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SPAIN AND POLISH AFFAIR DURING THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA

The Congress of Vienna was initially intended to be a convention of the representatives of all great powers which had participated in the Napoleonic wars, no matter for which side they were fighting. It was preceded by the Treaty of Paris (May 30, 1814). During the first talks concerning procedural issues, however, before the opening of the Congress and just before the arrival of the French Minister Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, the representatives of the four great powers (Great Britain, Austria, Russia, Prussia) had decided that they would be the only ones participating in negotiations, and the only ones deciding on the territorial changes in Europe. France and Spain were to be acquainted with the decisions only to achieve their acceptance. All participants of the Congress were obliged to ratify decisions which were to be taken.¹ The adopted procedure was protested by France. Talleyrand did not want to make out of the Bourbon monarchy a country of secondary importance. The French Minister was able to find supporters – the representatives of other excluded countries, including the representative of Spain, which was his strong trump card.² Less powerful monarchies were not able to execute their rights, but Talleyrand achieved his main aim – he became regarded as a partner in negotiations. In consequence, the Concert of Europe was established. Spain, however, although it was formally accepted as one of the negotiating countries, did not play an important role in Vienna.

Spain was represented by Pedro Gómez Labrador y Havel.³ Without any doubt, he was not an ideal person for such a mission: not very gifted, narrow-minded megalomaniac without much sympathy of the people surrounding him. Knowing about his weakness and mediocrity, the Spanish diplomat cannot be held responsible for all the mistakes made by Spain before and after the Congress of Vienna. Undoubtedly, Spain's position was peripheral in 1814, and it was not only due to the fact that the international political centre

¹ A. Palmer, *Metternich. Councillor of Europe*, London 1988, pp. 132-133; H. Kissinger, *A World Restored. Metternich, Castlereagh and the Problems of Peace 1812-1822*, London 1999, pp. 144, 151.

² M. Artola, *La España de Fernando VII*, Madrid 1999, pp. 441-442; D. Cooper, *Talleyrand*, London 1997, pp. 248-252. Talleyrand argued that the Treaty of Paris finished the war and, in consequence, Bourbon France cannot stay outside the alliance (A. Palmer, *Metternich*, p. 133).

³ D. Ozanam, *Les diplomates espagnols du XVIIIe siècle. Introduction et répertoire bibliographique (1700-1808)*, Madrid-Bordeaux 1998, pp. 279-281.

was relocated into the North. Simultaneously, Spain was marginalized by its previous allies, and it could not go beyond passivity in its own international policy.⁴ If the passivity was to be abandoned, as it was revealed, only to prove its total disorientation with European affairs.⁵ The topic of the present article, however, is not the analysis of the causes of international marginalization of Spain. The aim is not participation of P. Labrador in the Congress as well.⁶ The article concentrates on the Spanish outlook on the affairs of central Europe. At the same time, its purpose is to explain whether Spanish politicians saw and understood the importance of the problems of Poland and Saxony in European context, as well as if they were interested in solving the problems because of their own aims, which were to be fought for, though unsuccessfully, in Vienna.

P. Labrador was expected to defend the integrity of monarchy and the Spanish empire, as well as Bourbons' rights in Italy, while participating in the Congress. He was obliged by the instructions to prevent the principalities of Parma, Plasencia and Guastalla to be kept by the Habsburgs. The diplomat was to endeavour to unite them into one kingdom under the reign of the infant princess Marie Louise as a compensation for the Kingdom of Etruria (provided this solution had proved to be impossible, Labrador would have been expected to demand Sardinia). The idea concerning irreclaimably lost Toscana was totally impossible. Labrador was advised to ask the allies to persuade the United States of America to return Louisiana to them. The next task of the diplomat was to bring Ferdinand IV, a legitimate sovereign, who was dethroned by Napoleon in 1806 and took refuge on Sicily, back to the throne.⁷

Despite ambitious plans, Spain was not ready for the European Congress, just like it had not been previously prepared for the talks with the allies about the conditions of peace. In 1813 the British Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Robert Stewart Castlereagh expected that Madrid would properly instruct its representative in Berlin, José García de León y Pizarro, in order to negotiate in cooperation.⁸

Next year, when the allies met in Paris, Spain was not present during the conferences.⁹ On the contrary, even Great Britain, the most important supporter of Spain since

⁴ J. M. Jover, *Carácteres de la política exterior de España en el siglo XIX*, [in:] idem, *Política, diplomacia y humanismo popular. Estudios sobre la vida española en el siglo XIX*, Madrid 1976, pp. 86, 88-89.

