



Original text published in Polish:
Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka,
1971, vol. 26, no. 4, p. 523-543
PL ISSN 0037-7511

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The bargaining over Silesia during the Thirty Years' War

Located in the Upper and Middle Odra basin, neighbouring Poland, Hungary, Moravia, Bohemia, Lusatia, March and Pomerania, relatively densely populated, heavily urbanised, especially in its middle part, famous for its natural resources, craft, international and regional trade, and the highly developed agriculture—since the early Middle Ages the land of Silesia has been fought for by all its neighbours, who tried to take it away from Poland and incorporate into their own states. Apart from the economic factors, the process was driven by the geographical location of Silesia and its resulting strategic importance. This was most strongly emphasised, though with much exaggeration, by W. Dziegiel, who wrote: 'Silesia held in its hands a great key to resolve the problem of the line of the Odra, which was so incredibly important to the history of Central Europe. The significance of Silesia upon Odra can be compared to that of Alsace and Lorraine upon Rhein. In these two points one can and should see an intersection of the nerves of pan-European politics'¹. The several-hundred-years-long contest over Silesia was eventually won by Bohemia, with which the region got under the Habsburgs' rule in 1526.

The economic, political and especially the strategic features of Silesia became particularly evident during the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). Consequently, the number of pretenders to the province immediately increased and thus Silesia became the subject of interest not only for the diplomacy of Central European states but also for Western (France) and Northern (Sweden and Denmark) countries. The Habsburg court used Silesia whenever it had to keep a shaky ally on its side, or to win a new ally, to neutralise a real or potential opponent or finally to restore the balance of its budget. Silesia also became an important asset for Swedish, French and Brandenburg diplomacy².

Initially, according to a tradition that had lasted for nearly a century, a part of Silesia, namely the Duchy of Opole and Racibórz, was used by the Habsburgs in political and financial bargaining in Hungary. When following the outbreak of the Bohemian Uprising the Prince of Transylvania Bethlen Gabor joined the Emperor opponents in 1619, the Habsburg diplomacy used all its powers to weaken his international position, to drive a wedge between him and his allies and to deplete his wealth in Hungary. The Habsburgs were not acting on their own. Especially fruitful here was the help of the Polish court and partly of the French diplomacy which played a certain role during the peace negotiations in the Hainburg castle³. Under the terms of the truces in Bratislava and Banská Bystrica of January and August 1620, and of the Peace of Nikolsburg (Mikulow) in Moravia, signed on December 31, 1621, Bethlen received, among other

¹ W. Dziegiel, *Utrata księstw opolskiego i raciborskiego przez Ludwikę Marię w r. 1666*, Kraków 1936, p. 1.

² *Ibidem*, p. 2.

³ *Ambassade extraordinaire de Messieurs le duc d'Angoulesme, comte de Bethune et de Preaux-Chasteau-Neuf.*, Paris 1667, pp. 12 and following



lands, the Duchy of Opole and Racibórz as a hereditary feud of the Crown of Saint Wenceslaus⁴.

At first, the Prince of Transylvania did not treat seriously the newly acquired Silesian territories, which of course were not directly bordering his estates. He simply followed the tradition of Isabella Zapolya and Stephen Báthory, who ruled the land of Upper Silesia for several years. If he insisted on keeping the Duchy of Opole and Racibórz, it was mainly for financial reasons, for he soon found out that rich Upper Silesia could become a golden mine for him, and his was constantly in need of money. His wasteful economic, and especially monetary, policy was unexpectedly efficient, as it earned him 300,000 Guldens per annum⁵. It is no surprise then that Bethlen wanted to keep the Duchy of Opole and Racibórz under his rule. Over time, political and military factors added to the financial benefits. When Bethlen started to develop wider diplomatic relations and to draw (in fact, quite realistic) plans of allying with Northern Protestant states, Sweden, Denmark and the princes of Northern Germany, he quickly realised the significant strategic role of Silesia and tried not to lose the Upper Silesian stronghold. However, his efforts came too late because his intentions had been deciphered by the Habsburg diplomats, who deprived him of the Duchy of Opole and Racibórz under the terms of the Peace of Vienna of May 1624. Attempts to return to Upper Silesia, undertaken by Bethlen between 1624 and 1626, failed completely⁶.

Bethlen Gabor's rule over the Duchy of Opole and Racibórz was the last act of pledging this land to Hungarian and Transylvanian rulers. However, Transylvania did not forget about the financial and political profits connected with the ownership of the land. Therefore, the heirs of Bethlen asserted their rights and demanded from the Habsburgs that the land be returned to them, no matter if they were in alliance or at war with the Emperor. Already in 1629 plans were drawn to marry Hommonay with one of Austrian princesses and to give her the Duchy of Opole and Racibórz as a dowry. The plan, however, was not approved by the Emperor⁷. When in 1645 Władysław IV received the land as a pledge for a period of 50 years, George I Rákóczi immediately made claim to it⁸. However, these efforts were doomed to failure because he could only pursue his rights by entering into war not only with the Emperor but also with the King of Poland. With the U-turn in the relations between Poland and Sweden which was emerging thanks to hard work of French diplomats⁹, this was quite impossible, as it would mean a complete political isolation of Transylvania.

During the Thirty Years' War, Brandenburg was keenly interested in the case region of Silesia. This interest became visible already in the initial phase of the War, when in 1621 the unfortunate leader of the army of rebelling Silesian estates John George Hohenzollern was banished by Ferdinand II and deprived of his Silesian properties: the Duchy of Karniów, the Bytom estate and Bohumin. Brandenburg diplomats did all they could to keep those lands under the Hohenzollern's rule, but to no

⁴ J. Leszczyński, 'Rządy Bethlena Gabora na Górnym Śląsku (1620–1624)' (*Silesian Historical Quarterly Sobótka*, R. XIV, 1959, no. 3, pp. 312 and following).

⁵ E. Veress, Bathory 'Zsigmond es Bethlen Gabor vizszoja az oppelnratibori herczsegekhes' (Erdelyi Muzzeum, vol. XIV, Kolozsvár 1897, p. 31).

⁶ Leszczyński, 'Rządy...' pp. 343–348.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 351.

⁸ J. Leszczyński, 'La Silesie dans la politique europeenne aux XVIIe–XVIIIe siecles' (*Acta Poloniae Historica*, vol. XXII, 1970, pp. 95–96).

