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### Historical Conflicts and Reconciliation Efforts between Poland and Germany – Focusing on the Activities of the German-Polish Textbook Commission

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# Historical Conflicts and Reconciliation Efforts between Poland and Germany - Focusing on the Activities of the German-Polish Textbook Commission \*

**Keywords:** Polish-German relations; Polish-German Textbook Commission; historical reconciliation.

## 1. Introduction

The efforts European countries have made over the past one hundred or so years to resolve international conflicts and attempt historical reconciliation through the joint compilation of textbooks, especially the progress Germany and Poland have made on compiling a common history textbook since the 1970s, bear significant implications for Korea. Korea's reason for studying the German-Polish common history textbook is to discover clues to overcome the upset Japanese history textbooks have been causing in Korea since Korea-Japan relations share similarities with that of Germany and Poland. By examining the German-Polish Textbook Commission's activities that launched Germany and Poland toward historical reconciliation

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and contributed to resolving the border issue surrounding the Oder–Neisse line, this paper aims to catch a glimpse of any clues that may help resolve the historical enmity and conflicts between Korea and Japan over issues such as that involving the island Dokdo.

The case of Germany and Poland generally tends to be recognized as the most notable reference in terms of historical conflicts and reconciliation, which is reflecting on and settling issues of the past. This tendency is fairly acceptable when considering the efforts Germany, or West Germany prior to the German reunification to be precise, demonstrated throughout the process of cooperating with Poland in dealing with its Nazi past after the end of World War II. Unlike after World War I, Germany explicitly acknowledged its war responsibility upon losing World War II and wholly accepted the trials against Nazi war criminals, denazification process, and retraining programs run by the Allied forces, showing its firm will to split from its past. That will has persisted for well over half a century as Germany continues to try not to forget Nazi crimes, reflect on them, and memorialize as well as provide compensation for victims and survivors to this day. Although settling its Nazi past has caused controversies and been subjected to criticism within the German society from time to time, they never became compelling enough to change the overall social inclination toward wholly facing responsibility and reflecting upon its past. Moreover, the attitude of refusing to run away from reflecting on and facing responsibility over its Nazi past, even after going through a period of separation and achieving reunification, makes it clear that critical self-examination of its past has now settled down as a political culture in German society and a key component of Germany's identity.<sup>1</sup>

Such an attitude eventually managed to earn a response from Poland. The victim nation's heart opened up to Germany's sincere self-examination. While preparing for the 1000-year anniversary celebration of Poland's Christianization in 966, Polish bishops sent a letter of reconciliation to their German counterparts in 1965. That 'Pastoral Letter of the Polish Bishops to their German Brothers' ended with the fol-

1 Mary Fulbrook, *German National Identity after the Holocaust*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999; Jürgen Kocka, '불편한 과거사의 처리: 1945년 및 1990년 이후 독일의 집단기억과 정치' [Dealing with Difficult Pasts: Collective Memories and Politics in Germany after 1945 and 1990], *독일연구* [Korean Journal of German Studies], 2004, vol. 7, pp. 113-131.

lowing words: “We forgive and ask for forgiveness!”<sup>2</sup> Poland had offered to forgive the atrocities Nazi Germany committed so as to ask for forgiveness for deporting Germans from Polish territory after the end of World War II. A victim nation turned out to be the first to reach out to an aggressor nation. The letter moved the public sentiment in Germany and served as an impetus for Willy Brandt to actively pursue an eastern policy aimed at improving Germany’s relations with communist countries in Eastern Europe once he became Chancellor of West Germany in 1969. Dariusz Pawlos, chairman of the board of the Foundation for Polish-German Reconciliation, once said there is a German saying that forgiveness is the best revenge and an example of that saying can be found in the case of Germany and Poland.<sup>3</sup> Hence, the modern history of the two countries can be described as a process of repeated self-reflection that evokes forgiveness. And that is precisely what paved the road for Germany and Poland to overcome historical conflicts and head toward reconciliation.

## 2. The History of German-Polish Textbook Consultations

History education was one of the things Germany paid most attention to in the process of facing its Nazi past. Upon realizing that the best way to prevent repeating past mistakes is to not forget the past, post-war Germany emphasized the importance of history and reinforced history education not only at school, but in society as well. Yet, such history education was not limited to simply dwelling upon a regrettable past. No longer an aggressor disrupting international order, Germany sought to become a responsible member of the international society by finding ways to promote reconciliation and cooperation and to regain trust through history education.

