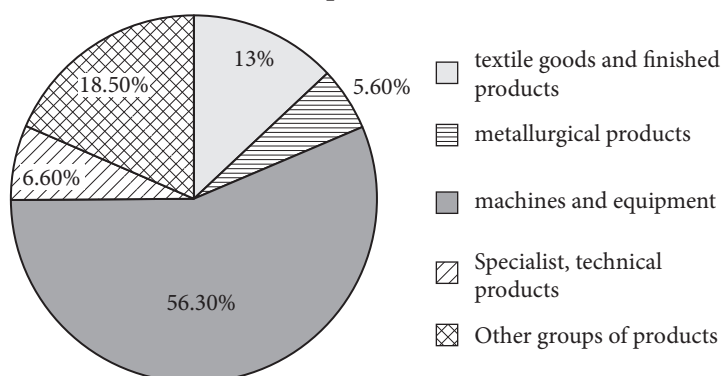


Chart 2: Polish import from China in 2009



Source: Ministry of Economy of Republic of Poland.

Similar trends, very unfavorable terms of trade for the countries of Central-Eastern Europe are present in trades of all nations of this region. Trade deficit with China is also an issue for all countries of the EU. There are also statistical discrepancies between Polish and Chinese data. They are the result of indirect and transitional trade done through Hong Kong and Macau, and also some EU nations.

The main goal of Polish-Chinese economic cooperation is strengthening mutual economic ties. The main priorities are: the development of Polish export and bilateral cooperation in the area of capital investment.

Main areas of Polish-Chinese economic cooperation are:

- Mining and relating groups of goods like mining equipment,
- Export of food and agriculture products,
- Environment protection,
- Aviation industry,
- Chinese companies participation in the implementation of infrastructure building projects in Poland, such us: building new airports, motorways, roads, stadiums and commercial real estate in the cities,
- Development of transport and logistics centers in Poland with Chinese investors playing an active role,
- Bilateral tourism cooperation,
- Railways and aviation – very intensive cooperation.

In May 2007 the Minister of Railways of PRC, Li Zhujun paid a visit to Poland and signed the following agreement in Warsaw: Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Railways of PRC and the Ministry of Transport of Poland on the Cooperation in railway transportation. This subject was continued during the visits of Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk and the Minister of Infrastructure Cezary Grabarczyk in China in 2008. There were talks about possible participation of Chinese companies in building of high speed railways in Poland.

Chinese companies are taking part in infrastructure biddings in Poland. In 2009 Chinese company COVEC won bidding for construction of two sections of motorway between Warsaw and Łódź.

In 2007 Poland signed contract for the delivery of 15 crop duster airplanes of Dromader class (PZL Mielec – Polish Aviation Works). In Janu-

ary 2008 PZL Świdnik signed a preliminary agreement for assembly of 150 civilian purpose helicopters.

In order to boost the export, in September 2008, an agreement was signed between the governments of Poland and China to give a credit for financing investments in environmental protection. The credit was USD 85 million. The scope of the credit financing was extended for mining, construction and energy. The contracts signed by Polish and Chinese companies had to be approved by respective Chinese authorities and their value had to be no less than USD 1 million. Polish government authorized Citi Bank Handlowy S.A. in Warsaw to manage the contract. Due to very quick utilization of the credit (the largest contract was signed by Kopex in December 2006 for USD 75 million) it was increased up to US \$285 m. The credit availability expired on January 31, 2011. So far USD 130 923 327,90 was paid.⁶

According to the data of Polish National Bank (NBP), at the end of 2008 the amount of current Polish capital investments in China was 130 million euro. During the 2007 the value of Polish Direct Investments was around 1.1 million euro .

To draw an interesting comparison the total value of Chinese investments to Poland was, according to NBP (National Bank of Poland), 236.8 million euro (the status for the end of 2008). During 2007 Chinese capital investments in Poland were worth 69.5 million euro. The Chinese Industrial Park for Chinese investors is located in Koszalin. In Żyrardów the factory manufacturing LCD monitors and TV sets was open. In Kielce there is new Chinese Business Park.

The list of biggest companies in Poland with Chinese capital:

1. Chinese-Polish Joint Stock Company “Chipolbrok” – the first Polish-Chinese company registered after the foundation of PRC (September 19, 1951) with headquarters in Shanghai and a branch office in Gdynia; its main scope is maritime transport;
2. VTS Clima Air. Conditioning Equipment Co., Ltd.;
3. Liangda Fasing Round Link Chains Co., Ltd. – the production of chains and chain assemblies, chain lock and links, flight bars, con-

⁶ The Ministry of Economy of Poland.