⁹ W. Czapliński, *Władysław IV wobec wojny 30-letniej (1637–1645)*, Kraków 1937, pp. 105 and following; W. Czermak, *Plany wojny tureckiej Władysława IV*, Kraków 1895, pp. 361–362.



avail as the Vienna court rejected any compromise¹⁰. It was only the invasion of Swedish troops in West Pomerania in 1630 and the alliance of Brandenburg with Sweden that created real prospects for regaining the lost Silesian territories, and even of adding new parts of the region to their state. Brandenburg troops entered Silesia, and diplomats of Prince-Elector George William worked hard to renew the 'family pact' signed by Frederick I with Brzeg and Legnica Piasts in 1546. This was clearly endorsed by prince of Legnica George Rudolf but the entire affair ended with a strong veto of John Christian, prince of Brzeg¹¹. Together with Saxons, Brandenburg tried to convince the Silesian estates to work more closely with the Protestant coalition in the Reich¹². However, the estates chose to wait, in order not to risk Habsburgs' revenge with such incautious step, especially that after Gustav Adolf's death in the battle of Lützen in 1632, George William, much like the Saxon elector John George I, thought of withdrawing from the war rather than of continuing it. Despite that, in 1633 princes of Brzeg, Legnica and Oleśnica, as well as the duchy and city of Wrocław, entered into an alliance with Protestant leaders in order to organise Silesian Protestants in such a way that they would be able to fight for religious tolerance. Nevertheless, Brandenburg was not eager to give them guarantees, and moreover, it engaged in peace negotiations, and in 1635 signed a peace treaty with the Emperor. Persuasions of Swedish chancellor Axel Oxenstierna, and the efforts of Swedish diplomats supported by French representatives, all came to nothing. George William saw no value in staying in the anti-Habsburg coalition, even when he was generously offered not only the duchies of Karniów, Bytom and Bohumin, with an expectative to the lands of the princes of Brzeg and Legnica, but all Silesia. The prospects for winning the entire province were too vague, and the victory of the Emperor over his opponents too likely to allow George William to continue his cooperation with the Swedes¹³. Therefore, he joined the Emperor, and as his ally he could not count on any more substantial gains in Silesia. At best, he could expect that Karniów, Bytom and Bohumin be returned to the Hohenzollerns, but these hopes were not to be realised. The Habsburgs were not going to let the Hohenzollerns back in Silesia. Although already after the conclusion of the Swedish-Brandenburg truce, rumours were spread in summer 1645 that Ferdinand III was in a desperate need of money and wanted to ask the 'great elector' Frederick William for a loan, which was to be secured by the Duchy of Głogów¹⁴. This hearsay, however, proved untrue.

The Brandenburg diplomacy was particularly active as far as attempting to win new territories in Silesia was concerned during the Congress of the Peace of Westphalia. Although the Hohenzollerns' efforts centred on winning Western Pomerania with Szczecin and ecclesiastical states in Northern Germany, but the dynasty did not turn down some concessions in Silesia. Frederick William was particularly interested in regaining the Duchy of Karniów, and Bytom and Bohumin, although he knew quite well that because these territories were remote from Brandenburg, he could easily lose them whenever the situation became unfavourable for the House of Hohenzollern. Despite that, his representative for the Congress, John Wittgenstein, requested the Emperor's

¹⁰ H. Schulze, 'Markgraf Johann Georg von Brandenburg und der Streit um Jägerndorf, Beuthen und Odraberg in den Jahren 1617–1624' (*Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Alterthum Schlesiens*—hereafter referred to as: ZGS—R. XXXIII, 1895, pp. 177–214).

¹¹ C. Grunhagen, *Geschichte Schlesiens*, vol. II, Gotha 1886, pp. 232 and following.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 247 and following.

¹³ J. G. D r o y s e n, *Der Staat des grossen Kurfürsten*, cz. I, wyd. 2, Leipzig 1870, pp. 101 and following.

¹⁴ J. Leszczyński, *Władysław IV a Śląsk w latach 1644–1648*, Wrocław 1969, pp. 69.



delegates on November 13, 1645 to return the Silesian lands that had been taken away from John George Hohenzollern¹⁵. When his request was turned down, he repeated it in the beginning of March, 1646, at the same time calling for the Duchy of Krosno to be awarded to the elector. Although Brandenburg was entitled to the Duchy as a security since 1482, and as a hereditary feud since 1537, Frederick William hoped that this *status quo* would be confirmed by an international treaty. He could not be certain if the Emperor would not chose to deprive him of the land, especially that the chief Emperor delegate for the Congress, Maximilian Trauttmansdorff, made a declaration to a representative of prince Henry de Longueville that the Hohenzollerns were 'barely tolerated' in the territory¹⁶. When in the beginning of April the Habsburg delegation once again rejected the Prince-Elector's request, and it persisted until the end of the Congress (especially that on August 2, 1647 Ferdinand III, in a special rescript, forbade the delegation to make any concessions in this respect) a claim was laid to the John George's heritage by Chrystian Wilhelm, his closest relative, in May 1646—also to no avail¹⁷. Frederick William lost all hope to regain the contested Silesian territories for his family. He could not count on wider international support, and even his own diplomat John Frederick von Loben stated that certain circles in the Congress were convinced that after the death of John George Hohenzollern King of Bohemia, i.e. a Habsburg, was the only legitimate heir to the duchies of Karniów, Bytom and Bohumin. However, just in case, he ordered his privy councillors to search archives and find any documents that confirmed the title of the Hohenzollerns to these territories¹⁸. They could prove useful in the future.

Being unable to regain the Silesian territories of John George, Frederick William decided to negotiate with the Habsburgs some other, equivalent lands in Silesia. Already in his resolution of April 28, 1645 he referred to the Duchy of Głogów as an appropriate compensation for the Duchy of Karniów¹⁹. However, when the Privy Council reminded him that the Duchy of Głogów was 'one of the most prominent duchies, and one to which the Duchy of Karniów could not compare", so it was difficult to expect that the Emperor would wish to give it up²⁰, and Frederick William abandoned the plan for the time being, while maintaining his demands to return the heritage of John George to the Hohenzollerns. Only on February 13, 1646 he ordered his diplomats to try exchange the Duchy of Karniów for the much larger and richer Duchy of Świdnica and Jawor, and if the Vienna court would not have agreed for that, than for the Duchy of Głogów. Should Vienna have accepted this proposal, he promised to return to the Emperor his

¹⁵ B. Šindelář, 'Slezska otazka na mirovem, kongresu vestfalskem 1643–1648' (*Sbornik praci filosoficke fakulty Brnenske university*, R. X, 1961, rada historicka, C 8, p. 269). The Privy Council of Brandenburg decided to request the Duchy of Karniów already on June 28, 1645 when Berlin received news that Sweden and France had made a peace proposal (O. Meinardus, *Protokolle und Relationen des Brandenburgischen Geheimen Rathes aus der Zeit des Kurfursten Friedrich Wilhelm*, vol. III, Leipzig 1893, p. 163). The Prince-Elector approved this decision and issued an appropriate instruction to his delegates for the Peace Congress (*Urkunden und Actenstücke zur Geschichte des Kurfursten Friedrich Wilhelm von Brandenburg*, hrsg. B. Erdmannsdorffer, vol. IV, Berlin 1887, p. 387).