Germany’s efforts to pursue reconciliation and cooperation through history education took shape through participating in international

2 Piotr H. Kosicki, ‘Caritas across the Iron Curtain? Polish-German Reconciliation and the Bishops’ Letter of 1965’, *East European Politics and Societies*, 2009, vol. 23, no. 2, pp. 213-243.

3 S. Lee and G. Han, ‘終戰 70년, 과거사 극복한 유럽: [1] 콜, 25년전 폴란드서 ‘歷史 배워야’... 유럽공동체 위해 진솔한 반성’ [70 Years Since the End of the War, Europe Overcoming Its Past: [1] Kohl’s Urge to ‘Learn From History’ 25 Years Ago in Poland ... Honest Self-Reflection for the European Community], *Chosun Ilbo*, 8 May 2015.

commissions related to history textbooks. Post-war Germany arrived at the conclusion that the prerequisite to true reconciliation lied in breaking away from prejudices and stereotypes about countries it used to be in hostile relations with and dissolving feelings of hatred. To do so, descriptions in history textbooks encouraging students to perceive other countries as enemies had to be revised. Accordingly, Germany embarked on a series of consultations with relevant countries. Since the 1950s, it began consulting not only border-sharing neighbours such as France, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, but Israel and Russia as well with respect to history textbooks. Germany's continued participation in history textbook commissions managed to bear much fruit from being anchored for decades by the Georg-Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research established in Braunschweig in 1951 and the German Commission for UNESCO. Among such fruit, the German-French and German-Polish textbook commissions are regarded to have been the most successful.<sup>4</sup>

Full-fledged discussions on history textbooks took place between Germany and France once World War II came to an end. Such discussions were not entirely new to the two countries because they already had some experience prior to World War II. Recognizing after the end of World War I that both countries' textbooks mutually carried exclusive, hostile descriptions, a group of German and French history and geography teachers jointly held meetings to discuss and revise such descriptions. Through a meeting that took place at Paris in 1935,

- 4 Refer to the following for Korea studies on Germany's activities related to history textbooks. 안병직 [B. Ahn], '국제화해와 역사교육: 독일의 사례를 중심으로' [International Reconciliation and History Education with Special Reference to (West) Germany], *역사교육* [History Education], 2006, vol. 98, pp. 295-311; 문기상 [K. Moon], '독일의 역사교육: 독일·폴란드 역사교과서 협의회 추천문항을 중심으로' [History Education in Germany: With a Focus on the German-Polish Textbook Commission's Recommendations], *역사교육* [History Education], 1983, vol. 34, pp. 223-257; 김유경 [Y. Kim], '기억을 둘러싼 갈등과 화해: 독일·프랑스 및 독일·폴란드의 역사교과서 협의' [Conflicts and Reconciliation of the Collective Memory: The European Cooperation for the Textbook Revision], *역사비평* [Historical Criticism], 2002, no. 59, pp. 363-385; 한운석 [U. Han], '역사교과서 수정을 통한 독일·폴란드간의 화해노력' [Efforts for Reconciliation through the Textbook: Revision between Germany and Poland], *서양사론* [The Western History Review], 2002, vol. 75, pp. 203-236; 이민호 [M. Lee], *독일, 독일민족, 독일사: 분단독일의 역사의식* [Germany, Germans, and German History: Historical Awareness During the Division of Germany], Seoul: Neutinamu, 1990; 차용구 [Y. Cha] et al., *가해와 피해의 구분을 넘어: 독일·폴란드 역사 화해의 길* [Beyond the Distinction Between Aggressor and Victim: Towards the French-German Historical Reconciliation], Seoul: Northeast Asian History Foundation, 2008.

textbook authors from the two countries were able to establish a set of 39 common recommendations. However, the outbreak of World War II undid all such efforts. When the war ended, the Franco-German textbook consultations became resumed and three conferences were held between 1950 and 1967. Through this process, the recommendations from 1935 were revised and supplemented to finally reach an agreement between France and Germany on how history textbooks would be revised. The revised set of 40 recommendations focused on correcting national or religious biases present in both countries' history textbooks. The bilateral consultations later became discontinued from the end of the 1960s until they were resumed once more upon entering the 1980s. During that third round of bilateral textbook consultations, a total of eight meetings took place until 1987. Discussions this time around intensely analyzed descriptions about the history of the twentieth century and reconsidered basic expressions used in historical narratives. They also focused on identifying missing or neglected topics and scrutinized principles of and differences in interpretation.<sup>5</sup>

