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THE USAGE OF POLITICS OF MEMORY IN POLISH FOREIGN POLICY: PRESENT STATE AND PERSPECTIVES

ABSTRACT

In the article, the author presents the present state of the usage of politics of memory as a substantiation of Polish foreign policy and its perspectives for following three years. Beginning with the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of the World War II, he presents how the Polish remembrance has transformed from a “conservative” vision under President Lech Kaczyński to a “conciliatory” one that is promoted by Prime Minister Donald Tusk. As a result of the intellectual clash, he recognizes the dominance of Tusk’s vision, which he describes, referring to outlooks of the prime minister and Paweł Machcewicz, a prominent Polish historian and close associate of Tusk. Then, he enumerates fifteen significant anniversaries, which may be used to present the Polish understanding of the past and to support foreign policy actions in the following years. The author also states his observations, suggestions, and remarks about the possible course of celebrations.

Key words

politics of memory; Polish Foreign Policy; World War II; Tusk, Donald (1957–); Kaczyński, Lech (1949–2010)

STRESZCZENIE

W swym artykule Autor przedstawia obecny stan wykorzystywania polityki historycznej jako uzasadnienia polityki zagranicznej Polski oraz jego perspektywy na kolejne trzy lata. Rozpoczynając od 70. rocznicy wybuchu II Wojny Światowej przedstawia jako polska pamięć zmieniała się od ‘konserwatywnej’ wizji prezydenta Lecha Kaczyńskiego do ‘pojednawczej’ premiera Donalda Tuska. Za skutek ówczesnego zderzenia autor uznaje dominację wizji Tuska, którą opisuje nawiązując do poglądów premiera i Pawła Machcewicza, wybitnego historyka i bliskiego współpracownika Tuska. Następnie wylicza piętnaście ważnych rocznic, które mogą, w najbliższych latach, zostać wykorzystane do ukazania polskiej wizji przeszłości i wsparcia polskiej polityki zagranicznej. Ponadto Autor przedstawia swe spostrzeżenia, sugestie i uwagi dotyczące możliwego przebiegu uroczystości.

Słowa kluczowe

polityka historyczna; polityka zagraniczna Polski; II wojna światowa; Tusk, Donald (1957–); Kaczyński, Lech (1949–2010)

1. 1st September 2009: The clash of two visions

The 70th anniversary of the outbreak of the World War II was an unprecedented opportunity to express the Polish view on contemporary history, as well as to present the local way of understanding its consequences and legacy. For a brief moment, the Polish commemorations drew the world's attention to the first day of the conflict, which engaged the whole world and resulted in heavy casualties. This day was planned as a triumph of the Polish politics of memory, similar to the 60th anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising just four years prior. However, the plan did not succeed. During the celebration, two different visions of the Polish memory clashed, which meant a decline for one and the beginning of the second's intellectual domination.

Robert McCrum, an editor of "The Observer", called the Second World War as the last war, the conflict, which changed moral conditions of the world (and especially Europe). He was referring to British historian Tony Judt's words, who stated that the war destroyed a hitherto order and established a "new world," where nothing could be like it was before.¹ The vision of the past in the Polish politics of memory was formulated differently, and the aim of the 70th anniversary was to successfully introduce national perspective into the international political discourse.² In other words, this proposition can be recognized as an attempt to spread the local myth of Polish exceptionalism (similar to the myth of American exceptionalism³) and establish a social understanding of the Second World War as a traumatic and destructive conflict, which not only changed Poland (and Europe), but also caused a half-century of a totalitarian subjugation, as well as the cultural and economic backwardness of the state (and whole East Europe). At the same time, the goal was to present the Second World War as a conflict

¹ R. McCrum, *The Second World War: Six Years that Changed This Country for Ever*, "The Observer" 23.08.2009, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/aug/23/second-world-war-mccrum?INTCMP=SRCH> [access: 03.07.2012].

² Partially, this aspiration was lead by – how Miroslaw Karwat called this phenomenon – "a Poland-centric perception of the world," which obliges to convince others that Poland's role was the most important one and Polish conditions were the most worthy to universally memorize (regardless, if it had been true). M. Karwat, *W oparach polonocentryzmu* [In the clouds of polonocentrism] [in:] *Polacy o sobie. Współczesna autorefleksja: jednostka, społeczeństwo, historia* [The Poles about Yourself. Contemporary Self-reflection: The Individual, Society, History], P. Kowalski (ed.), Łomża 2005, p. 404.

³ See e.g. G. Hodgson, *The Myth of American Exceptionalism*, New Haven–London 2009.

initiated by a conspiracy of two totalitarian regimes – Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union – and that even if warfare ceased in 1945, the social and political degradation of the half of Europe lasted until the collapse of communism and democratization in the last decade of the 20th Century.

As I stated before, the 70th anniversary had to be a splendid triumph of the Polish politics of memory, a success of the idea of the Fourth Polish Republic (pol. *IV Rzeczpospolita, IV RP*). It also needed to be the crowning moment Polish cultural memory's transformation, which was inaugurated during commemorations of the 60th anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising and the establishment of the Warsaw Uprising Museum. However commemorations took a different course; they changed into a spectacular clash of two visions: President Lech Kaczyński's "conservative" one and Prime Minister Donald Tusk's "conciliatory" one. As it turned out to be, 1 September 2009 was the last "battle" of the Polish politics of memory, while these propositions were equivalent visions and the day, when the symbolic change took place. It is worth to introduce the assumptions of these opposing political conceptions.

President Kaczyński delivered the opening remarks at the official ceremony marking the 70th anniversary of the start of the Second World War at Westerplatte in Gdańsk.⁴ Kaczyński began by reflecting on the visions of the Second World War. The president remarked that visions of heroic resistance and visions of massacres and the totalitarian nature of the war characterized the war. Then, considering causes of the conflict and the significance of the 1938 Munich Agreement, he stated that:

this is not a problem stemming only from totalitarianism, the problem lies in all imperialistic and neo-imperialistic tendencies. We have learnt that last year⁵. Taking part in the partition of Czechoslovakia, in reducing its territory, was not only a mistake, it was a sin. We, Poles, can admit that and we seek no excuses to justify it. Seek no excuses even if there were any to be found. We have to draw conclusions from the Munich Agreement and apply them to the present, we must not yield to imperialism. We must not yield to imperialism, or even neo-imperial tendencies. Such behavior does not always bring such quick and tragic results as in the case of Munich. But it always brings similar results. This is a great lesson for the whole of modern Europe, for the whole world. A year after the Munich

⁴ A shortened report from anniversary celebrations is available on the website of Polish Prime Minister. See: The Chancellery of Prime Minister, *International Commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of WWII*, 01.09.2009, http://www.premier.gov.pl/en/press_centre/news/international_commemorations_o,2116 [access: 03.07.2012].

⁵ Kaczyński refers to the 2008 Georgian-Russian Crisis.