⁵ W. Villa-Urutia, *España en el Congreso de Viena según la correspondencia oficial de D. Pedro Gómez Labrador, Marqués de Labrador*, Madrid 1928, p. 18.

⁶ Besides Villa-Urrutia the issue was dealt with by J. Bécker, *Relaciones exteriores de España durante el siglo XIX (Apuntes para una Historia diplomática)*, vol. 1: 1800-1839, Madrid 1924, pp. 371-407; M. Artola, *La España*, pp. 438-449.

⁷ W. Villa-Urrutia, *España*, pp. 373-374; M. Artola, *La España*, pp. 438-439; A. Goicoechea y Cosculleula, *La política internacional de España en noventa años (1814-1904). Lección explicada en la apertura de curso verificada el día 12 de noviembre de 1921*, Madrid 1922, p. 15-16.

⁸ M. Artola, *La España*, p. 435.

⁹ J. Bécker, *España e Inglaterra. Sus relaciones políticas desde las paces de Utrecht*, Madrid 1906, pp. 63-64.

the very beginning of the war for independence, inclined to isolate the government of Ferdinand VII.¹⁰ Then changes important and alarming for the European allies changes took place behind the Pyrenees. They concerned the return of the king and restoration of absolutism. The attitude towards Great Britain was also changing. In March 1814 Spanish Regency Council was willing to form an alliance with London, containing a provision that no family pacts like those established before the war with Napoleon would be renewed between France and Spain. The answer from the British Cabinet confirming this request came after governmental changes in Spain. Although the treaty of peace, friendship, and alliance was signed on 5 July 1814, Ferdinand VII was not so willing to form an alliance with Great Britain.¹¹ In fact, Spain, which contributed greatly to the defeat of Napoleon, had no allies at the time of the Congress of Vienna.

The Congress was called in order to establish peace on the continent. The great powers agreed that the rule of retaining balance was the only one which could guarantee a necessary legitimate order, and thus, long lasting peace. The differences resulted from various factors: a geographical location, a political system, a national interest, the tradition of foreign policy, a degree of involvement in the continental affairs. The most serious difference was between a concept defended by Great Britain, an island and a marine country, and a Russian concept expressing ambition of a continental empire.¹²

In practice it meant that, according to the concept of Castlereagh, Central Europe should be powerful enough to retain its position unthreatened both from the side of the West and the East, i.e. Russia. The first aim was virtually achieved by virtue of the first Peace of Paris. France was neutralized then, and at the same time, thanks to rejection of revenging conceptions of Alexander I and the support given to French Bourbons, it appeared that it would not be a source of political unrests and revolutionary ideas.¹³ Actually, the real threat were Russian ambitions concerning Poland and, as their consequence, claims laid by Prussia to Saxony. The problem of organization of central Europe was the most difficult to solve during the Congress. The issue threatened the unity of allies during meetings held in Paris. The antagonisms, which started to dominate, were observed by P. Labrador. In September the diplomat informed from the capital of France that the conflict of British and Russian interests was evident. He apprehended that it could be unbenevolent for Spain because of an extraordinary, delicate situation, hampering the *buenos oficios* usage of the great European powers for realization of its own aims.¹⁴

The tsar's main advisor on Polish affairs was the prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski. The Spanish diplomat endowed him with "significant influences",¹⁵ but it was only par-

¹⁰ M. Artola, *La España*, p. 437, see also footnote 24.

¹¹ J. Bécker, *Relaciones exteriores*, pp. 329-333; idem, *España e Inglaterra*, pp. 61-64.

¹² H. Kissinger, *A World*, p. 147. The different concept of the balance of powers was also dealt with by J.-H. Pirenne, *La Sainte-Alliance*, vol. 1-2, Neuchâtel 1946-1949, passim.