While Franco-German textbook consultations proceeded fairly smoothly, the dialogue on history textbooks between Germany and Poland met with a number of obstacles and required considerable time before being able to enter into consultations. Like the bilateral commission with France, Germany's bilateral commission with Poland for history textbooks had a history that went back to the interval between the two world wars. Poland was the one to take the initiative in launching a dialogue on textbooks with Germany. Over talks with the German Ministry of Education, Józef Lipski, the Polish ambassador in Berlin, proposed the formation of a German-Polish bilateral commission for textbook revision. According to Ambassador

5 안병직 [B. Ahn], '국제화해와 역사교육: 독일의 사례를 중심으로' [International Reconciliation and History Education with Special Reference to (West) Germany], *역사교육* [History Education], 2006, vol. 98, pp. 297-298; 김유경 [Y. Kim], '기억을 둘러싼 갈등과 화해: 독일·프랑스 및 독일·폴란드의 역사교과서 협의' [Conflicts and Reconciliation of the Collective Memory: The European Cooperation for the Textbook Revision], *역사비평* [Historical Criticism], 2002, no. 59, pp. 372-375; H. Tison, '프랑스·독일 협력활동' [Franco-German Cooperation], [in:] Korean National Commission for UNESCO (ed.), *21세기 역사교육과 역사교과서: 한·일 역사교과서 문제해결의 새로운 대안* [21st Century History Education and Textbooks: A New Alternative to Resolving the Korea-Japan History Textbook Issue], Seoul: Oreum, 1988, pp. 63-72.

Lipski, doing so seemed to be the only way to do away with hostile stereotypes about one another in both countries' textbooks. The proposal was eagerly supported by the Polish government, but its German counterpart stalled and remained rather passive in discussing the proposal. In the meantime, Poland gathered a group of 21 experts to analyze around 200 German history and geography textbooks and atlases. Such analysis proceeded simultaneously with the dialogue for establishing a bilateral commission. However, Germany continued to postpone the commission's establishment and showed signs of trying to grant the commission an unofficial status should it become established rather than having it become a government-established official institution. The two countries were therefore destined to severely clash over such differences in their views. It wasn't until April 1937 that the first consultation meeting for textbooks took place between Germany and Poland in Berlin. The Polish side was headed by a history professor named Jan Dąbrowski at the Jagiellonian University, a prominent university in Kraków. Professor Dąbrowski was fluent in German and an expert well known in Germany from having frequently been invited to give lectures at German universities. Unfortunately, his German counterpart, Dr. Rudolf Fitzek, was not a suitable choice for heading the German delegation. He had no knowledge of the Polish language and was even known for possessing anti-Polish sentiments. Fitzek's academic shortcomings were supplemented by the addition of Professor Hermann Aubin, an expert on East European history at the University of Breslau in Germany. The second bilateral consultation meeting was held in Warsaw in August 1937. At this second meeting, the German side focused on correcting the methods used to describe Germany in Polish history textbooks, whereas the Polish side was more interested in increasing the amount of descriptions related to Poland in German textbooks. The minutes of this meeting show that both sides objectively approached issues and made efforts to reach an agreement on problematic textbook descriptions while trying to revise them. Despite this, the German participants were reluctant about increasing the amount of Poland-related descriptions, which sparked fierce disputes. Intense disputes also arose over some modern history topics such as the 'Polish Corridor' which involved border issues between Germany and Poland after World War I. Nevertheless, the German delegates came to place faith in the positive

changes taking place in the two countries' bilateral relations and were deeply impressed by the meeting. By the time the meeting came to an end, expectations were heightened that revisions would be possible through continued consultations. It was agreed that the next meeting would take place in Berlin in June 1938. However, as Nazi Germany annexed Austria and the Sudeten Crisis intensified, the German-Polish consultations were terminated without being able to produce any notable outcome.<sup>6</sup>