Agreement the war broke out preceded by the pact of 23rd August 1939 called the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. It was not only a non-aggression pact, but also a pact for division of influences in a major part of Europe.⁶

Kaczyński recalled the magnitude of casualties and emphasized that those numbers do not consist of just Nazi victims. He also stressed that the tragedy of the war cannot be reduced to the Holocaust only. He paid homage to all of the victims of the Soviet repression, especially those that perished in the Katyń massacres.⁷ The president recognized the bravery of millions of the Red Army's soldiers and appealed to Europeans to pay tribute to those who fought against Nazi aggression. Recapitulating, he referred to contemporary issues and applying past experiences to the state of European relations he suggested that:

a cooperating Europe does not require scaffolding based on two countries, but it requires broad, multilateral cooperation. And it requires democracy not only at the level country-citizen, but also in the relations between particular countries. If this is what happens in the future, we can say that we have fully succeeded in drawing conclusions from the unimaginable tragedy, unimaginable crime of the years 1939–45. However, there is still a long way ahead to achieve it. Yet, today, I would like to express my hopes that we will manage to achieve our goal on the basis of the world of values, on the basis of truth. A truth, which is often painful, must be revealed both by the winners and the defeated. We cannot agree that those who were defeated must talk about issues most painful for them and those who won – do not have to. There is only one truth. [...] We, Poles, have the right to know the truth, to know the truth about tragic issues for our nation and we cannot ever resign from it. I am deeply convinced that Europe, the whole Europe, is moving in this direction – towards pluralism, freedom and democracy and towards the truth even when it is very tough. [...] We should also be able to confess our sins and never put the decision of murdering 30 thousand people on par with a typhoid epidemic or another disease⁸. This is not the right track to

⁶ President of the Republic of Poland, *Two Generations Have Passed but the Second World War Still Requires Reflection*, 01.09.2009, <http://www.president.pl/en/archive/news-archive/news-2009/art,12,61,two-generations-have-passed-but-the-second-world-war-still-requires-reflection.html> [access: 03.07.2012].

⁷ The Polish President reckoned that Auschwitz and Katyń should be universally recognized as two equivalent symbols of totalitarian crimes during World War II. P. Wawrzyński, *Prezydent Lech Kaczyński. Narracje niedokończone* [President Lech Kaczyński. Unfinished Narrations], Toruń 2012, p. 47.

⁸ Kaczyński refers to Russian paralleling the fate of Polish officers murdered in the Katyń massacre with Russian-Bolshevik prisoners of war during early 1920s, who suffered a pandemic of contagion. More about Bolshevik POWs, see: Z. Karpus, *Jeńcy i internowani*

reconciliation. Reconciliation, which is necessary not only for my country, but also for the whole of Europe.⁹

Kaczyński recognized the past as a warning. His vision of the Polish politics of memory included exposing past dangers and menaces to counteract their contemporary equivalents. President's narration was constructed in a way that enabled an emphasis on the repeating of history and to present a convenient explanation of reality. Prime Minister Tusk followed different model; he decided to constitute his vision of the politics of memory on the basis of an assumption that brooding over past events hampers current cooperation and the remembrance may be important only if it can be used as a substantiation of political actions already undertaken. He rejected the primacy of martyrdom as the intellectual foundation of the politics of memory and, during anniversary, Tusk responded to Kaczyński's conception.

Beginning his speech, the prime minister presented a quite different understanding of the significance of the anniversary. Tusk did not consider its meaning from a solely Polish perspective. He stated that in the same way the tragedy of the Second World War is a part of universal history of humankind, the 1st of September has a similar meaning as a part of pan-European history. While Kaczyński emphasized the importance of the war for Poland, Tusk took the stand that, from a historical perspective, the most important aspect is a common experience of war trauma, without distinctions of nationality. He considered the symbolic meaning of the Nazi camp in nearby Stutthoff and the forests of Pomerania, places where Poles, Russians, Jews, and Germans suffered dreadful deaths. Tusk referred to the war as a national experience, but he also presented it as complex, merged into a single victim of all nationalities and without juxtaposition he recalled destruction of European cities: Dresden, Gdańsk, Kiev, Leningrad and Warsaw. The Polish prime minister openly stated:

I want to stress that different interpretations of history are justified – everyone has a memory, but the interpreted facts are constant. We want to remember about those facts, but not to use history against anybody; we want history to become the foundation of peace and for the truth about those events to become the underpinning of peace¹⁰.

rosyjscy i ukraińscy na terenie Polski w latach 1918–1924 [Prisoners of War and Interned Russian and Ukrainian on Polish Territory in the Years 1918–1924], Toruń 2002.

⁹ President of the Republic of Poland, *Two Generations Have Passed...*, op.cit.

¹⁰ The Chancellery of Prime Minister, *Donald Tusk's Speech in Westerplatte during the Afternoon Commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of the Outburst of World War II*,

It was unequivocal answer to Kaczyński's suggestions. Even if Polish political commentators did not notice it,¹¹ during the commemoration, Tusk confronted the main assumptions of "conservative" politics of memory, a key for the concept of the Fourth Republic. He also accomplished the cognitive transformation from Polish martyrdom-based remembrance to a pan-European, value-based commemoration. Tusk remarked that Gdańsk is not just a tragic symbol of the war, but:

Gdańsk is also the place of hope. [...] I can see Lech Wałęsa, a living testimony to hope, the victory of solidarity and many other values, which became the cornerstone of the new Europe. The fact that this is the place where Solidarity was born, that this is the place where the new Europe rose as a sign of rejection of the war and gruesome principles which sparkled it, was only possible for we keep on remembering the war and values embraced anew to never prevent the war from flaring open again. These are the most elementary of values. Today, on the 1st of September in Gdańsk, everyone from Moscow to Rome, from London through Paris to Warsaw, from Stockholm through Slovenia to the Balkans, from the Baltic States to the US – everyone, with no exception, must declare that these are the values, which will save us from the tragedy. That freedom always excels over bondage just as democracy is superior to dictatorship, truth to lies, love to hate, respect to contempt, trust to mistrust, and, finally, solidarity to selfishness.¹²

It is worth to ask why the prime minister's speech was so important. There are a few reasons that allow one to recognize it as the decline of the dominant (at that time) vision represented by Kaczyński and the beginning of a new mainstream. Firstly, Tusk succeed in introducing the Polish perspective into international political discourse after he presented national history as a part of pan-European history and emphasized the similarities between Poles and other societies, recognizing them as a community with traumatic experience. Secondly, he referred to values that are comprehensible not only for Poles, but the same values with which all Europeans may identify themselves. Therefore, the prime minister rejected the notion of Poland as a "solitary isle" amongst hostile cultures that are detracting from Polish merits. Tusk stated that Polish

01.09.2009, http://www.premier.gov.pl/en/prime_minister/speeches/donald_tusk_s_speech_in_west,2848 [access: 03.07.2012].

¹¹ Executing the query I did not find any press relations that emphasized the anniversary as the clash of Kaczyński's and Tusk's visions of politics of memory, which shows a superficiality of Polish press analyses.