¹⁶ Šindelář, *op. cit.*, pp. 270 and 289, footnote 33.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 273 and 291, footnote 53. The Emperor delegation took the view that the case of the Duchy of Karniów was not among the competences of the Peace Congress, and thus it refused to discuss it; C. W. G ä r t n e r, *Westphalische Friedens-Cantzley*, vol. IX, Leipzig 1738, pp. 784–785.

¹⁸ Šindelář, *op. cit.*, pp. 290–291, footnote 52.

¹⁹ *Urkunden...*, vol. IV, p. 387.

²⁰ Meinardus, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 357.



properties at the Wrocław *camera*. If Ferdinand III rejected even this request, the representatives of the Prince-Elector were to demand the Duchy of Żagań together with the Świebodzin powiat as an equivalent, but without relinquishing the above-mentioned properties²¹.

Because the court in Vienna considered the Brandenburg claims to the Duchy or Karniów as completely groundless and unlawful, they would not agree for any compensation for the land. Therefore, the Prince-Elector had to look for another grounds to win some concessions in Silesia. He found them thanks to an affair in Pomerania. In the second half of April 1646 disappointed Loben wrote from Westphalia to the Prince-Elector that there was every chance that the Swedes would win the dispute over Pomerania and that Brandenburg would have to give up its claims to the land. Therefore, he advised Frederick William to instead demand compensation in the form of Magdeburg, Bremen, Verden, Halberstadt, Osnabruck and two Silesian duchies: of Głogów and of Żagań²². At first, Frederick William did not follow this strategy of exchanging Western Pomerania for other lands, including the Silesian duchies. In his view, it would have been more profitable to gain North German ecclesiastical states. The Privy Council even proposed to file a motion at the Congress according to which if Magdeburg and Halberstadt have had been awarded to Brandenburg, the local bishop would receive a compensation 'in some Silesian duchies'²³. However, when the Berlin court found out that their efforts to win the Silesian lands would find a strong support from Sweden and France, which were interested in turning Brandenburg's attention away from Western Pomerania (we will discuss this later on in more detail), they decided to lay claim to different parts of Lower Silesia, and their appetite for these lands was growing. In the beginning of June, 1646, the Privy Council decided to demand, apart from the above-mentioned ecclesiastical states in Germany, the Duchy of Żagań, Głogów, and even the Kłodzko County²⁴. In the following months, the Prince-Elector added the Duchy of Świdnica and Jawor to the list²⁵. In mid-August, Frederick William ordered his Congress delegates to agree, after certain bargaining, to give Western Pomerania to the Swedes but in return for an expectative to Magdeburg, Bremen, Halberstadt, Minden, Hildesheim, Osnabruck, Munster as well as the Duchies of Głogów, Żagań, and Świdnica and Jawor. The Prince-Elector was to receive the Silesian Duchies without any obligations or payments for the Emperor²⁶.

In late September 1646, negotiations between the Empire and Brandenburg began in Osnabruck. According to their instructions, the Brandenburg delegation, led by Wittgenstein, was to first demand from the Emperor's representatives that entire Western Pomerania be returned to the Prince-Elector. They realised, however, that in the light of the progressing negotiations between the Habsburgs and Sweden and the persistence of the Swedes to stay in Western Pomerania, this demand could not become reality. Therefore, if Trauttmansdorff opposed, they were to demand the Kołobrzeg Pomerania and Szczecin, as well as Halberstadt. If the Empire delegates persisted to award Szczecin to the Swedes, then the city was to be exchanged for the Silesian Duchies of Głogów, Żagań, and Świdnica and Jawor, plus an expectative to Magdeburg.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 385, 388–389; Šindelář, *op. cit.*, pp. 273–274.

²² Meinardus, *op. cit.*, pp. 426–434.

²³ *Ibidem*, pp. 462, 474; Šindelář, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

²⁴ Meinardus, *op. cit.*, p. 476; Šindelář, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

²⁵ *Urkunden...*, vol. IV, pp. 454, 464.

²⁶ Meinardus, *op. cit.*, pp. 542–544; Šindelář, *op. cit.*, p. 274.



Trauttmannsdorff would not even hear of any concessions in Silesia. Frederick William was also uncompromising. Still in January 1647 he persisted to gain the Kołobrzeg Pomerania, the ecclesiastical states of Halberstadt and Minden, the Magdeburg expectative and the Duchies of Głogów and Żagań²⁷. But when in February of that same year a provisional treaty between Sweden and the Habsburgs was signed, granting Western Pomerania with Szczecin to Sweden, pressured by Swedish, French and Dutch diplomats, he agreed to relinquish Szczecin and the Silesian duchies. He knew well that without the support of the anti-Habsburg coalition he would not win much from the Emperor. Frederick William made one more attempt to win the Duchy of Karniów to the Hohenzollerns, but to no avail. The inflexibility of the Emperor in the Silesian negotiations was so upsetting to the Prince-Elector that in June 1647 he planned to relinquish the neutrality of his state and to join the anti-Emperor coalition aside the Swedes; eventually, he abandoned these plans as well²⁸.

Thus, in the end, Frederick William failed to gain any new territories in Silesia, of course excluding the Duchy of Krosno which he had already owned. As such, the principal aim of his Silesian policy had not been achieved²⁹. The best evidence that his intentions towards Silesia were purely related to military expansion is that he was never interested in the situation of Silesian Protestants, who were threatened by the Catholic reaction. The Brandenburg delegates never interceded for them during the Peace Congress, despite many occasions to do so in their negotiations with Trauttmannsdorff. The Prince-Elector expected that by ignoring the touchy and unpleasant issue of ensuring religious tolerance for Silesian, as well as Bohemian or Austrian, Protestants, he would more easily reach compromise with the Emperor regarding the territorial concessions in Silesia³⁰. But his strategy failed completely.