The textbook consultations Germany conducted with Poland during the interval between the two world wars ended up being closer to a failure compared to what its consultations with France had been able to achieve. Moreover, it took close to three decades after World War II before the German-Polish textbook consultations could be resumed in 1972. The obvious reason for such a delay was because Germany's relations with Poland had historically been far more negative and antagonistic than its relations with France. Furthermore, France and West Germany had been part of the same Western bloc during the Cold War, whereas Poland had sided with the Soviet Union as part of the ideologically different Eastern bloc, which is likely to have further contributed to the delay. Yet, the most crucial reason for being unable to resume textbook consultations, let alone historical dialogue itself, was because of the border issue Germany and Poland were involved in. In other words, Germany felt that Poland had deprived it of its eastern territory through post-war settlements, and therefore found it difficult to acknowledge the Oder–Neisse line.

Despite all such unfavorable circumstances, the waves of *détente* that began to rise between the Eastern and Western blocs by the 1970s, coupled with West German Chancellor Willy Brandt's eastern policy, brought a great turning point for Germany and Poland to resume their bilateral textbook consultations. When Willy Brandt visited Warsaw to sign the Treaty of Warsaw between West Germany and Poland, he created a sensation worldwide on December 7, 1970 by kneeling in front of a monument dedicated to victims of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

6 차용구 [Y. Cha] et al., *가해와 피해의 구분을 넘어: 독일·폴란드 역사 화해의 길* [Beyond the Distinction between Aggressor and Victim: Towards the French-German Historical Reconciliation], Seoul: Northeast Asian History Foundation, 2008, pp. 67-69.

His act played a huge role in mitigating the prejudice the Poles had against Germans. And with support from such a mood of reconciliation, the German-Polish Textbook Commission became launched in 1972. The commission thereafter met twice a year to continue their discussions and finally succeeded in coming up with a set of 26 recommendations in 1976 to improve both countries' textbooks. Included in the recommendations are several topics from the medieval times to the twentieth century that both countries have each recognized differently in the history of their relations. For instance, the recommendations covered the struggles between the Holy Roman Empire and the Kingdom of Poland, the German eastward expansion, the German empire's territorial expansion and the Teutonic Order, the Prussian partition of Poland, Bismarck's policy toward Poland, World War I and German-Polish relations, the Polish resistance movement against Nazi occupation, and territorial changes and the mass expulsion of Germans from Poland after World War II.

The German-Polish recommendations took a minimalist, practical approach by proceeding with discussions on issues more likely to reach an agreement. However, there was a substantial gap between how Germany and Poland each recognized various issues involving the two countries' history, which undoubtedly resulted in negative reactions against the recommendations. Unlike the outcome of the Franco-German textbook consultations that was positively received by both countries, the German-Polish case not only failed to attract much attention but engendered serious controversies. Especially in West Germany where textbook discussions were carried out in a non-governmental capacity, the bilateral recommendations became the target of sharp criticism and controversy in parliament, mass media, as well as among social organizations and schools. Conservative, right-wing political parties and media outlets of West Germany in addition to groups of Germans who were deported from areas that were incorporated into Polish territory after the war utterly criticized the German-Polish textbook recommendations, claiming that they were no more than an outcome of political compromise that distorted historical truths. In particular, describing Poland's annexation of German territory as 'territorial and border change' and using the word 'transfer' to describe the expulsion or deportation of Germans from such territory

were censured for disregarding the sacrifice and sufferings of those who experienced deportation.<sup>7</sup>

In Poland where the government dealt with textbook consultations, the recommendations didn't earn an altogether positive response. Poland remained under a socialist system at the time, which meant the state was in control of history education. So, the fact that only a few thousand copies of the recommendations were printed in Poland carries significant implications. Moreover, reactions toward the recommendations were severely negative and a testament to such reactions was Professor Władysław Markiewicz's resignation as chairman of the Polish textbook committee due to pressure from the communist party. Nevertheless, despite such criticism and opposition, the German-Polish Textbook Commission's activities in the 1970s hold great significance. They were, as one historian recalled, close to an unfathomable miracle back when the war ended in 1945. And using the word miracle is not much of an exaggeration considering the history and political reality of the two countries' relations. Because even after being plagued by antagonism against one another from going through territorial partition and occupation, two world wars, the human, material damages the wars incurred, and territorial conflicts due to border issues, Germany and Poland had still managed to overcome differences in their ideological, political systems and economic power to eventually take their first step toward historical reconciliation.