- nectors and bands for different applications in any branches of industry through mining, power, construction and fishing;
4. PMP Changzhou – a service center for the paper business in China;
 5. Shandong TAGAO Mining Equipment Manufacturing Co., Ltd. – established by KOPEX S.A. and Shandong Taishan Jianneng Machinery Group Co. Ltd. in August 2007 in the city of Taian, Shandong province, P.R. China.;
 6. Selena S.A. , the first polish investor in Nantong Zone, launched construction works in the Nantong Economic and Technological Development Zone in China –
 7. production plant for mounting foams, sealants and adhesives. The value of investments was USD 27 million.
 8. Jiujiang Red Eagle Science and Technology Development Co., Ltd.;
 9. In 2008 Polish company PZL Swidnik and China's Jiujiang aeronautics plant signed an agreement on delivery within 10 years 150 helicopters of three types: W-3A Sokol, Kania and SW4 [41,42];
 10. Glaspo – in 2007 the foundation stone for the Glass Processing Plant in China was put.

The list of largest Chinese companies present on Polish market:

1. TTL Polska company set up by TCL Corporation to manufacture LCD displays and television sets in the city of Żyrardów – around USD 60 million);
2. GD Poland Distribution Center in Wólka Kosowska – USD 25 million;
3. Min Hoong Development Co. – a real estate agent operating in Warsaw and the coastal city of Sopot – USD 25 million;
4. Lenovo Group Ltd. – the company pulled back from its investment plans in Poland, however still has some shares;
5. Athletic Group – production of bicycles in Koszalin – USD 5 million;
6. Digital View – production of television sets in Koszalin – the plant was closed in 2008.

7. Huawei Technologies Co., Ltd. – its activity on Polish market is very dynamic.

Poland had also trade disputes with China. In October 2006 Polish authorities imposed antidumping duties, for a period of two years, on leather shoes from China. On October 8 EU imposed antidumping duties on strawberries. The main originator was the Polish Freezing Industry Union. The minimal price for strawberries from China was set at 684 euro per ton.

4. CULTURAL AND SCIENCE/TECHNICAL CONTACTS

EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

Cooperation with China in the area of education is based on the following agreements:

- Agreement between the government of People's Republic of Poland (PRL) and the government of PRC on cultural and scientific cooperation (Beijing, September 30, 1986)
- Agreement between the Ministry of Education and Sport of Poland and Ministry of Education of PRC on cooperation in the area of education in the years of 2004–2006 signed in Warsaw on June 8, 2004 during the visit of PRC's chairman Hu Jintao, extended by the letter of intent until signing of another agreement;
- Protocol between the Minister of Culture and National Heritage of Poland and Minister of Culture of PRC on cultural cooperation, signed in May 2007.
- Bilateral cooperation with Chinese partner provides opportunities for education, scientific practices and the exchange of teachers. The agreement from 2004 stipulated the number of 35 persons; in 2007 this number was increased to 40. The scholarship is paid by the party that sends a scholar; the hosting party offers free studies.

More Chinese students begin to study at Polish universities on commercial terms. University of Gdansk, Gdansk Technical University

(Politechnika Gdańska), Warsaw Technical University (Politechnika Warszawska), Silesian Technical University (Politechnika Śląska), Silesian University (Uniwersytet Śląski).

In September 2006, during the visit to Poland, Chinese Deputy Prime Minister Chem Zhili was at the official opening of Confucius Institute at Jagiellonian University – the first one in Poland. Another three institutes were opened in Poznań, Opole and Wrocław. The fifth one was created at the University of Gdansk.

Poland is planning to create Polish Institute in Beijing over 2010–2011. The main center of Polish language in China is Beijing Foreign Studies University. At Harbin Pedagogical University, in October 2009, based on cooperation with the University of Gdansk the Polish Studies were inaugurated. The East Asian Studies Centre of the University of Gdańsk works well and promotes cooperation with scientific centers from East Asia region.

THE CULTURE

Polish culture attracts China. The positive view of Polish culture in China is a result of its many years of presence over there. Poland has a large group of friends. Those are the people who have studied in Poland, diplomats and journalists once accredited in Poland. There exists very active group of Polish scholars. In China we can now observe the clear renaissance of interest in European culture and Poland as a new member of the European Union is coming into this trend.

Over the past few years in China, many most renowned works of Polish writers – translated by domestic Polish scholars – were published, for example „Pan Tadeusz”, „Dziady” and other literary works of Mickiewicz, two first parts of H. Sienkiewicz’s Trilogy, “Prawiek i inne czasy” by Olga Tokarczuk, „Sława i chwała” by Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, poetry of Wisława Szymborska. Among Polish scholars we can distinguish professor Yi Lijun from Pekijski Uniwersytet Języków Obcych (Beijing University of Foreign Languages), Phd Wu Lan and from a younger generation prof. Zhao Gang.

On March 3, 2007 in Shanghai the monument of Frederic Chopin was unveiled. The year 2010 was declared a Chopin's Year in China. The most important events of this year were:

The concerts of Simfonia Varsovia in China;

Organization of Master Classes in Shanghai Music Academy together with Chopin's concert at Zhongshan Park and in Academy;

Chopin's Day: „The whole China play Chopin” – an attempt to beat Guinness World Record during Chopin's concert at Zhongshan Park: Polish pianist and 100 white pianos.