The situation of another neighbour of the Silesian province—the Electorate of Saxony—was completely different. John George I, according to the traditional pro-Habsburg orientation of the Wettins, took the Emperor's side in the beginning of the Thirty Years' War, but when after the defeat in the Battle of White Mountain Silesian Protestants were subject to strong repressions in consequence of their participation in the Bohemian uprising, he eased their plight with his Accord of Dresden of 1621 by limiting the repressions to a relatively high tribute paid to the Emperor³¹. Also later, as much as he was able to, he protected the interests of Protestants in Silesia, and although he could not avoid the re-Catholicisation action in the period of the Edict of Restitution of 1629, he still enjoyed significant authority in the region. The Prince-Elector's interests in the Silesian affairs were not only connected with religious matters. Silesia played a prominent role in Saxon trade. Additionally, Silesian goods, as well those which were transported through Silesia from Poland, passed through Saxony, having significant

²⁷ *Ibidem*; F. Dickmann, *Der Westfälische Frieden*, Munster 1959, p. 309 and following; R. Koser, *Geschichte der brandenburgischen Politik bis zum Westfälischen Frieden von 1648*, ed. 2, Stuttgart–Berlin 1913, pp. 496–500.

²⁸ *Urkunden...*, pp. 554, 556–565; Šindelář, *op. cit.*, p. 275.

²⁹ The court in Berlin tried hard not to disclose these aims. While playing an elaborate game to win Western Pomerania, they tried to deceive the Habsburg delegates and claimed that the Prince-Elector forbade them to accept or demand any hereditary lands of the Emperor. In this way, they deceitfully denied the rumours spread by French and Swedish diplomats, according to which Frederick William was to demand some Silesian duchies as a compensation for Western Pomerania; there rumours were quite true (Šindelář, *op. cit.*, p. 275).

³⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 276 and following.

³¹ H. P a l m, 'Der Dresdner Accord' (ZGS, R. XIII, 1878, pp. 153 and following).



impact on the Electoral treasury, for which custom payments were the main source of income. The Elector was thus eager to keep the best possible relations with Silesia and to consolidate his influence in the region³². Despite that, he did not seek territorial gains in Silesia for the time being, for Lusatia remained his main target for expansion³³.

In 1631 Saxony together with Brandenburg, partially against its will, found itself in the anti-Habsburg coalition. Saxon troops entered Silesia, as did the Brandenburg army, and ensured protection for local Protestants. John George I was one of the main initiators and organisers of the above-mentioned 'conjunction'. However, following the death of Gustav Adolf he seriously considered leaving the Swedish alliance and taking the side of the Emperor. He also entered negotiations with the supreme commander of the Emperor Army, Albrecht von Wallenstein, but the latter was about to abandon the Emperor and announce himself King of Bohemia. Wallenstein tried to win the support of the most prominent Empire generals by promising them lands in Silesia; for instance, he offered the Duchies of Głogów and Żagań to Matthias Gallas³⁴. Rumours were spread that he wanted to offer the Saxons not only Lusatia and territories in the Reich, but also Silesia. Allegedly, John George I also demanded that Silesian estates served as guaranties for money that the Emperor owed him³⁵. This, most likely, was only gossip, but it would not have been spread if the Elector of Saxony was not interested in the Silesian affairs.

This interest did not guarantee, however, that the elector would provide a more efficient protection for the Silesian Protestants. For when on the orders of Vienna Wallenstein was murdered in February 1634 in the town of Cheb in western Bohemia, John George I entered into negotiations with the Habsburgs and concluded with them a peace in May 1635 in Prague. In return for Lusatia he left Silesian, Bohemian and Moravian Protestants at the Emperor's mercy³⁶. This does not mean, however, that Saxony lost interest in the events taking place in Silesia. Winning Lusatia marked the beginning of its Eastern policy, which was crowned with the personal union between Poland and Saxony in the end of the eighteenth century. The court in Dresden cautiously kept an eye on events taking place behind the eastern frontier of its land³⁷. The elector was still interested in the Silesian affairs, and in summer 1645 rumours were even spread that in desperation, the Emperor wanted to give him the Duchy of Świdnica and Jawor as a security³⁸. John George I did not make the most of this opportunity to win a stronghold in Silesia because he did not have the money that the Emperor so desperately needed³⁹. Therefore, the negotiations were doomed to failure. On the other hand, Saxon delegation to the Peace Congress was strongly committed to ensuring religious tolerance for Protestants in Silesia. It was them who put the greatest pressure on Trauttmannsdorff and his colleges, however to little effect. When fighting for Silesian Protestants to be left in peace, the Prince-Elector was guided both by religious considerations and religious solidarity, and by economic, and also political factors. On

³² Šindelář, *op. cit.*, p. 268; *idem*, *Vestfalskymir a českaotazka*, Praha 1968, p. 201.

³³ J. Leszczyński, 'Przejście Górnych Łużyc pod panowanie saskie' (*Sobótka*, R. XVII, 1962, no. 3–4, pp. 345–374).

³⁴ J. Pekař, *Wallenstein 1630–1634, Tragodie einer Verschwörung*, vol. I, Berlin 1937, pp. 590–591; H. S r b i k, *Wallensteins Ende. Ursachen, Verlauf und Folgen der Katastrophe*, Wien 1920, p. 75.

³⁵ Pekař, *op. cit.*, pp. 606, 682

³⁶ Grunhagen, *op. cit.*, pp. 267 and following; Šindelář, *Vestfalsky mir...*, p. 51; E. Vehse, *Geschichte der Hofe des Hauses Sachsen*, vol. III, Hamburg 1854, p. 124.

³⁷ R. Kotzschke, H. Kretzschmar, *Sächsische Geschichte*, vol. II, Dresden 1935, p. 55.

³⁸ Leszczyński, *Władysław IV...*, p. 69.

³⁹ *Idem*, *Stany Górnych Łużyc w latach 1635–1697*, Wrocław 1963, pp. 138–141



the quiet, he hoped that the Emperor would not be as inflexible in the territorial negotiations concerning Silesia as he had been with the Elector of Brandenburg, and that he would award him at least a part of Lower Silesia⁴⁰.

Also the Swedish diplomacy devoted a great deal of attention to Silesia. Gustav Adolf quite soon realised the strategic values of the province of Silesia as a bridge connecting northern-German Protestants with other religious groups in Bohemia, Moravia, Hungary, Transylvania and Austria, as well as a base for sallies against the Emperor and Poland. Swedish generals were aware of this potential throughout the period covered by this paper⁴¹. Later on, Sweden was also interested in the rich resources of Silesia, which guaranteed that a large number of soldiers could be maintained.