¹² The Chancellery of Prime Minister, *Donald Tusk's Speech...*, op.cit.

merits are a part of pan-European history and that European merits should be included into the national legacy. Thirdly, as opposed to Kaczyński, he managed to show full respect to all of the foreign guests and he proved his sincere desire to establish friendly relations with other states, especially with Russia.¹³ It resulted from Tusk's conviction that the main aim of the anniversary is to present Poland as an important member of European community, whereas the president wanted to take advantage of it to propagate the Polish vision of the past. And, that highlights the general distinction between them: Tusk recognizes politics of memory as a pragmatic instrument of influence or substantiation, whereas Kaczyński understood politics of memory as a goal by itself and aspired to spread the Polish perception of the past. Fourthly, during his speech, the prime minister tried to establish an agenda for Europe, referring to common values and manifesting his proclivity towards deepening international cooperation. Meanwhile, Kaczyński warned of "specters haunting Europe" and called upon European leaders to cooperate "against menaces" instead of "for peace and welfare." Finally, Tusk, as I noticed before, rejected the primacy of the Polish martyrdom as the foundation of politics of memory. It is significant that in his speech he emphasized the importance of Gdańsk as a symbol of war trauma and a symbol of hope. Furthermore, the prime minister recognized the legacy of the "Solidarity" movement as currently more influential than the legacy of World War II. German Chancellor Angela Merkel referred to this afterwards, thanking other nations' for their outstretched hands of reconciliation.¹⁴ Finally, Tusk presented the possibility of understanding politics of memory not only as commemorating national victimhood, but also as a way to make Poles proud of being a member of nation that is esteemed and appreciated. Polish martyrs can be recognized as embodiments of virtues. However, "ordinary people" do not desire to associate themselves with the defeated heroes. It is more probable that everyone wishes to be like those who succeeded. And, this new identification is what Tusk promoted (and still promotes).

¹³ Tusk's right-wing political adversaries accuse the prime minister of compliance, weakness, and unable to oppose German or Russian statesman. Even if I am not an admirer of Tusk's vision of politics of memory, I am convinced that the aim of official anniversaries is not to articulate demands, but to pay general homage to heroes of the past. So, I state that an efficiency of this instrument's usage is closely related to showing all invited guests a full respect and host's care for appropriate mood for a reflection.

¹⁴ A. Kozłowska, M. Zauszkiewicz, *Merkel: to wy wyciągnęliście do nas rękę* [Merkel: You Reach out to Us], 01.09.2009, http://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/wiadomosci/10,114927,6990617,Merkel__To_wy_wyciagneliscie_do_nas_reke.html [access: 03.07.2012].

2. New mainstream: towards “conciliatory” politics of memory

Radosław Sikorski, the current Polish foreign minister, embraced a new vision of Polish politics of memory based on the assumption that history must be remembered, but that the future must be jointly formed by different nations.¹⁵ The “conciliatory” proposition was constructed as an opposition to, as Roman Kuźniar describes it, “vulgar” previous observances effective only in creating images of enemies and unable to establish a positive and attractive message referring to Europe’s past.¹⁶ The vision promoted by the Civic Platform (pol. *Platforma Obywatelska*, PO), which has been governing since 2007, was initially an answer to these questions: how to break out the vicious circle of the concept of Fourth Republic and how to establish politics of memory without the Law and Justice’s (pol. *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*, PiS) “original sin” of martyrdom-based remembrance?¹⁷

Tusk’s decision to entrust Paweł Machcewicz with establishing the World War II Museum in Gdańsk was typical of this change.¹⁸ The museum was planned to some degree as a response to a previous success of Kaczyński’s vision of politics of memory: the Warsaw Uprising Museum. The person who was chosen to lead this project was the founder of the educational department at the Institute of National Remembrance¹⁹ (pol. *Instytut Pamięci Narodowej*, IPN), who resigned from his position due to an intellectual conflict with Janusz Kurtyka, the head of IPN. Already, the dispute between two prominent IPN officials – Machcewicz and Kurtyka – unveiled the possibility of a future clash of two visions of the

¹⁵ S. Zaborowski, *Polityka historyczna w polityce zagranicznej III RP – casus stosunków polsko-niemieckich* [Historical Policy in the Foreign Policy of the Third Polish Republic – Casus of Polish-German Relations] [in:] *Polityka zagraniczna III RP. 20 lat po przełomie. Tom II* [The Foreign Policy of the Third Polish Republic. 20 Years after the Turn. Vol. II], L. Czechowska, M. Bierowiec (eds.), Toruń 2011, p. 213.

¹⁶ R. Kuźniar, *Polityka zagraniczna III Rzeczypospolitej* [The Foreign Policy of the Third Polish Republic], Warszawa 2012, p. 291.

¹⁷ Rauf Garagozov published interesting theoretical study on the role of politics of memory. See: R. Garagozov, *Characteristics of Collective Memory, Ethnic Conflicts, Historiography, and the “Politics of Memory,”* “Journal of Russian and East European Psychology” 2008, No. 2, Vol. 46, pp. 58–95.

¹⁸ The Chancellery of Prime Minister, *Prime Minister Signed the Foundation Act of the Museum of the Second World War*, 01.09.2009, http://www.premier.gov.pl/en/press_centre/news/prime_minister_signed_the_foun,2120 [access: 04.07.2012].

¹⁹ A. Dudek, *Instytut. Osobista historia IPN* [Institute. Personal History of IPN], Warszawa 2011, pp. 80–85.

Polish remembrance. Machcewicz's resignation determined his role as the main polemicist with the then-politics of memory, as realized by the Kaczyński brothers, Law and Justice, and the Kurtyka-led IPN. Furthermore, the dispute established him as the "godfather" of the new "conciliatory" Polish politics of memory and as a symbol of the "remembrance without hate" philosophy.²⁰ Actually, it is reasonable to state that Machcewicz is one of the main authors of the current Polish politics of memory as an intellectual proposition opposing Kaczyński's.

To understand the "conciliatory" conception it is worthwhile to call attention to Machcewicz's opinions, especially those that were collected in his newest book, *Debates on History 2000–2011*. The publication includes thirty-two articles that he published in the Polish mainstream press during the last decade. Five of them seem to be the most influential and clearly present the demands made by the "conciliatory" vision of Polish politics of memory. Thus, Machcewicz's commentaries necessitate their enumerating.

- 1) Politics of memory presents both glorious and dark deeds from the past; in his article *Westerplatte, as well as Jedwabne*. Machcewicz engages in polemics with right-wing historian Andrzej Nowak, who previously stated that politics of memory should be established to take pride in Poland's glorious past, not to feel shame. Machcewicz recognizes its role quite differently and rejects Nowak's suggestion to forget Polish crimes for national community's good. He states that this constitution of the community would be insincere. The proper one would be based only on an honest confrontation with the past without "monumental" subliming and idealizing the nation.²¹
- 2) Politics of memory ought to be placed halfway between outlook extremes; Machcewicz, at the same time, demurs at constructing politics of memory founded on the conviction of inactivity and remembrance's carelessness of the Polish post-communist authorities, as well as at recognizing politics of memory as a menace or a sign of parochial Polish mentality. He clearly states that conducting politics of memory is nothing unusual

²⁰ The significance of Machcewicz's influence was also constituted by his crucial role during the debate on Jedwabne massacre, which often is recognized as the beginning of Polish politics of memory. See: *Wokół Jedwabnego. Tom I: Studia* [Around Jedwabne. Vol. I: Studies], P. Machcewicz, K. Persak (eds.), Warszawa 2002.