¹³ C. J. Bartlett, *Castlereagh*, London 1966, pp. 133-135.

¹⁴ W. Villa-Urrutia, *España*, p. 79.

¹⁵ Archivo General del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores [AGMAAEE], Fondo TR 10, expediente 068: Congreso de Viena. Documentación sobre Polonia y Sajonia [TR 10, exp. 068], P. Gómez Labrador al duque de San Carlos, Viena 29.09.1814, n. 176.

tially true, as Czartoryski's position at the side of the emperor was not as strong as it was expected. Actually, they stayed in a friendly relationship dating back to their youth. The prince, a Polish aristocrat of the Enlightenment of strong pro-Russian orientation, was a close tsar's associate during the first years of his reign. He proposed numerous moderately liberal reforms, and from 1802 to 1806 he was the Minister of Foreign Affairs. In the memorial "Sur le système politique qui devrait suivre la Russie", which concerned Russian foreign policy, and which was probably created in 1803, Czartoryski presented the vision of future Poland. The memorial was to play an important role in shaping Alexander's I policy with regard to Poland. It states that Poland should reappear on the map of Europe, but the country ought to remain in alliance with Russia. The restored monarchy should be as powerful as possible. Czartoryski even suggested that the Polish areas belonging to two remaining powers taking part in the partitions should be returned. The throne should be given to a prince from the dynasty of Romanov. Czartoryski attempted to convince the tsar that the neighbourhood of pro-Russian Poland would be very beneficial for the empire, and the partition was not only morally disreputable, but also politically wrong from the point of view of Russian interests. Instead of the weakening neighbour and a barrier for rivals from central Europe, Russia had then two powerful neighbours, Austria and Prussia. The prince's projects evolved with time, and they were adjusted to the developing international situation. In 1806/1807 he spoke about declaring the very tsar the king of Poland. During an unofficial meeting in Chaumont in March 1814 he referred to the idea of Russian mission among Slavic nations. He encouraged the tsar to form a Slavic federation, which would include not only the Polish, but also inhabitants of the Balkan Peninsula, liberated by Russia from Turkish yoke. Czartoryski's concept had also a minimum version, just in case the restoration of Poland would be impossible. He suggested resignation from independence movements and proposed direct inclusion of all Polish areas or at least their largest part into Russia instead.¹⁶

Although Czartoryski's projects were not an official part of the Russian foreign policy, undoubtedly, they had a great influence on Alexander I and the negotiations in Vienna. Coming to the Congress, the tsar intended to unify the Polish areas of Russian partition with the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, and to create the Kingdom of Poland. Reunified Poland was not to be, however, an independent country. It was to be an autonomic strongly connected with the Russian monarch and ruled according to the provisions of the Russian constitution.

Labrador informed Madrid about Alexander's I aspirations in a letter from September 29.¹⁷ He was attentively following the discussion over the organization of central Europe, although he was not sufficiently informed, due to the fact that he had been excluded from the deciding group, and he was not a gifted diplomat. He was, however, aware of the European significance of "disputa acerca de Polonia de cuya decisión de-

¹⁶ J. Skowronek, *Adam Jerzy Czartoryski 1770–1861*, Warszawa 1994, pp. 71–201.

¹⁷ AGMAAEE, TR 10, exp. 068, P. Gómez Labrador al duque de San Carlos, Viena 29.09.1814, n. 176.