In the beginning of, a plan was developed for prince Chrystian of Brunsvick and Ernest Mansfeld, chief commander of the army of the unfortunate 'winter king', Frederick V, elector palatine of the Rhine, to attack the lands of Bohemia. Bethlen Gabor was also included in the plan. The Odra was chosen as the basis for the operation, and the allied armies were to join forces in Silesia⁴². The plan was modified and extended by Gustav Adolf who intended to actively join the war on the side of the Catholics. The main intention behind the plan was to create a northern Protestant coalition comprising Brandenburg, Mecklenburg, Rostock, Lübeck, Hamburg and Holstein. It would tie the Habsburg army in the Reich and cooperate with Swedish troops which were to attack Royal Prussia, from there to head from Greater Poland and with secure supply base from North-West enter Silesia, if circumstances were favourable. According to the plan, Bethlen was supposed to attack Silesia and Poland from the South, whereas John George Hohenzollern of Karniów and count Henry Thurn were to hit Bohemia⁴³. However, the realisation of the plan was blocked by both Brandenburg, which did not wish to break its relations with Poland after obtaining the fiefdom of Prussia in 1621, and by the prince of Transylvania, who fearing for his own safety was reluctant to attack Poland, and preferred to head straight for Silesia⁴⁴. For now, the plans of Gustav Adolf were dropped. All that remained was the idea of Chrystian and Mansfeld joining Bethlen in Silesia, but even this was not achieved because of the defeats of the Prince of Brunswick in the Battle of Stadtlohn and by Mansfeld in the Battle of Friesvyth. The prince of Transylvania was forced to sign a disadvantageous peace with the Emperor, which deprived him of the Duchy of Opole and Racibórz, among other lands⁴⁵.

In 1624–1625 Gustav Adolf returned to his plans of using the line of the Odra as the operational basis for the entire campaign against the troops of the Catholic League and the Emperor. It was at that time that the project was devised to attack Silesia from the north by Swedish troops and the allied armies of 'North-German princes', from the south by the prince of Transylvania, and from the west by Mansfeld, among other commanders. The efforts to create the coalition were undertaken not only by the

⁴⁰ Šindelář, *Vestfalsky mir...*, p. 201; *idem*, *Slezska otazka...*, p. 272.

⁴¹ See an instruction for field marshal Wrangl of April 17, 1647, B. Dudik, *Schweden in Bohmert und Mahren 1640–1650*, Wien 1879, pp. 241 and following; Šindelář, *Slezska otazka...*, p. 270.

⁴² A. Gindely, *Geschichte des Dreissigjahrigen Krieges*, vol. IV, Praga 1880, pp. 476 and following; M. Depner, *Das Fürstentum Siebenburgen im Kampf gegen Habsburg*, Stuttgart 1938, pp. 96–97.

⁴³ N. Ahnlund, 'Gustaf Adolf och tyska kriget' (*Historisk Tidsskrift*, 1917, pp. 261–265).

⁴⁴ C. Wibling, *Sverigesforhallende till Siebenburgen 1623–1648*, Lund 1890, p. 11; F. H. Schubert, *Ludwig Camerarius (1573–1651)*, Kellmunz Oberpfalz 1955, p. 246.

⁴⁵ Leszczyński, *Rzqdy...*, p. 241.



diplomacy of Sweden and that of the anti-Emperor German princes but also by diplomats from England, France and the Netherlands. Gustav Adolf's plans were temporarily abandoned due to the resistance of Danzig which would not agree to maintain neutrality in the case of a war between Poland and Sweden, and to the pressure from a delegate of Brandenburg, Bellini, and the Dutch diplomacy insisting on relocating the military operations to Northern Germany, instead of the states of the Crown of Saint Wenceslaus; however they were soon taken over by Denmark⁴⁶.

According to these plans, Bethlen Gabor was to take not only the Duchy of Opole and Racibórz, but also other Silesian territories, including especially the Duchies of Karniów and Brzeg, where he was to join the armies of North-German princes, of John Ernest IV, Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld, and of Denmark⁴⁷. This well designed plan was never to be realised. The new campaign did not bring any success to the anti-Habsburg coalition. The armies of John Tilly and Wallenstein beat the Danish and North-German troops in 1626, and the Prince of Transylvania, left behind, was forced to sign a new peace with the Emperor⁴⁸. Flying from Wallenstein, the defeated armies of Mansfeld and John Ernest arrived to Silesia, wreaking havoc in the region. It was not long before they were driven from the land by Wallenstein's troops⁴⁹.

After landing in Western Pomerania in 1630, Gustav Adolf was going to return to his previous strategic plans, which assumed a decisive role for the line of the Odra, and thus for Silesia. However, due to certain developments in the situation in the Reich, he changed them and started conquering northern and central Germany, and then entered Catholic lands upon the Rhein. At the same time, he did not take his eye away from Silesia, ordering his allies—the electors of Brandenburg and Saxony—to take the region, which they successfully did. Now the Swedes tried to make the Silesian estates acknowledge the superiority of Gustav Adolf and develop closer ties with the Protestant alliance in the Reich⁵⁰. The estates, however, chose to wait so that an incautious step would not make the Habsburgs take revenge. They could also see how shaky the allies of the King of Sweden were. When in 1633 the 'conjunction' with Protestant leader was signed, Swedish chancellor Axel Oxenstierna in the convent of Protestant princes in Frankfurt am Main initiated efforts to admit Silesia to the union of Reich states, which in practice mean detaching the province from Bohemia, but instead tying it more closely with German Protestant princes, and thus with Sweden. These attempts, however, were not successful. Following the defeat of Sweden in the Battle of Nordlingen its Protestant German allies were more interested in making peace with the Emperor than in continuing the war against him. Therefore, they did not want to block their path to the peace by endorsing actions to diminish the Habsburgs' hereditary territories, and Silesia was part of these lands⁵¹.

⁴⁶ Ahnlund, *op. cit.*, p. 272 and following; *idem*, *Gustav Adolf infor tyska kriget*, Stockholm 1918, pp. 2–3; G. Droysen, *Gustaf Adolf*, vol. I, Leipzig 1869, pp. 188 and following; J. Paul, *Gustaf Adolf*, vol. I, Leipzig 1927, pp. 150–151.

⁴⁷ Schubert, *op. cit.*, p. 286 and following.

⁴⁸ Leszczyński, *Rządy...*, pp. 348–349. Bethlen's conduct is severely criticised by J. P o l i s e n s k y, 'Morava a vztahy mezi evropským východem a zapadem 1626–1627' (*Sborník prací filosofické fakulty Brněnské university*, R. X, 1961, rada historická, C 8, p. 260), who blamed him for failing to win Turkey for the anti-Habsburg coalition, which could play a decisive role for its success.