²¹ P. Machcewicz, *Spory o historię 2000–2011* [Disputes about the History of the 2000–2011], Kraków 2012, pp. 167–171.

and it is typical for all states at any time. On one hand, Machcewicz rejects “cognitive nihilism”²² of post-communist fear of dealing with the past. On the other hand, he opines that the moral revolution suggested by followers of the idea of the Fourth Republic²³ is not necessary. Constructing the memory, in particular, requires progressive acting to maintain its credibility.²⁴

- 3) Politics of memory is not a weapon of warfare and should not determine enemies; considering the 2007 Estonian-Russian dispute on the Monument of Red Army in Tallinn, Machcewicz argues that monuments or other instruments of political memory should not be exploited as a “political weapon” and the aim of politics of memory is to maintain the remembrance or to commemorate heroes and victims instead of establishing dividing lines between nations and societies. He remarks that being guided by the “my enemy’s enemy is my friend” role in case of the memory leads nowhere and does not take into account historical differences.²⁵
- 4) Politics of memory requires its own grand projects to exhibit its narrations; Machcewicz recognizes the lack of constructive criticism as the main “sin” of Kaczyński’s vision of the Polish politics of memory. Considering the German-Polish conflict on the commemoration of the German expellees²⁶, he states that it was a mistake just to raise an objection against selective recounting the past. He emphasizes it would have been most appropriate to provide an alternative proposition about how to include German expellees into the general narration of World War II.²⁷

²² I refer to the concept used by Leszek Koczanowicz to describe a state of Polish politics of memory in last decade of the 20th Century, especially the dominance of the ‘thick line’ (pol. *gruba kreska*) paradigm. See: L. Koczanowicz, *Memory of Politics and Politics of Memory. Reflections on the Construction of the Past in Post-Totalitarian Poland*, “Studies in East European Thought” 1997, Vol. 49, pp. 268–269.

²³ L. Stan, *The Vanishing Truth? Politics and Memory in Post-Communist Europe*, “East European Quarterly” 2006, No. 4, Vol. 40, p. 395.

²⁴ P. Machcewicz, *Spory o historię...*, op.cit., pp. 172–176.

²⁵ Ibidem, pp. 245–248.

²⁶ To understand the significance of this issue see: R. Schultze, *The Politics of Memory: Flight and Expulsion of German Population after the Second World War and German Collective Memory*, “National Identities” 2006, No. 4, Vol. 8, pp. 367–382.

²⁷ P. Machcewicz, *Spory o historię...*, op.cit., pp. 249–253. Meaningful is already the title of this article: *Museums Instead of Entanglements*.

- 5) The Polish politics of memory should be placed in a wider European context; in the article *How Narrate Polish History*, Machcewicz (with Piotr M. Majewski) substantiates his vision of the World War II Museum in Gdańsk, which was presented in a bad light by Piotr Semka in “Rzeczpospolita” newspaper. He opposes the paradigm of martyrdom-based memory and the myth of Polish exceptionalism, and presents an alternative: to incorporate Polish narrations into the pan-European history, so to present Polish history as an integral part of Europe’s past. Machcewicz exhorts to extricate the Polish politics of memory from a shell of phobias and fears and to believe that inside European discourse the Polish perspective will not vanish or become distorted.²⁸

Prime Minister Tusk, in his speech during the 70th anniversary commemorations at Westerplatte, visibly realized these demands. He even developed the third one by not only rejecting politics of memory as a “political weapon” available in foreign policy, but by recognizing politics of memory as an instrument of reconciliation between nations, supposing that a common remembrance of World War II is *sine qua non* of the peaceful cooperation in Europe. Already in 2005, (even though he supported the idea of the Fourth Republic at the time) Tusk unwillingly referred to the “conservative” and “monumental” politics of memory proposed by Kaczyński.

During a debate on the role of memory in a foreign policy that was organized by the Stefan Batory Foundation (28 June 2005), he stated that Poland definitely has to stress that the past cannot be used as a substantiation of present political claims. He proposed abandoning European politics based on an emotional repugnance and historical stereotypes and to encourage other states in promoting understanding others’ comprehension of the past.²⁹ In his speech during the meeting, Tusk outlined the vision of the politics of memory, which – after certain modifications and the decline of the idea of the Fourth Republic – has become the most influential one.³⁰ His ‘manifesto’ may be summarized in a few high points,

²⁸ Ibidem, pp. 254–258.

²⁹ *Dyskusja* [Discussion] [in:] *Pamięć i polityka zagraniczna* [Memory and Foreign Policy], P. Kosiewski (ed.), Warszawa 2006, pp. 50–52.

³⁰ Even if Polish Foreign Minister Sikorski desires to propagate his own conception of politics of memory, which seems to be an alternation of the ‘thick line’ paradigm and accords with the vision of Adam Michnik, a former prominent anti-communist activist and the editor-in-chief of influential newspaper “Gazeta Wyborcza.” However, I assume that both politics of memory and foreign policy are mainly under Tusk’s influence, so I limit my interest in Sikorski’s propositions.

which are still noticeable in the present Polish politics of memory and foreign policy. These are assumptions that: (a) the remembrance may be pragmatically used to achieve political goals, but cannot be used as a moral substantiation of claims; (b) history should be a basis for co-understanding of different nations, not a reason for phobias; (c) foreign policy must consider different historical sensitivities between states and aim to develop a common framework of respect and tolerance; (d) remembrance is indispensable for reconciliation; and (e) the goal of Polish foreign policy should be to establish a big-picture strategy of countering a re-writing the history while at the same time esteeming other nations' right to narrate their past by themselves.³¹

It is evident that Tusk's early conception of the Polish politics of memory resembles Machcewicz's suggestions. Over the course of time and with the intensification of the political conflict between Tusk and Kaczyński brothers, the prime minister's vision became entirely convergent with Machcewicz's outlook. And, after the tragic death of President Kaczyński (as well as Director of IPN Kurtyka) in 2010, the coalescence of followers of the "conservative" politics of memory and the idea of the Fourth Republic prevailed over Polish public discourse. Jarosław Kaczyński, the former prime minister, devoid of charisma and the philosophical follower of his late brother was (and still is) not able to vie for an intellectual influence on social expectations related to politics of memory with Tusk. Successive Civic Platform's victories in election – the 2010 presidential election and parliamentary elections in 2011 – reaffirmed the dominance of the new mainstream vision – the "conciliatory" politics of memory promoted by Prime Minister Tusk and his political milieu.

3. Former areas, new visions: remembrance vs. foreign policy

The Kaczyński brothers' politics of memory, pursued during their two years in power (2005–2007) and then realized by President Kaczyński right up to his tragic death, formed intellectual frameworks of Polish debates on issues of cultural memory related to foreign policy. It established seven areas of interest, which Tusk inherited: (a) Polish-German relations (especially the question of German responsibility for World War II and its moral consequences); (b) Polish-Russian relations (especially the question of Russian responsibility for Stalinist

³¹ D. Tusk, *Problem niemieckiej "normalności"* [The Problem of the German "Normality"] [in:] *Pamięć i polityka zagraniczna...*, op.cit., pp. 41–44.

crimes, including the Katyń massacre issue); (c) Polish-Ukrainian relations; (d) Polish-Jewish relations (including perpetration of criminal offenses against Jews during World War II by Poles, the Polish Righteous Amongst the Nations, and restitution of Jewish property); (e) the European Union and the roots of European cooperation; (f) Communist crimes; and (g) the collapse of communist regimes in Eastern Europe (including the role of the Polish “Solidarity” trade union).