As a matter of fact, the 1976 German-Polish Textbook Recommendations that met with domestic criticism and opposition in both countries turned out to be the beginning rather than the end of the bilateral textbook commission's activities. For ten or so years since the recommendations' establishment, historians and teachers from both countries continued to participate in a joint academic conference held each year. This allowed the two countries to together examine the major issues in the history of their bilateral relations, broaden their boundaries of mutual understanding, and monitor whether they were properly following the recommendations they had agreed upon. According

7 안병직 [B. Ahn], '국제화해와 역사교육: 독일의 사례를 중심으로' [International Reconciliation and History Education with Special Reference to (West) Germany], *역사교육* [History Education], 2006, vol. 98, p. 299.

to an interim review of the bilateral textbook commission's activities conducted in the late 1980s, the number of experts who participated in textbook consultations amounted to around 300 and they had managed to produce about ten publications by then.<sup>8</sup> Through this sort of long term mutual exchange that involved many participants, Germans were able to gradually discard their long-held prejudices and typical misunderstandings about Poland. And this was vice versa for the Poles as they were able to dissolve a considerable degree of antagonism against Germany for politically taking advantage of issues. Although many obstacles surfaced over quite a few years, the two countries were able to mostly achieve their goal through their textbook commission activities in terms of enhancing mutual understanding and advancing toward historical reconciliation.

Based on the progress made, the German-Polish Textbook Commission's activities regarding history education advanced into a whole new level since the late 1980s. Just by establishing the textbook recommendations, much of the unfair, misguided perceptions of history that clearly incited antagonism against one another were driven away. However, this did not satisfy the historians and teachers of both countries. They proved there were certain parts and aspects that remained either omitted or considerably minimized when it came to providing information about and introducing one another in their own history textbooks. They also came to share the understanding that as much

- 8 Włodzimierz Borodziej, '프랑스·독일 협력활동' [Franco-German Cooperation], [in:] Korean National Commission for UNESCO (ed.), 21세기 역사교육과 역사교과서: 한·일 역사교과서 문제해결의 새로운 대안 [21<sup>st</sup> Century History Education and Textbooks: A New Alternative to Resolving the Korea-Japan History Textbook Issue], Seoul: Oreum, 1988, pp. 51-62; Krzysztof Ruchniewicz, '1970년대 폴-독 교과서 위원회의 활동' [The German-Polish Textbook Commission's Activities in the 1970s], [in:] Korean Educational Development Institute (ed.), 국가간 상호이해증진을 위한 교과서 개선 [Textbook Improvement with a View to Enhancing Mutual Understanding Between Countries], Seoul: 한국교육개발원 [Korean Educational Development Institute], 2002, pp. 19-24; Robert Maier, '1989년 이후 독-폴 교과서 협력' [German-Polish Textbook Cooperation Since 1989], [in:] Korean Educational Development Institute (ed.), 국가간 상호이해증진을 위한 교과서 개선 [Textbook Improvement with a View to Enhancing Mutual Understanding between Countries], Seoul: 한국교육개발원 [Korean Educational Development Institute], 2002, pp. 25-30; 정영순 [Y. Chung], 역사분야 독일-폴란드 교과서회의의 교육학적 성과, 1972-1987 (RM2002-62) [Educational Progress Made Through the German-Polish History Textbook Consultations, 1972-1987 (RM2002-62)], Seoul: 한국교육개발원 [Korean Educational Development Institute], 2002; 정영순 [Y. Chung], 역사분야 독일-폴란드 교과서회의의 교육학적 성과, 1972-1987 (RM2002-63) [Educational Progress Made Through the German-Polish History Textbook Consultations, 1972-1987 (RM2002-63)], Seoul: 한국교육개발원 [Korean Educational Development Institute], 2002.

as it was important to improve descriptions in history textbooks, the form and method used to convey the improved descriptions were equally important. This understanding on the importance of teaching methods served as all the more reason for the textbook commission to try to achieve more in-depth progress. As a result, the commission published a guide for history teachers in 2001 under the title ‘Germany and Poland in the Twentieth Century: Analyses, Sources, Didactic Suggestions.’<sup>9</sup> As a supplementation to the 1976 recommendations in terms of the modern history of Germany and Poland, there are a few things worth taking note of about the publication. The guidebook’s narration is arranged by topic rather than in chronological order and focuses on analysis, didactic methods, and use of sources pertaining to each topic. Sources have been selected so that historical facts may simultaneously introduce diverse perspectives. Placing an emphasis on the diversity of perspectives makes it rather obvious as to what is being attempted. The intention is to help students break away from exclusive, narrow ethnocentric views on their own and cultivate a discerning eye capable of looking at history from a universal, pluralistic point of view. In short, liberating history education from views confined to national history is what the German-Polish Textbook Commission essentially managed to achieve.