penden el arreglo de Alemania, el de Italia y aun la fijación de los límites de los Países Bajos".¹⁸ From the Spanish point of view the most significant was the issue of the organization of the Apennine Peninsula and its connection with three northern powers. The main aim of Spain was "que lo que se convenga entre los principales interesados no perjudique a la restauración de Nápoles al legítimo soberano ni a la de Toscana o un perfecto equivalente al rey de Etruria".¹⁹ In a treaty signed by Labrador in Paris on July 20, 1814, it committed itself to support Spanish attempts with regard to Italian issues. In fact, however, the hopes to create *buenos oficios* allied countries turned out to be unfulfilled. Decisions concerning Italy had been made before the meeting of the Great Four Powers in Vienna during talks about The Treaty of Paris or even earlier. First of all, Great Britain could count on Austria with regard to support of its ambitions concerning Lombardia. The fact was affirmed by the allies in June 1814. In the Treaty of Paris it was additionally decided that Tuscany would be returned to Grand Duke Ferdinand III of the Habsburg dynasty, Parma would remain under the authority of archduchess Marie Louise, and Modena would be ruled by archduke Francis d'Austria d'Este. In practice, it meant that Austria controlled the situation in Italy. The only issue which was not decided on was the future of the Neapolitan throne. This issue was the only one which could be solved during the Congress, and Spain could fright only for it.

Labrador was interested in negotiations concerning Poland not only because of Italian issues.²⁰ Labrador overvalued the role of Czartoryski in Vienna, and despite the fact that the prince was still regarded by many as the main associate of the tsar, actually his position was losing its significance from 1807. The emperor came to the Congress together with his numerous advisers. In fact, J. Kapodistria, H. von Stein, K. Nesselrode or Ch. Pozzo di Borgo had much stronger positions than Czartoryski. The lack of consensus on the Polish issue was not a secret. Labrador also pointed to disagreements.²¹ The tsar's plans concerning Poland were not accepted by the politicians surrounding him, and it appears that the Spanish diplomat shared their concerns, although, at the same time, he wrote about them in a negative way in his correspondence.²² The creation of the Kingdom

¹⁸ AGMAAEE, TR 10, exp. 068, P. Gómez Labrador al duque de San Carlos, Viena 18.10.1814, n. 192.

¹⁹ AGMAAEE, TR 10, exp. 068, P. Gómez Labrador al duque de San Carlos, Viena 29.09.1814, n. 176.

²⁰ J. Bécker, *Relaciones exteriores*, pp. 339-341; M. Artola, *La España*, pp. 440-441.

²¹ AGMAAEE, TR 10, exp. 068, P. Gómez Labrador al duque de San Carlos, Viena 29.09.1814, n. 176.

²² "Son algunos generales ó juvenes edecanes sin idea alguna de politica ni experiencia de Gobierno", "los sugetos de poca capacidad y merito". The chancellor of Austria received Labrador's words of severe criticism as malservidor de Austria. The opinion cannot be regarded as important, however. The Spanish diplomat was known in Europe for his conceit and arrogance. By the way, his lack of independence in formulating opinions was also known. This ruthless judgement of majority of European politicians was strongly influenced by Talleyrand who assigned himself the role of coryphée of the Congress. AGMAAEE, TR 10, exp. 068, P. Gómez Labrador al duque de San Carlos, Viena 18.10.1814, n. 192.

of Poland could distort the political order in Russia and the two remaining countries taking part in partitions. Alexander's I plans pertaining to Poland could pose a threat to the peace in central Europe. "Semejante establecimiento sería una tentación continua para los polacos súbditos de Prusia y de Austria y era también capaz de causar sublevación en el Imperio ruso; pues mientras sus habitantes están sugetos al gobierno ilimitado del Emperador y de los señores no verían sin envidia a los polacos súbditos del Imperio más favorecidos que los mismos naturales de él".²³ Such strong disagreements made Labrador think that the tsar would not persist with his plans, but he would be induced to a different plan, according to which the Grand Duchy of Warsaw would be incorporated into the empire. In consequence, the Spanish diplomat was of the opinion that Alexander's I plans concerning Poland would pose a threat to the European peace and safety, and directly to Spain as "Austria por último resultado quería ganar en Italia lo que deje de adquirir en Polonia". The wish to restore Bourbons to Naples and Parma made the Spanish "desear que Rusia no adquiriese más y que Sajonia se conservase independiente".²⁴

Contrary to Labrador's opinion, Great Britain did not underestimate the dangers, which threatened the future peace in Europe and its own national interests posed by Russian transpiring ambitions. Before the meeting of the Powers in Vienna, London received messages about threatening acts and statements made by Russian representatives coming from everywhere. Even if they did not represent the actual Alexander's I plans, for Great Britain they were alarming enough to take a role of the main contestant of the tsar's claims concerning Poland.²⁵ The restoration of the Kingdom of Poland unified with Russia with one monarch and the declaration of the country's constitution were against British interests.