As a matter of fact, Tusk abandoned only the first area, considering that relations with Germany are too important to risk their worsening only because of controversies on understanding the past. As Merkel justifiably noticed in her speech during commemorations of the 70th anniversary in Westerplatte, Tusk gave a helping hand to Germans, suggesting to look ahead, not to brood over tragic occurrences from the past. Remarkably, he also transformed the Polish attitude towards other issues of national memory affecting foreign policy. It is essential to outline his vision, referring to particular cases, which seem to be representative.

To present the prime minister’s attitude towards Russia, it is valuable to refer to his speech delivered during the official intergovernmental commemorations of the 70th anniversary of the Katyń massacre. Tusk, with Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, paid homage not only to the Polish officers murdered by the Soviet NKVD (the People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs, rus. *Narodnyy Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del*) in 1940, but to all victims of Stalinist repressions without distinction of their nationality.³² However, Tusk’s speech was overshadowed by President Kaczyński’s tragic death in the plane crash on the 10 April 2010; it is undisputable that Tusk’s message about Katyń has essentially altered the mutual understanding of the purpose of the Polish and Russian debate on the common past. Then he stated that:

Why are we here today, seventy years after that crime? Why do we come to this place every year? First of all, because we remember the crime. The crime and its victims. We remember the crime committed on people, we also remember the crime which was perpetrated, or attempted to be so, on the entire nation. [...] The truth of Katyń became the founding myth of independent Poland. [...] We want this myth to divide no one; this truth may not divide, yet this truth must reverberate. It was like a suit of armor for us all, for these few generations

³² The Chancellery of Prime Minister, *Prime Minister Tusk: One Word of Truth May Draw Two Great Nations*, 07.04.2010, http://www.premier.gov.pl/en/press_centre/news/prime_minister_tusk_one_word_,4435 [access: 05.07.2012].

of post-war Poland. Thanks to this armor, we have survived. [...] It is also here in Katyń that one needs to say that one eventually needs this daring and power, that the road to reconciliation awaits us. We are not closing anything. We must find in ourselves that daring and that strength to once and for all open everything. We want to remember so that this road to reconciliation might be as straight and short as it can be. [...] Today, I want to believe that a word of truth may also draw together two great nations so painfully divided by history. [...] We must believe that we have chosen the right direction, that we have found this straight and short path, as on this road to reconciliation we put two signposts: memory and truth.³³

Kaczyński never offered so unconditionally reconciliation to Russians. Even in his speech (generally recognized as extraordinary gentle), which he prepared for the commemoration scheduled on the 10th of April 2010, Kaczyński planned to emphasize that the “truth needs more than words – it also needs action,”³⁴ somehow demurring at Prime Minister’s proposition of unconditionally reconciliation. But, the change in Polish-Ukrainian relations seems to be different from the new attitudes towards Germany and Russia. Tusk expected Ukrainian concessions and expressed Polish claims bolder than Kaczyński.³⁵ This transformation may be interpreted as a transition from the president’s interest in regional community building to the prime minister’s desire to participate in the mainstream of European politics. Therefore, attitudes towards the most influential states have been softened while those towards less influential neighboring countries have hardened.

With reference to Polish-Jewish relations, there were no sweeping changes. Tusk appreciated Kaczyński’s role in building a friendly mood in relations between Poland, Israel, and the Jewish Diaspora (especially in the United States). He continued the president’s path of reconciliation, and like Kaczyński, Tusk supported promoting the Polish Righteous and spreading the universal

³³ The Chancellery of Prime Minister, *PM Donald Tusk’s Speech at Katyń*, 07.04.2010, http://www.premier.gov.pl/en/prime_minister/speeches/pm_donald_tusk_s_speech_at_k,4438 [access: 05.07.2012].

³⁴ President of the Republic of Poland, *Freedom and Truth*, 10.04.2010, <http://www.president.pl/en/archive-news-archive/news-2010/art,12,125,freedom-and-truth.html> [access: 05.07.2012].

³⁵ The Chancellery of Prime Minister, *Prime Minister Tusk Meet President of Ukraine*, 07.09.2009, http://www.premier.gov.pl/en/press_centre/news/prime_minister_tusk_meets_pres,2115 [access: 05.07.2012].

remembrance of Holocaust. During his meeting with the International Auschwitz Council, he appealed to its members:

you work for universal memory and the memory of the event that is perhaps the most important in the modern history of mankind. It is our common goal that in the universal memory, not only of Jews, Poles, but the collective, common memory, Auschwitz-Birkenau, remained forever a very sound and clear warning.³⁶

Referring to European Union and the roots of European peaceful cooperation, Tusk, in spite of pretenses, did not noticeably transform Polish politics of memory. He, like Kaczyński, stressed the symbolic meaning of the 2004 Enlargement of the EU as Eastern Europe's return to her civilized "motherland." He emphasized the fundamental role of Polish anti-communist movements, especially the "Solidarity" trade union, in overthrowing communist regimes in Europe and the reunification of the continent. He also recalled that the present peaceful cooperation is somehow a way to pay homage to all victims of totalitarian crimes committed by Nazis and Soviets. Tusk included all of this in his speech delivered at the international conference on the 5th anniversary of Poland's accession to the EU. The President of European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, accompanied the Polish prime minister stating, "The values for which the Polish nation fought are the foundations of Europe."³⁷ The only important change is a different general attitude towards the EU: Tusk recognizes European cooperation as the main source of Poland's historical opportunity to become a permanent member of the West, whereas President Kaczyński recognized the union as a possible menace for Polish independence and sovereignty (a mentality that his brother continues to have).

At last, Tusk inherited two areas that were fundamental for "conservative" martyrdom-based politics of memory: the interest in communist (as well as Nazi) crimes and the issue of the Polish anti-communist military and political resistance's exceptionalism. Both of these constructed the narration of the so-called "cursed soldiers" (pol. *Żołnierze Wyklęci*), which was, aside from the myth

³⁶ The Chancellery of Prime Minister, *Prime Minister Donald Tusk at the Meeting of the International Auschwitz Council*, 18.01.2012, http://www.premier.gov.pl/en/press_centre/news/prime_minister_donald_tusk_at_,8872 [access: 05.07.2012].

³⁷ The Chancellery of Prime Minister, *Poland's 5 Years in European Union*, 30.04.2009, http://www.premier.gov.pl/en/press_centre/news/poland_s_5_years_in_the_euro,2142 [access: 05.07.2012].

of the Warsaw Uprising, the Kaczyński's main contribution to Polish politics of memory and was one of the foundations of the moral constitution of the Fourth Republic's idea. From the very beginning, Tusk was rather reluctant to recognize the myth of the "cursed soldiers" as a focal point of the Polish politics of memory; he did not mention it in his "conciliatory" vision.