On 22 June 2016, Germany and Poland published their first common history textbook in time for the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Treaty of Good Neighbourliness and Friendly Cooperation’s conclusion between the two countries. It was a product that came eight years after experts from both countries began working on the joint project as a team since 2008. The jointly compiled history textbook’s publication was announced at a high school in Berlin by German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier and Polish Foreign Minister Witold Waszczykowski. Under the title ‘Europe: Our History’, the book describes in both German and Polish the history of Europe up until the medieval times for middle and high school students above 5<sup>th</sup> grade. The two countries plan to publish three more textbooks by 2020 that

9 This publication has been translated into Korean. 정영순 [Y. Chung], *20세기의 독일과 폴란드: 분석, 사료, 교수법 시사* [Germany and Poland in the Twentieth Century: Analyses, Sources, Didactic Suggestions], Seoul: 한국교육개발원 [Korean Educational Development Institute], 2002.

cover the times that come after the Middle Ages. At the ceremony for the first common textbook's publication, German Foreign Minister Steinmeier said he was happy to be able to take part in the publication's announcement since the book was compiled to help the advance the future to be shared by the two countries. He also stressed that the two countries were able to pave the road to reconciliation and close friendship thanks to the amazing efforts of countless people, which is what created the foundation the two countries now stand firmly upon. Polish Foreign Minister Waszczykowski celebrated the textbook's publication by saying that "from now on, Polish and German pupils will be able to learn Europe's common history as seen from the same perspective."<sup>10</sup>

### 3. Conclusion

As described by experts on German-Polish relations, the two countries' relations reached a peak in 2000 as high as the one reached back in 1000. There probably haven't been times more amicable in the history of their relations except for the late 1980s and the early 1990s. While communism collapsed in Europe and the divided Germany was on its way to reunification, West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl paid a visit to a village called Krzyżowa in Poland. The village was a place well known for being where the anti-Nazi resistance group Kreisau Circle met to discuss the assassination of Hitler during World War II. During a reconciliation mass held at Krzyżowa on 12 December 1989, Chancellor Kohl shook hands with and hugged the then Polish Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki when the time came for people to extend the sign of peace by saying 'peace be with you' to one another. This scene reminded some of the Congress of Gniezno, a convention that took place about a thousand years ago. In 1000, Otto III, the king of Germany and ruler of the Holy Roman Empire, visited the then Polish capital Gniezno and courted the Polish ruler Bolesław I the Brave as his ally in East Europe by bestowing a crown upon the latter and investing the latter with the title 'Brother and Partner of the Empire.'

10 '달라도 너무 달라: 독일, 폴란드와 공동 역사교과서 발간' [All Too Different: Germany Publishes Common History Textbook with Poland], *Yonhap News*, 23 June 2016.

Poland is now a member of the same military alliance (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) and the same political, economic union (European Union) as Germany. What is interesting is that Poland joined such alliances of its own accord, unlike when it was a communist regime that had been pressured from the outside into joining the Warsaw Pact or Comecon. Furthermore, Germany, a country the Poles used to regard as an eternally irreconcilable enemy, reached out and actively supported Poland in joining its current alliances. After fearing the Germans' eastward advancement for so long, Poland has now become an equal member of alliances that Germany is also part of. It no longer has reason to fear and be hostile toward Germany. Then is it safe to now consider Poland and Germany as true allies? Based on what has recently been going on between the two countries over issues such as those involving refugees, it may be too early to make any sort of judgement. Because now that its politics and economy are back on track, Poland is raising its voice with other members of the Visegrád Group, which includes Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia. We must wait and see to find out whether Germany and Poland will be able to patch up their relations once torn by enmity and conflict and settle down to permanent reconciliation or whether the Germans and Slavs have been born to be genetically incompatible with one another.

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