⁴⁹ *Historia Śląska*, vol. I *Do roku 1763*, K. Maleczyński, ed., part III, *Od końca XVI w. do r. 1763*, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1963, pp. 344–345.

⁵⁰ Grünhagen, *op. cit.*, p. 247 and following.

⁵¹ Šindelář, *Vestfalskymir...*, p. 49.



After Saxony and Brandenburg had withdrawn from the war with the Emperor and had turned against Sweden, Swedish armies were a frequent guest in Silesia, occupying large part of the region for an extended period of time. When the Westphalia peace negotiations were about to begin, the Swedes demanded large territories from the Emperor. Their principal aim was to win the outlets of three most important rivers of contemporary Germany: the Odra, the Weser and the Elbe. Silesia was also amongst lands they demanded. However, claims to the region were being made mainly to soften up the Habsburgs and to win concessions in those areas in which the Swedes were most interested in. Swedish territorial demands had already been formulated in an instruction of October 15, 1641, prepared by Chancellor Oxenstierna before the Peace Congress. Back then, they were very moderate and they concerned mainly Western Pomerania. Nevertheless, if the Emperor had not agreed to give up Western Pomerania, then Swedish delegates to the congress were to demand Magdeburg, Minden, Osnabruck and some duchies in Silesia, while emphasising that Sweden would accept this amendment reluctantly because the lands were very remote from its own territory⁵².

Because in the on-going combat each of the parties could count on victory over its opponent, the peace negotiations were progressing extremely slowly. What speeded up the process was the battle of Jankowice in March 1645. Now it became clear that the anti-Habsburg coalition would be victorious. The peace congress started to work faster and harder. Swedish appetites also grew exponentially. In the light of a Swedish government instruction of November 20, 1645 for its congress delegates John Oxenstierna and Adler Salvius, Sweden demanded all Western Pomerania together with Szczecin and the Bishopric of Kamień, as well as Bremem, Verden and Wismar. These were to be the minimal demands. To win the lands more easily, the government also decided to lay claim to Magdeburg, Halberstadt, Minden, Osnabruck, and to entire Silesia. In this way, Sweden was to gain not only the mouths of the Odra, Elbe, and Weser, but also other territories⁵³. According to French sources the Swedes' intention was not to permanently conquer Silesia, although they were fully aware of its economic, political and strategic potential. Instead, they only wanted to win the region as a guarantee that the Emperor would observe the terms of the future peace treaty. Therefore this was supposed to be only a temporary occupation of the Silesian province⁵⁴. When on January 7, 1646 the Swedes officially presented the demands contained in the instruction from November of the previous year, Trauttmansdorff, who had just returned from Vienna with new instructions forbidding to make any concessions as to the hereditary Habsburg territories, opened negotiations with Oxenstierna and Salvius, which were to last to Autumn 1647. Although the Swedes demanded that Silesia remained in their hands as a guarantee of peace⁵⁵ even in August 1647, eventually they settled for Western Pomerania with Szczecin and the Bishopric of Kamień, Brema, Verden and Wismar as feuds of the Reich, and they gave up Silesia and other above-mentioned territories⁵⁶.

⁵² *Ibidem*, pp. 83 and 94, footnote 35.

⁵³ Dickmann, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

⁵⁴ Šindelář, *Slezska otazka...*, p. 270.

⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 288, footnote 24.

⁵⁶ M. Ritter, *Deutsche Geschichte im Zeitalter der Gegenreformation und des Dreissigjährigen Krieges (1555–1648)*, vol. III, part 1, Stuttgart–Berlin 1901, p. 622–623; Dickmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 271, 278; Šindelář, *Slezskaotazka...*, p. 289, footnote no. 30; G. T. O d h n e r, *Die Politik Schwedens im Westphalischen Friedenskongress und die Grundung der schwedischen Herrschaft in Deutschland*, Gotha 1877, pp. 108 and following. Only at a meeting of Swedish generals in July 1647 devoted to the issue of compensation for the army to be discussed during the Peace Congress, apart from other territories the politicians demanded the



Sweden remained flexible towards Silesia for several reasons. It would be inconvenient and dangerous to keep a province that was so remote from its mother land and had no borders with any other of its colonies. But what was much more important were concerns about the reaction of courts in Warsaw and Berlin should Silesia be awarded to Sweden. As we know, Władysław IV expressed utmost reluctance and hostility towards the possibility of keeping the Swedes in Western Pomerania and Silesia. This would mean having an uncomfortable Swedish neighbour from the west and north-west, and an opportunity for Sweden to make sallies against Poland. That is why in December 1645 he issued a statement that he would be forced to take action if Western Pomerania and Silesia were awarded to Sweden, and that is why he himself laid claim to several districts of Western Pomerania. Later on, when the relations between Poland and Sweden improved, and when Sweden withdrew its claims to Silesia, he accepted the fact that Western Pomerania with Szczecin and the Bishopric of Kamień would be given to the Swedes⁵⁷.

News from Westphalia was extremely worrying for the court in Berlin. Accepting the Swedish demands by the Emperor meant not only that the territories of Brandenburg were surrounded by Swedish lands but also that the Swedes had managed to win many territories to which the Elector himself had laid claims⁵⁸. The very news that there was a possibility that entire Western Pomerania, for which Brandenburg had the greatest appetite, would be awarded to Sweden caused consternation in Berlin. Most councillors of Frederick William believed that this situation had to be avoided or otherwise Sweden would gain a good stronghold for future attacks on Poland and the Reich, and especially a free route to Silesia⁵⁹. In order to deviate the attention of Brandenburg from Western Pomerania, Sweden, which definitively gave up its claims against Silesia in early spring 1646, decided to endorse the demands of the Prince-Elector concerning different Silesian duchies. It received support from French diplomat who believed that Brandenburg should receive Silesia as a compensation for relinquishing Western Pomerania. Therefore, in the end of June and in August 1646 Salvius promised to Peace Congress delegates of Brandenburg Swedish help in efforts to win the Duchies of Karniów, Krosno, Głogów and Żagań. For that same reason, he also insisted on Habsburg delegates in April to agree to return the Duchy of Karniów to Frederick William, and in August and in December—to award him the Duchy of Żagań and the Duchy of Głogów. The French delegation also opted for awarding these duchies to the Prince-Elector. However, the support of Sweden and France brought no benefits to Brandenburg as far as Silesia was concerned. The Habsburg delegation did not agree for any slightest concessions regarding the province⁶⁰.