His attitude towards the remembrance of the communist period in Polish (and European) history was clearly exhibited in his speech at the commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of martial law in Poland. He stated:

It is still an anniversary that should make us think of our history as well as our duties and limitations as authorities, both at the time of the Soviet authoritarianism and today, in the democratic system. [...] Today, Poles are still not unanimous as to the causes and effects of martial law. I can say from my own experience, as well as the experience of my environment, that approval, tolerance, and remission of sins is unacceptable.³⁸

Apparently, Tusk's judgment of the communist past is close to Kaczyński's. But, it is only a charade; one is a refusal to forget (Tusk) while the other is calling for the criminalization of communist officials' actions (Kaczyński). And, this is a difference only on the level of declarations. In reality, the prime minister agreed to tolerate the communist sins (e.g. not objecting to inviting former prominent communist official General Wojciech Jaruzelski for an official meeting of the National Security Council concerning the state of Polish-Russian relations) by President Bronisław Komorowski, who hails from the Civic Platform.³⁹ He also cooled anti-communist moods in Polish society and restricted his interest in "de-communization" and "lustration," which were included into Tusk's and the Civic Platform's political platform. Likewise, it was with a retrenchment of public support for the Institute of national Remembrance, which – as Polish MP Arkadiusz Mularczyk called it, "always was a unwanted child of Civic Platform."⁴⁰

³⁸ The Chancellery of Prime Minister, *PM: Approval, Tolerance and Remission of Sins Are Unacceptable*, 13.12.2011, http://www.premier.gov.pl/en/press_centre/news/pm_approval_tolerance_and_re,8596 [access: 05.07.2012].

³⁹ M. Chodurski, *Jaruzelski zaproszony na obrady RBN* [Jaruzelski Invited to Debate RBN], 23.11.2010, <http://www.polskieradio.pl/5/3/Artykul/277206,Jaruzelski-zaproszony-na-obrady-RBN> [access: 05.07.2012].

⁴⁰ RZ, *Mniej pieniędzy dla IPN. "Zawsze był niechciany"* [Less Money for the IPN. "It Was Always Unwanted"], 02.01.2012, <http://wiadomosci.onet.pl/kraj/mniej-pieniedzy-dla-ipn-zawsze-byl-niechciany,1,4986763,wiadomosc.html> [access: 05.07.2012].

Summing up, the new vision of the Polish politics of memory did not influence the range of issues, which are taken up on a borderland of the remembrance and foreign policy. Kaczyński, like Tusk, narrates about World War II, communist crimes, the Holocaust, or the “Solidarity” Trade Union. And, like Kaczyński, Tusk uses these narrations in international political debate. He properly does it in a less ostentatious manner and without an emphasis on the Polish martyrdom, but he still recounts the same occurrences as the president did. However (even if the range has not changed), after the 70th anniversary at Westerplatte, the Polish politics of memory have been substantially transformed. The things that changed are the general understanding of the Polish history, its usage as a substantiation of Poland’s international actions, and the recognition of politics of memory’s aims, especially its adaptation for the foreign policy. These are the differences between “conservative” and “conciliatory” visions of the remembrance; it is not a question of what to narrate, but rather of what and how to narrate, even if they make politics of memory just one of the state’s instruments in international relations. Yet, Tusk, himself, has stated that the remembrance may be pragmatically used to achieve political goals.⁴¹

4. Next three years: opportunities, challenges, and perspectives

In spite of widespread opinions that the current governmental coalition will not survive through the entire term of the Parliament, I assume that Tusk will remain in power for the next three years. Even if I am wrong in my presumption, it is particularly impossible that “conciliatory” politics of memory could be refuted during following three years. In next few paragraphs, I would like to present an analysis of the possibilities and perspectives of politics of memory’s usage in the Polish foreign policy⁴² until the 2015 parliamentary elections. In chronological order it will be:

1. December 2012: the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the Polish Council to Aid Jews “Żegota” (pol. *Rada Pomocy Żydom “Żegota”*).

⁴¹ D. Tusk, *Problem niemieckiej “normalności”...*, op.cit., p. 41.

⁴² I agree with Neil Gregor about the significance and the influence of official commemoration celebrations, so I have constructed following part of this article as an enumeration of anniversaries, which can be exploited by the Polish politics of memory to achieve goals of foreign policy. See: N. Gregor, *Four Days in April 2000: The 55th Anniversary of the Liberation of Ravensbrück*, “The Journal of Holocaust Education” 2001, No. 2, Vol. 10, pp. 71–78.

The goal of these commemorations should be to present Polish actions against the Holocaust⁴³ and the Nazi policy of extermination⁴⁴ in a wider context of European attitudes towards the Holocaust. It will be – if the government will be able to gain support of e.g. Israel, the Jewish Diaspora, the Yad Vashem Institute, and the German authorities – a splendid opportunity to present Poland not just as a place where the genocide was committed, but also as a place where Jews could expect aid (even if in Poland and Ukraine the punishment for this aid was death or confinement in Nazi concentration camps). The anniversary will have to challenge the stereotype of Polish anti-Semitism and present the history of the Righteous Poles as a part of pan-European history. In my opinion, an academic meeting that is devoted to pan-European attitudes towards the Holocaust and the struggle of European (not only Polish) Righteous Amongst the Nations, as well as an exhibition on the Nazi extermination policy, should complement the commemorations.

2. February 2013: the 70th anniversary of the massacres in Volynia and Eastern Galicia (pol. *Rzeź Wołyńska*). The goal of these commemorations should be to incorporate the genocide of Poles committed by Ukrainian nationalists into pan-European discourse about mass murders during World War II. Also, it should reveal the burden of the past in the Polish-Ukrainian relations and establish the remembrance of it as a foundation of reconciliation. However, it is important not to limit the significance of narration only to local issues, but to present massacres as a local

⁴³ To understand the cultural power of the Holocaust narrations see: e.g. J.E. Berman, *Holocaust Museums in Australia: The Impact of Holocaust Denial and the Role of the Survivors*, “The Journal of Holocaust Education” 2001, No. 1, Vol. 10, pp. 67–88; D. Cesarani, *Does the Singularity of the Holocaust Make It Incomparable and Inoperative for Commemorating, Studying and Preventing Genocide? Britain’s Memorial Holocaust Day as a Case Study*, “The Journal of Holocaust Education” 2001, No. 2, Vol. 10, pp. 40–56; S. Cooke, *Beth Shalom: Re-Thinking History and Memory*, “The Journal of Holocaust Education” 1999, No. 1, Vol. 8, p. 21–41; A. Langberg, *America, the Holocaust, and the Mass-Culture of Memory: Towards a Radical Politics of Empathy*, “New German Critique” 1997, No. 71, pp. 63–86; R. Linn, *Genocide and the Politics of Remembering: The Nameless, the Celebrated, and the Would-be Holocaust Heroes*, “The Journal of Genocide Studies” 2003, No. 4, Vol. 5, pp. 565–586.

⁴⁴ I believe that every time, when it is possible to debate on Nazi policy of extermination, it is also possible to refer to the Soviet occupation policy. See: A. Głowacki, *Ogólne założenia sowieckiej polityki okupacyjnej w Polsce* [General Assumptions of Soviet Occupation Policy in Poland], “Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość” 2008, No. 1, Vol. 12, pp. 61–78.

manifestation of the pan-European phenomenon of the war, which was an escalation of inter-ethnic violence and hate. So, I suggest linking commemorations with the commemorations of different European victims of inter-ethnic conflicts, especially in Eastern Europe and the Balkans.