On 9–13 May, 2005 the days of Polish Culture in China took place, and in September 2006 the days of Chinese Culture in Poland – joint venture of Polish and People's Republic of China Ministry of Culture.

Polish artists regularly visit China. One of them is Krzysztof Penderecki. In December 2007 a Polish movie “Wojownik” [Warrior] directed by Jacek Bławut won a Grand Prix of the 5th Guangzhou International Documentary Film Festival. In October 2008 there was a Polish Movies Festival and its special guest was Roman Polański.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The majority of projects within this field are implemented based on the framework of Polish-Chinese Commission for Scientific-Technical Cooperation. The last session was held in Beijing on November 4, 2008. One can spot a growing number of visits of Chinese scientists to Poland. In 2006, during the visits of Deputy Prime Minister Andrzej Lepper to China, Polish-Chinese Center for Agricultural Science and Technology was created.

EXPO 2010

A peak point of broad promotional Polish efforts in China over the years 2009–2011 was the World EXPO 2010 in Shanghai. The detailed calendar of events in promoting Poland was prepared by Polish Agency of Information and Foreign Investments. From January 2009 this work was handed over to Polish Agency of Entrepreneurship Development. The

total cost of Polish participation in EXPO 2010 was around 40m zloty. Polish pavilion was set apart by very unconventional architecture. Polish Day at EXPO 2010 in Shanghai took place on May 22, 2010. Official delegation was led by the Minister of Culture and National Heritage of Poland Bogdan Zdrojewski. Other members of delegation included: Minister of Agriculture and Development of Countryside Bogdan Sawicki, Vice-Ministers of Foreign Affairs Paweł Wojciechowski and Economy Dariusz Bogdan.

5. SOCIAL CONTACTS AND HUMANITARIAN AID

PERSONAL EXCHANGE

The number of citizens of China and Poland traveling and visiting both countries is growing. Over the period of 2004–2006 more than 128 000 Polish citizens visited China, 1150 of them used a Chinese green card. According to Polish Border Guard around 36 000 citizens of PRC came to Poland. Polish visa refusal for Chinese citizens is at the low level of 13%. The reasons of refusal are mainly submissions of counterfeit documents.

Humanitarian aid for China

In 2007 Poland contributed 40 000 euro of humanitarian aid for the victims of flood in Southern China. Those funds were allocated to build a primary school and medical assistance station in Fangtian, Guizhou province. In 2010 the Foreign Ministry of Poland financed equipping of the computer lab in the new school (so called small grant of 5850 Euro).

In 2008 Poland gave aid to the victims of Sichuan province earthquake in the amount of 100 000 dollars.

CONCLUSION

The differences in basic political convictions of Poland and China are not the major hurdles in the development of bilateral relations. Polish

people should follow the Germans, French or even Swedish known for their pragmatic approach towards the foreign relations. Chinese authorities will not support the development of cooperation with the nation who does not accept the Five Rules of Foreign Policy (*Pancha Shila*). Sometimes even messianic approach to China, presented by some Polish politicians, creates more laughter than anger on Chinese side, what is pretty obvious knowing the big disproportion in size and international prominence between those two countries. So, this is why Polish policy towards China should also be attributed with realism and pragmatism instead of only paying attention to moral principles. It should be based on competent and rational analysis of situation in this country, rather than on myths and superstitions. The fact that there is freedom of press in Poland and no control of state authorities anymore does not mean that journalists and editors should not obey the basic rules of their professions, i.e. objective description of facts and presenting various views and opinions on the subject. Very often instead we have to read and hear overrated judgments, or untrue stories. Their main purpose is to maintain still alive myths about China. They do not show the complex picture of modern China. Even the most prestigious and respected papers often publish stories written by completely incompetent authors, whose intention is clearly not to show the real look at the modern China, rather than painting a simple “anti-communist” picture. Such publications not only discredit even the high-minded intentions, but also disgrace very generous human rights cause. When the number of “communism victims in China” is highly distorted, without mentioning that they include also estimated number of abortions done in this nation (employing such way of calculation even in Poland we would have millions of communism victims), so the average reader who does not know China is not able to draw right conclusions. Contemporary China is also accused of crimes during the Cultural Revolution – without mentioning when it really happened and reminding the readers that state leaders responsible for them have been brought before court and convicted receiving very harsh punishments. It will be very difficult to develop cooperation with China to the level even comparable with the most countries of the European Union, when there is no willingness to really understand China and inform public opinion in Poland about difficult and

complicated transformation process occurring there, also about achievements, existing roadblocks and serious issues. Chinese nation and its people are very proud and independent, also extremely sensitive about their national dignity after the fresh historical memory of the early 20th century. Popular interpretation in Poland for rapidly growing Chinese cooperation with European Union is saying that Western countries are betraying democratic values and ideas in exchange for lucrative Chinese contracts are in sharp contrast to the facts. Such statements are even issued by political parties who declare themselves as pro-European, which really undermines their declared goals. The growing importance of China on the international scene clearly indicates that Poland should broadly increase its presence there.