After nearly a century, during the Thirty Years' War the Polish court became again keenly interested in the issue of Silesia and in acquiring new territories in the region. Following the outbreak of the Bohemian uprising, Sigismund III Vasa spared no effort to keep Silesia faithful to the Emperor. As much as he could he also tried to support Habsburgs financially and militarily. Simultaneously he initiated efforts to win

duchies of Świdnica and Jawor, Głogów, and Żagań or a tribute of 10,000–12,000 thalers (Šindelář, *Vestfalsky mir...*, p. 233).

⁵⁷ Šindelář, *Slezska otazka...*, p. 288, footnote 27; Leszczyński, *Władysław IV...*, p. 85; Czaplinski, *Polska a Bałtyk w latach 1632–1648*, Wrocław 1952, pp. 135 and following.

⁵⁸ Dickmann, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

⁵⁹ Meinardus, *op. cit.*, vol. III, pp. 313–314.

⁶⁰ Šindelář, *Slezska otazka...*, pp. 274–275.



the whole or part of the Silesian province. By doing this, his intention was not to reincorporate Silesian into Poland but simply to secure hereditary income for his sons, without formally attaching the acquired Silesian territories to the Polish state. Despite the fact that the King's efforts were aimed at securing the future for his dynasty, he managed to win over part of the nobility for his plans to 'recuperate' Silesia, especially those noblemen who were closely connected to secular and church aristocracy. The idea was also endorsed by some of the *sejmiks*, for example by the *sejmik* of Czersk in Masovia. Polemic writings emerged, either expressing support for the king or opposing the idea of intervening with Silesian affairs. However, a vast majority of the nobility believed that Poland should stay out of the conflict in the territories of the Crown of Saint Wenceslaus⁶¹.

At the same time, the Bishop of Wrocław Karol Habsburg, brother of Emperor Ferdinand II, reassured the supremacy of the Metropolis of Gniezno over the bishopric of Wrocław, and yielded to the power of King of Poland. Later, most probably convinced by Prince Władysław who stayed at his court in Nysa⁶², he proposed that Polish noblemen privately supported the Emperor and in return be allowed to occupy lands of rebelling Silesian dukes and lords for an unspecified period of time. There is no evidence that the Emperor approved of this project. More clear indications of the planned concessions the Emperor was to make for Sigismund in Silesia can only be found in an instructions for Ferdinand II's envoys to the Warsaw court, Aithann and Tennagle, prepared in late 1619, that is after the intervention of the Lisowczycy in Hungary. However, the Emperor once again did not specify which parts of Silesia he was going to award to the King. Most likely, he had the Duchy of Opole and Racibórz on his mind. He also expected the court in Warsaw to offer him more decisive and open support in the fight against the 'rebellious subjects', and Sigismund III was obliged to do so by the treaty signed with the Habsburgs in 1613. But this was not possible. Polish public opinion was dissatisfied with the pro-Habsburg policy of the King and with the plundering that the Lisowczycy perpetrated in the Carpathian Mountains, and these sentiments were skilfully fuelled by the anti-Catholic opposition, seeking support in the European Protestant alliance⁶³.

After suppressing the Bohemian uprising the allied courts in Warsaw and Vienna did not return to the issue of Silesia. As the only profit that the Vasas gained with their pro-Habsburg policy in Silesia, Prince Charles Ferdinand was awarded the title of the suffragan bishop (1619), and then the bishop of Wrocław (1625)⁶⁴. Only Prince Władysław, clearly enchanted with Silesia, did not give up the plans to win a hereditary land in the province. In 1624 and 1631 he proposed to create and take the command of

⁶¹ The relations between Poland and Silesia between 1618–1620 are covered in detail in the following studies: A. Szelański, *Śląsk i Polska wobec powstania czeskiego*, Lwów 1904; J. M a c u r e k, *Ceske povstani r. 1618–1620 a Polsko*, Brno 1937; W. Czaplinski, 'Śląsk a Polska w pierwszych latach wojny trzydziestoletniej (1618–1620)' (*Sobótka*, R. II, 1947, pp. 141–181); *idem*, 'Polska wobec początków wojny trzydziestoletniej. Uwagi i spostrzeżenia' (*ibidem*, R. XV, 1960, no. 4, pp. 449–477). Most important studies on the situation in Poland in the beginning of 1620 include: F. S u w a r a, *Przyczyny i skutki klęski cecorskiej 1620 r.*, Kraków 1930, pp. 60–62; Szelański. *op. cit.*, p. 90 and following; R. M a j e w s k i, *Cecora rok 1620*, Warszawa 1970, p. 34 and following.

⁶² W. Czaplinski, 'Ziemie zachodnie w polityce Rzeczypospolitej szlacheckiej' (1572–1764) (*Kwartalnik Historyczny*, R. LXVIII, 1961, no. 1 p. 10).

⁶³ Cf. footnote no. 61.

⁶⁴ W. Czaplinski, 'Elekcja biskupa wrocławskiego Karola Ferdynanda Wazy w r. 1625' (*Rocznik Zakładu Narodowego im. Ossolińskich*, vol. 3, Wrocław 1948, pp. 251–289).



reinforcement corps in return for the Duchy of Opole and Racibórz. In both cases, despite a keen interest from the Habsburgs, these plans were not realised⁶⁵.

After the death of Sigismund III Poland seemed to be more interested in Silesia. During the interregnum, Krzysztof Radziwiłł, one of the leaders of Polish anti-Catholic opposition, when conducting secret negotiations with a Swedish envoy on electing the King of Sweden as king of Poland, allegedly suggested that Gustav Adolf promised him part of Silesia, reaching the river Odra, in return for the support of the Polish nobility⁶⁶. With the death of Gustav Adolf in the Battle of Lützen, these plans Elected as king of Poland, having prevented conflicts with Russia and Turkey, Władysław IV did not lose his interest in Silesia. Between 1634 and 1635 he frequently intervened with the court in Vienna to protect the Protestant Silesian estates, but to little effect⁶⁷. Despite that, the king kept thinking about regaining the whole or part of Silesia with the approval of the Habsburgs. In 1642 he proposed a plan according to which he and Poland would be given the Silesian province 'on deposit' in return for waiving the rights to the Swedish crown and for persuading Denmark to turn against Sweden. This project deserves a closer look because for the first time Władysław demanded that Silesia was awarded not to the Polish Vasas, but to the Polish state. However, the Emperor was not going to renounce the province. He tried to turn the king's attention away from the issue, and when this strategy did not work⁶⁸, in 1645 he gave him as a mortgage the Duchy of Opole and Racibórz, but on legal, political and financial conditions that were very disadvantageous for Władysław⁶⁹. Władysław was not satisfied with this concession, as it was substantially below his expectations, and it cost him dearly. The deal only made him lose his trust in the court in Vienna. The king still did not abandon the plans to win more territories in Silesia. According to a French envoy to Stockholm, Pierre Chanut, in the beginning of Spring 1647, that is in a period of a significant improvement of relations between Poland and Sweden, the Swedish government allegedly proposed to Władysław a perpetual peace on condition of awarding Livonia and Prussia (most likely Ducal Prussia) to Sweden, and resigning the claim to the Swedish throne. Furthermore, Chanut wrote that the king of Poland accepted those conditions, but in return for the marriage of his 8-year-old son Sigismund Casimir with Queen Christina, and for a permanent right to the province of Silesia⁷⁰. The information provided by Chanut is not confirmed by any sources that are known to me. Leaving the question of its credibility aside, we may surely conclude that this account is a firm evidence of Władysław IV's interests in Silesia and of his intention to win the Silesian province for the Polish Vasas, and perhaps even for Poland.