3. April 2013: the 70th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Most likely this event will prevail over other commemorations during 2013 and not because of the importance of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising for Polish memory, but because of the place of this occurrence for the universal remembrance of the Holocaust. However, the Polish government is able to take advantage of the anniversary to once again exhibit the moral heritage of the Polish Righteous and emphasize Poland's friendly attitude towards Jews during the World War II. It is certain that the commemorations will attract the world's attention and will draw the most prominent statesmen from different countries to Warsaw. The anniversary seems to be a unique opportunity to express the Polish view on the history of Holocaust and its remembrance. It would be a particularly opportune occasion to deny accusations of Polish anti-Semitism and to officially object the use of the phrase "Polish death camps" with reference to Nazi concentration and extermination camps, located in the occupied territory of Poland. Only then, this voice may be heard so clearly. It will be also a unique chance to establish international projects for youth concerning the memory of Holocaust and resistance struggle against the Nazi policy of extermination (which can in the long term change the picture of Poles and question the stereotype of the Polish anti-Semitism).
4. May 2014: the 10th anniversary of the Great Enlargement of the EU. The goal of the Polish government's actions should be to confirm the European identity of Poland and to present the role of Poland in new EU-27⁴⁵ cooperation. Authorities have to be concerned about the international character of the anniversary, even if it will cause that the main part of commemorations will not take part in Poland. Furthermore, I assume that it will be beneficial to propose organizing an EU event in another country (and then use this symbolic act as a sign of good will and as a substantiation of Poland's claims related to the program of celebrations). The Polish government should also benefit from an opportunity and propose a debate on a declaration of the EU's policies during the following

⁴⁵ Then already the EU-28, after Croatian accession to the Union.

decade, including the issue of further enlargements (South Caucasus, Turkey, Ukraine).

5. June 2014: the 25th anniversary of Poland's first partially-free elections and the beginning of European autumn of nations. The 10th anniversary of the EU enlargement can be linked with the Polish commemorations of the June 1989 elections. Polish elections may be presented as a turning point of the pan-European process with the epilogue being the enlargement of the Union. At the same time, the 25th anniversary should be the beginning of the European commemoration of the 1989 autumn of nations, which will (most likely) end with the anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall.⁴⁶
6. August 2014: the 70th anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising. Like in 2004, the anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising may be an opportunity to present the Polish vision of the past and exhibit the Polish struggle against Nazi occupation and their policy of extermination. Since it will be difficult to repeat the success of the 60th anniversary, which was a triumph of the nascent Polish politics of memory, I suppose that the most convenient will be to establish an international project concerning the pan-European, anti-Nazi resistance movements and recognize the uprising as a focal point of pan-European endeavors. A good idea would be to change the emphasis of celebrations from Polish martyrdom, which cannot be a source of identification for other nations, to the tragic lot of civilians, which can be understood regardless of nationality. Perhaps another good idea will be to support research on foreign aid and international assistance for Poles, and then to celebrate all of these activities together with local (helping countries) authorities. For Tusk, the main challenge will be how to incorporate the narration about the uprising into his "conciliatory" politics of memory, the narration that was previously an intellectual constitution of "conservative" one (and in present version does not suit the prime minister's policy).

⁴⁶ Polish desires to establish the 1989 June Elections or the establishment of the Tadeusz Mazowiecki's government (the first Polish democratic government after the World War II) as a universal symbol of the decline of communist regimes in Europe are devoid of political realism and pragmatism. I assume that the Fall of the Berlin Wall has so enormous and intense symbolic as well as emotional potential, that nothing can outshine its splendor. So I believe that the only way for Polish politics of memory is to supplement the narration about the Fall with own symbols and wider Eastern European context, but never – what Kaczyński sometimes suggested – to force own Remembrance against mythologizing the Fall.

7. September 2014: the 75th anniversary of the outbreak of the World War II. I am afraid that this commemoration will be the most important in government's agenda for following years. Why do I suppose that it will be a disadvantage for the Polish foreign policy? Firstly, because it will show that after 2009 there was no progress in the Polish politics of memory and it is so unproductive that cannot establish any new narration, which can benefit Polish interests in international relations. Secondly, because referring to the Second World War is nothing new, it can be stated that the only possible message is the repetition of the willingness to reconcile. Thirdly, because the outbreak of the war is somehow a local anniversary (e.g. Americans recognize the attack on Pearl Harbor as the outbreak of the war, the British commemorate the beginning of the Battle of Britain, the Russians commemorate the 22nd of June as the outbreak of the Great Patriotic War (rus. *Velikaya Otechestvennaya Voyna*), in Eastern Asia the war had begun before the 1st of September 1939,⁴⁷ and even in Central and Eastern Europe it is hard to recognize this day as the common turning point for different nations (in fact, it is common just for Germans and Poles). However, I expect that commemorations will be a success, because most likely the anniversary will somehow be connected with the promotion of the Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk, which also increases international interest in the anniversary itself.
8. September 2014: the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the first Polish resistance movement – Polish Victory Service (pol. *Służba Zwycięstwu Polski*, SZP). If the incorporation of the narration about the Warsaw Uprising into Tusk's "conciliatory" politics of memory will not be successful, the anniversary of the establishment of Polish resistance movement does not seem to be an appropriate occasion to realize the new vision of the Polish remembrance. In addition, this anniversary allows us to include Polish narrations into the pan-European history and present Polish history as a part of extensive processes, which is one of goals of Tusk's politics of memory.

⁴⁷ J. Seo, *Politics of Memory in Korea and China: Remembering the Comfort Women and the Nanjing Massacre*, "New Political Science" 2008, No. 3, Vol. 30, pp. 369–392; J. Qiu, *The Politics of History and Historical Memory in China-Japan Relations*, "Journal of Chinese Political Science" 2006, No. 1, Vol. 11, pp. 25–53; Z. Wang, *National Humiliation, History Education, and the Politics of Historical Memory: Patriotic Education Campaign in China*, "International Studies Quarterly" 2008, Vol. 52, pp. 783–806.

9. January 2015: the 70th anniversary of the Liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Nazi camp. The International Holocaust Commemoration Day may be used by the Polish government as another opportunity to struggle against the stereotype of the Polish anti-Semitism and to oppose any framing of Poles as complicit in the Holocaust. The challenge is how to celebrate the anniversary without commemorating the liberator of Auschwitz – the Soviet Red Army, which although it liberated Eastern Europeans from Nazi occupation, also it also imposed repressive communist regimes.⁴⁸ Most likely, Tusk will also not find an answer to this question and the anniversary will still not be developed by the Polish politics of memory. And that, I believe, is an irretrievable loss.
10. February 2015: the 75th anniversary of the beginning of the Soviet deportations from the occupied territories in Poland. Anniversaries of the Soviet deportations were organized as ceremonies of Polish martyrdom. I hope that the transformation of memory by Tusk will enable the 75th anniversary to be an international commemoration of all victims of Stalinism⁴⁹ regardless of their nationality or everyone exiled during World War II (and due to it). It could be a true gesture of friendship and reconciliation of all Europeans. Presenting Polish victims side by side with Balkars, Chechens,⁵⁰ Crimean Tatars, Estonians, Germans, Jews, Kalmyks, Karachays, Lithuanians, Latvians, Russians, or Ukrainians will simplify the understanding of Polish history by members of different national communities.
11. April 2015: the 75th anniversary of the Katyń massacre. I do not perceive any chance for significant change in the narration about the Katyń massacre. I suppose that commemorations will be just a recurrence of intergovernmental ceremony in 2010 and another opportunity to state that the Polish and Russian reconciliation will be based on truth, and to confirm the development of bilateral relations.
12. April 2015: the 5th anniversary of President Kaczyński's plane crash in Smolensk. In addition, the anniversary of the Katyń massacre will most

⁴⁸ I suppose that it is the main reason why the Remembrance Day has never been popular in Poland.