Although during the first talks between Castlereagh and Alexander I in Vienna, the British Secretary of Foreign Affairs suggested the possibility of the existence of independent Poland, in fact, his intentions were not quite honest.²⁶ If Castlereagh had been convinced that Poland should have regain its independence, it would not have stemmed from his understanding of national ideas and Polish national aspirations. It was more important to prevent incorporation of large Polish areas with the great human and economic potential by Russia. It would distort the central European balance of powers and influences. Furthermore, the tsar's plan to declare Polish constitution could be potentially dangerous. Castlereagh agreed in this regard with some of the tsar's opponents: special rights granted to the Polish could spur the national ambitions of the people remaining under the authority of other countries participating in parti-

²³ AGMAAEE, TR 10, exp. 068, P. Gómez Labrador al duque de San Carlos, Viena 29.09.1814, n. 176.

²⁴ Ibidem.

²⁵ H. Kissinger, *A World*, pp. 149-150.

²⁶ On Castlereagh's plans concerning Poland during the war see: G. Dallas, 1815. *The Roads to Waterloo*, London 2001, pp. 67-68. Castlereagh's position on Polish issues cannot be identified with the standpoint represented by the British government. The government did not understand the engagement of its secretary in the Polish affairs regarding them as solely continental and unconnected with British position. H. Kissinger, *A World*, pp. 153-154, 163-165.

tions. In consequence, independent Poland was a guarantee of peace. It was not, however, the main aim of the British policy, but only a method. Due to this fact, the position of Castlereagh in this matter was not firm. What was called by Labrador unjustified weakness and submission was, in fact, a result of political realism and defeat of the national British interests.²⁷ It was more important for Castlereagh to compromise with three central European Powers and grant them effective potential counterbalancing French ambitions than engage in the fight for the independent Poland.²⁸ The consequence of this was an acceptance of the next partition.

Great Britain was also extremely interested in the organization of Germany because of apprehensions about the safety of the Netherlands.²⁹ The solution of this issue involved the dilemma about the Rhine territories. On the one hand, Castlereagh would be glad to see Prussia close to the western borders of Germany. The Rhine barrier could protect Low Countries sufficiently, if it was strong enough. Only Prussia was able to guarantee this. At the same time, pro-Russian Frederic Wilhelm III was much more interested in Saxony. Alexander I promised him the terrain as a compensation for complete annexation of Grand Duchy of Warsaw (whose main parts were occupied by Prussia during the first and the second partition). The Russian-Prussian conception envisaged, in consequence, donation of the Rhine terrains to the dethroned Saxon king – Frederic August III. The conception was not satisfactory for Great Britain, yet. On the other hand, Prussian presence close to the Rhine could entail the strengthening of Frederic Wilhelm III in the West. It could pose a potential threat both to Low Countries, as well as British Hanover.³⁰ It is worth remembering that in 1805 Russia and Prussia envisaged the possibility of resignation from Polish terrains in favour of Holland, the Rhine provinces and Hanover in a treaty in Potsdam.³¹ The issue of the organization of Germany was thus extremely significant from the point of view of the very British interests. Because of its importance and complexity Castlereagh approached the issue with reservations, and he was willing to compromise.

Castlereagh's plans involved, first of all, to persuade the tsar to accept his own conception and inhibit tsar's ambitions in central Europe since they could threaten the peace. At the beginning of October 1914 the tsar revealed his plans concerning Poland, presenting for the first time in an open and official manner the scope of his aspirations.³² He claimed virtually the whole area of the past Grand Duchy of Warsaw together with the strategic cities – Toruń and Kraków. The fact that this whole territory

²⁷ AGMAAEE, TR 10, exp. 068, P. Gómez Labrador al duque de San Carlos, Viena 12.10.1814, n. 191.

²⁸ J. Clarke, *British Diplomacy and Foreign Policy, 1782–1865. The National Interest*, London 1989, pp. 132–134.