In the period covered by the present study, the issue of Silesia also drew the attention of French diplomats. French politicians never thought about any territorial gains in Silesia for their own country. They only used Silesia when they had to retain a shaky ally or win over a new one in the anti-Habsburg coalition. By employing Silesia in

⁶⁵ A. Szelągowski, *Rozkład Rzeszy i Polska za Władysława IV*, Kraków 1907, pp. 29–47; Dziegiel, *op. cit.*, pp. 9–15.

⁶⁶ D. Norman, *Gustav Adolfs politik mot Ryssland och Polen, under tyska krieget*, Uppsala 1943, p. 165; Czapliński, *Ziemie...*, p. 12.

⁶⁷ *Historia Śląska...*, pp. 354–357.

⁶⁸ Czapliński, *Władysław IV...*, pp. 38 and following.

⁶⁹ Leszczyński, *Władysław IV...*, *passim*.

⁷⁰ Šindelář, *Vestfalskymir...*, p. 201. See also a review of this book by Leszczyński, *Sobótka*, R. XXV, 1970, no. 4, pp. 692–693.



the bargaining, France skilfully used its neighbours' interests in the region, including mainly Poland and Brandenburg. Thus, in the period of a cooling in Polish-Habsburg relations in 1635, French diplomacy tried to draw Władysław IV into the anti-Habsburg coalition, speaking about the Polish 'droits sur la Silesie'. This plan was completely unrealistic as neither Polish nobility wanted a war for Silesia nor France could offer the province if Sweden strongly objected to giving it away to Poland⁷¹. Even 10 years later, in the beginning of 1645, a French envoy to Warsaw Nicolas de Bregy expressed hope that Władysław IV would agree to join the war against the Habsburgs, for example 'pour le recouvrement de la Silesie'⁷².

Silesia was used as bait by French diplomacy also in the efforts to win over Brandenburg. This was the case before the signing of the Peace of Prague, when France together with Sweden tried to keep the Prince-Elector in their coalition, and it was also the case between 1645 and 1647, when they had to turn the attention of Berlin court away from Western Pomerania. From the second half of 1647 on, France wanted to persuade Brandenburg to take military action against the Habsburgs, promising in return 'possession reelle de la Silesie'⁷³. Brandenburg resident to Paris Abraham Wicquefort together with French foreign ministers even prepared an appropriate text of a treaty, but Frederick William had guarantees for large territorial gains in his draft agreement with the Emperor, and therefore he was reluctant to take the risk. Furthermore, at the same time he tried to mount a league of Protestant princes under his leadership, which was to become the third force in the Reich, between the Emperor on the one hand, and Sweden and France on the other. The elaborate intrigue died a natural death. The league was also never formed because of the position of Saxony which feared Brandenburg's advantage in the Reich and did not want to join any action that could have been used against the Emperor⁷⁴.

Despite all efforts undertaken by both the enemies and friends of the House of Habsburg, Silesia, that 'Pupille in des Kaisers Auge'⁷⁵, remained in the hands of the dynasty. Although there were periods, in 1619–1621, 1632–1634 and 1645–1647, when the Silesian interests of the Vienna court were seriously threatened, and although the Silesian case required some temporary concessions, Ferdinand II, and even more so Ferdinand III never thought to voluntarily relinquish the province. The court in Vienna consequently implemented its strategy according to which the Habsburgs could never lose an inch of their hereditary lands, including Silesia. Such was also the statement which Trauttmannsdorff gave to John Oxenstierna on November 11, 1646.⁷⁶ The aim was eventually achieved thanks to the efforts of Habsburg foreign ministers but at a price of significant territorial concessions to Sweden and Brandenburg in the Reich. The above analysis proves that we cannot accuse the Polish Vasas of squandering the chance

⁷¹ Szelański, *Rozkład...*, pp. 104–112; Dziegiel, *op. cit.*, pp. 17–27.

⁷² Leszczyński, *Władysław IV...*, pp. 84–85, footnote 10.

⁷³ *Urkunden...*, vol. I, Berlin 1864, pp. 664, 666. The German draft version of the treaty states: „wo nicht ganz, doch ein gut Theil des Fürstenthums Schlesien” (*ibidem*, p. 664).

⁷⁴ Dickmann, *op. cit.*, p. 309 and following; K o s e r, *op. cit.*, pp. 496–500, and most importantly Šindelář, *Slezska otazka...*, p. 275.

⁷⁵ Dickmann, *op. cit.*, p. 271.

⁷⁶ Šindelář, *Slezska otazka...*, p. 275. This fact was not well-known among the opponents of the Habsburgs. Already in 1645 in Paris, diplomats believed that apparently Sweden did not want peace yet if it had listed Silesia among its demands. They knew that the Emperor would have never paid this price for peace (*idem*, *Vestfalsky mir...*, p. 177, footnote 33).



to regain the province of Silesia during the Thirty Years' War⁷⁷. W. Czapliński is most certainly right when he states that there were no perspectives to win back Silesia 'neither in an alliance with the Habsburgs nor in an alliance with the Protestant coalition'⁷⁸.

⁷⁷ Mainly Dziegiel, *op. cit.*, p. 114; K. P i w a r s k i, *Historia Śląska*, Katowice–Wrocław 1947, p. 219; Czermak, *Studia historyczne*, Kraków 1901, pp. 240–242.

⁷⁸ Czapliński, 'Polityka Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w latach 1576–1648' (*Pamiętnik VIII Powszechnego Zjazdu Historyków Polskich w Krakowie*, 14–17 IX 1958, vol. I, part 1, Warszawa 1958, pp. 91–98).