⁴⁹ See: T. Sherlock, *Confronting the Stalinist Past: Politics of Memory in Russia*, "The Washington Quarterly" 2011, No. 2, Vol. 34, pp. 93–109.

⁵⁰ See: B.G. Williams, *Commemorating "The Deportation" in Post-Soviet Chechnya. The Role of Memorialization and Collective Memory in 1994–1996 and 1999–2000 Russo-Chechen Wars*, "History and Memory" 2000, No. 1, Vol. 12, pp. 101–134.

probably be overshadowed by the commemoration of President Kaczyński and other victims of the 2010 plane crash in Smolensk, which will surely be used as a manifestation of support for Kaczyński's vision of the politics of memory and foreign policy. I presume that these commemorations will be the hardest challenge for Tusk to overcome in the following years – the 10th of April 2015, which is the fifth anniversary of Kaczyński's tragic death, falling on the year of Polish parliamentary elections, will probably be a clash of two the visions like it was on the 1st of September 2009. This time, however, it may cause the decline of the “conciliatory” politics of memory and the return of “conservative” proposition.

13. April 2015: the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the Nazi concentration camp in Auschwitz. Remarks that I emphasized when referring to the anniversary of Auschwitz's liberation suggest that a substitute for those commemorations may be the anniversary of the establishment of the camp. Firstly, it enables the focus to be only on the genocide and Nazi extermination policy⁵¹ without commemorating Soviet forces. Secondly, it may also harmonize with commemorations of the end of war with regard to timeliness of these events. Finally, emphasizing the significance of this anniversary may enable an international debate on past and present genocides.⁵² Additionally, it permits the establishment of Poland's new identity in international politics. Since neither Israel nor Germany is the world's political leader for the discussion on issues of mass violence and crimes against humanity, why shouldn't Poland develop this 'niche' and use the past as a substantiation of its role in international relations? I am convinced that Poland's tragic history can be used as a moral authority to represent all nations that suffered any mass violence, including genocide (somehow it is related to the remembrance of the Katyń massacre and the massacres in Volynia, which individually do not have this intellectual attraction in tandem with the universal memory about the Holocaust and Nazi crimes during the World War II).

⁵¹ Another issue, which may be included into this narration is the remembrance of 'slave laborers' in Nazi Germany. See: U. Schmidt, *Discussing Slave Labourers in Nazi Germany: Topography of Research and Politics of Memory*, "German History" 2001, No. 3, Vol. 19, pp. 408–417.

⁵² It may also be celebrations in memory of Raphael Lemkin, a Polish lawyer of Jewish descent, who introduced the term “genocide” into the international law. See: J.-L. Panné, *Kilka uwag na temat genezy pojęcia “ludobójstwo”* [A Few Notes on the Origins of the Term “Genocide”], “Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość” 2007, No. 1, Vol. 11, pp. 373–382.

14. May 2015: the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe. Domestically, the anniversary of President Kaczyński's tragic death will be Tusk's main challenge. On the international relations level, the most grueling challenge will be commemorating the end of war. It is obvious that the anniversary is a festival commemorating the heroism and dedication of Russia for the liberation of Europe from Nazi occupation.⁵³ It is as well as the most ambiguous feast in the Polish remembrance calendar. So, the anniversary will be a paramount trial for Tusk's "conciliatory" politics of memory. And, if it will stand this test and cause Russian acceptance of the Polish role during the war, it is highly probable that prime minister's vision will evade its decline. The issue is the efficiency of Tusk's policy, which cannot be verified until the anniversary and the unavoidable clash of Polish and Russian cultural memories.
15. August 2015: the 35th anniversary of the establishment of the "Solidarity" Trade Union. Polish politicians cannot yet comprehend that commemorations of the establishment of the "Solidarity" are purely Polish national celebration, or an anniversary interesting only for East European societies. They wished to establish it as a pan-European celebration in memory of the Polish anti-communist movement, but, in reality, is a memory of Polish martyrdom. It cannot succeed. I suggest changing the emphasis of celebrations from commemorating the Polish (or Eastern European) struggle against communism to remembering all occurrences of civil resistance against enslavement, despotism, and the abuse of power. And, I see the opportunity for Poland in inviting leaders of European autumn of nations and leaders of the Arab Spring, so as to enable a comparison of two transformations and two ways of struggling against dictatorship. Another way to establish the anniversary as a respectable international event is to organize it as a celebration of worldwide worker's movements and trade unions (I hope with some support from the International Labor Organization). Currently, the "recipe" for commemorations is, in my opinion, ineffective and too martyrdom-based, if it is supposed to be an instrument of the Polish foreign policy.

⁵³ G. Carleton, *History Done Right: War and the Dynamics of Triumphalism in Contemporary Russian Culture*, "Slavic Review" 2011, No. 3, Vol. 70, pp. 615–636. See: E.-C. Onken, *The Baltic States and Moscow's 9 May Commemoration: Analyzing Memory Politics in Europe*, "Europe-Asia Studies" 2007, No. 1, Vol. 59, pp. 23–46.

5. Conclusion

In this article, I planned to present the current state of the politics of memory's usage in Polish foreign policy and use it to predict developments over the next three years. Currently, Prime Minister Donald Tusk's "conciliatory" vision of remembrance is dominant. A fact that shows the superiority of Polish martyrdom is fading and that national narrations are beginning to be incorporated into the pan-European history. I suppose that Poles expect this precise direction of the politics of memory. And, after the accession to European Union, they require the remembrance, which enables them to feel like a part of the European community. It is for this reason that the "conservative" politics of memory, promoted by President Lech Kaczyński and the right-wing Law and Justice party, has declined. Because it was only superficially adapted to social expectations.

Tusk craves for the complete adaptation of social expectations and is guided by polls, something that he is often accused of, and directs his policy with reference to public opinion. That is why the pillars of his politics of memory are reconciliation with other nations and the Europeanization of the Polish memory. Like the World War II Museum in Gdańsk, brought to life by Paweł Machcewicz, the whole Polish commemoration is planned to be placed in the pan-European context. The aim of Tusk's vision is to interest Europeans (not only Poles, as was the case in Kaczyński's conception) in Polish narrations about past and to establish their identification with the history of Poland. The goal is a little grandiloquent. But, contradicting Machcewicz's opinion,⁵⁴ I state that politics of memory requires ambitious visions and momentous purposes.

In the last part of the article, I presented my considerations about following years. I also included my suggestions for the Polish statesman on how particular anniversaries may be used as an instrument of foreign policy. I hope that they may become a contribution to the new debate on the aims, means, and methods of the Polish politics of memory, as well as I hope that they will stand the test of time and will be confirmed by the future actions.

⁵⁴ P. Machcewicz, *Spory o historię...*, op.cit., p. 253.