²⁹ G. Dallas, *1815*, pp. 129–130.

³⁰ R. Albrecht-Carrié, *A Diplomatic History of Europe Since the Congress of Vienna*, London 1965, p. 13 (see also a footnote 13); J. Clarke, *British Diplomacy*, p. 135.

³¹ J. Skowronek, *Adam Jerzy Czartoryski*, pp. 112–113.

³² AGMAAEE, TR 10, exp. 068, P. Gómez Labrador al duque de San Carlos, Viena 3.10.1814, n. 180.

was occupied by half-million Russian army could not be underestimated. It strengthened the position of the tsar immensely. He could not persuade the British that Russian claims are not motivated by the wish to enlarge the empire, but moral obligations to the Polish.³³ Labrador had no doubts about the actual Alexander's intentions and their possible fatal consequences for European peace, as the annexation of the whole Grand Duchy of Warsaw "con lo qual además de un extraordinario engrandecimiento lograria dejar sin fronteras militares a Austria y a Prusia".³⁴

October talks between Castlereagh and Alexander I, during which they both attempted to convince each other about the rightness of their own argumentation, turned out to be unsuccessful. The tsar did not step back with regard to his intentions concerning Poland. Castlereagh's opinion that just like France previously posed a main threat to Europe, then it was Russia that played this role. The Polish issue appeared to be the most complicated one during negotiations in Vienna.

It did not entail the fiasco of the very idea of the Congress. Anyone without exception was convinced that the restoration of Europe was necessary. Thus, they did not give up their attempts, and did not reach compromise when the interests of empires were conflicting. Along with private talks with Alexander I, Castlereagh thought about creation of the barrier for Russian aspirations. He searched for new arguments, which could persuade the tsar to make his attitude less uncompromising. British Secretary of Foreign Affairs had just had an important supporter – Clemens von Metternich.

The barrier Castlereagh thought about was to involve isolation of Russia, which means its deprivation of the Prussian ally. It was necessary to point to commonness of aims and coordination of actions of the remaining Powers. Coordination of Austrian and Prussian efforts was not easy, however. According to Castlereagh, it was even impossible in the light of the lack of political good will of both sides, and he was right to a great extent. The issue which precluded cooperation between Habsburg and Hohenzollern monarchies, in Castlereagh's opinion, was a fact that "Austria se resiente de la debilidad que hace tanto tiempo es como habitual en ella, y Prusia no procede enteramente de buena fé".³⁵ Two aims were hidden behind Prussian aspirations. First of all, the annexation of Saxony. The fact that Prussian ambitions in this regard were against the principles of legitimism was not taken into consideration. A convincing argument was found that Frederic August III could not be regarded any longer as a legitimate monarch. He turned out to be a betrayer, since he had not rejected the alliance with Napoleon in a due time. Saxony was much more valuable than the territories out of which Napoleon had formed Grand Duchy of Warsaw in 1807. Saxony was safer because for Prussia "sería más ventajoso tener súbditos alemanes que polacos".³⁶ The belief was strongly connected with the second aim, namely such an reorganization of

³³ H. Kissinger, *A World*, pp. 52-55.

³⁴ AGMAAEE, TR 10, exp. 068, P. Gómez Labrador al duque de San Carlos, Viena 18.10.1814, n. 192.

³⁵ *Ibidem*.

³⁶ *Ibidem*.

Germany, which would guarantee Prussia a strong position and safety. The monarchy of Frederic Wilhelm III was not the most powerful element in the group of Great Powers, but it could expect Russian support, and this very fact decided about its significance, and made its aspirations more real.

Austria had much more complicated situation, since Russian domination in central Europe was as dangerous as Prussian domination in Germany. At the same time it could not allow itself to distort relationships with Prussia. Unanimous cooperation between both countries was, according to Metternich, necessary for safety of Austria, because only this country could guarantee stability of relationships in Germany.³⁷ The Spanish diplomat was convinced that Austria, which should have been interested in preventing Russian plans concerning Poland and Prussian plans concerning Saxony, “no hará ningún gran esfuerzo para oponerse particularmente si le prometen algun nuevo territorio en Italia”.³⁸ Spain was not indifferent to the way in which Austria would solve these dilemmas. Labrador was not sure how to behave in this situation, and he asked for instructions. Certainly, he overestimated his ability to influence decisions taken in Vienna, but his dilemmas were right, and they stemmed from Italian interests in Spain. Labrador, who, as should be remembered, assessed territorial claims of the northern empires in a very negative way, and was, at the same time, naively afraid that his potential protest could leave Spain alone with its attempts to restore Bourbons to Italian thrones: “se arriesgara que Rusia y Prusia abandonen la justa causa de las Casas de Sicilia y Parma”.³⁹ Labrador’s calculations were groundless. As already noted, the Italian issue had been solved earlier, and Spain did not actually have any ally in Vienna. Labrador overestimated also the role of Russian support. Despite the fact that Russian ambassador in Madrid, Dimitri Tatischev, guaranteed the tsar’s support for Spanish aims in Italy, it turned out that the position of Alexander I contributed to leaving Duchy of Parma in the hands of archduchess Marie Louise.⁴⁰

Despite Labrador’s scepticism about agreement between Russia and Prussia, for a while it could seem, that it would be possible. Austria agreed on the annexation of Saxony, but also imposed conditions on Prussia, which consisted in a common opposition against the enlargement of Russia at Polish expense, as well as guaranteeing balance in Germany. The tsar had a number of proposals made, about which Labrador informed at the beginning of November.⁴¹ They envisaged three solutions concerning Poland: first of all, maintaining the *status quo* from before the first partition of Poland, secondly, restoration of Poland within borders from 1771, thirdly, restoration of borders decided on in 1795 by virtue of the third partition of Poland.⁴²

³⁷ H. Kissinger, *A World*, p. 155; A. Palmer, *Metternich*, p. 135.

³⁸ AGMAAEE, TR 10, exp. 068, P. Gómez Labrador al duque de San Carlos, Viena 12.10.1814, n. 191.

³⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁰ W. Villa-Urrutia, *España*, p. 102.

⁴¹ AGMAAEE, TR 10, exp. 068, P. Gómez Labrador al duque de San Carlos, Viena 4.11.1814, n. 209.

⁴² H. Kissinger, *A World*, p. 155-159; A. Palmer, *Metternich*, p. 136.

The first possibility was the most probable. Nobody cared about Poland as such. Polish fate was treated superficially. The actual aim was the balance of powers in Europe, and all the decisions concerning Poland depended on it. Labrador was right when he assumed that Russia “*aunque afecta querer favorecer a los polacos*” would never accept their independence. It would involve a great territorial loss and the weakening of its powerful position. Russia “*no puede consentir en desprenderse de unas provincias que forman la mejor parte de su Imperio y que acercándola a Alemania le dan sobre los asuntos generales de Europa una influencia que no tendría reducida a sus antiguos límites*”.⁴³ Own project of accession of the whole Grand Duchy of Warsaw was too tempting since thanks to it “*quedan enteramente a disposición suya Prusia y Austria*”.⁴⁴ Actually, the first point was treated exclusively as a trump card in negotiations with Alexander I already from the beginning. Its commonly predicted rejection strengthened the significance of the remaining two.

In accordance with Labrador’s predictions, the attempts to definitely and cooperatively prevent Russian usurpations did not succeed. The Spanish diplomat accused, foremost, Metternich and Castlereagh of amicability, if not even weakness, but it was rather a result of misunderstandings of Viennese diplomacy, lack of information and uncritical references to Talleyrand’s opinions. Hopes to attract Prussia turned out to be vain. The tsar was not afraid of the alliance formed against him. The very alliance revealed to be fragile, and did not find support of the king of Prussia. It turned out that there was no unanimity both among the members of Russian delegation and among the members of the Prussian one as well. Frideric Wilhelm III forbade his representative, baron Carl von Hardenburg, to take any actions behind the tsar’s back. The problem arose not only because of different points of view represented by them. Undoubtedly, strong pro-Russian views of Frederic Wilhelm III were not in line with the opinion of his minister, but it was the monarch who made decisions. It was not, however, a single opinion, as another Prussian representative in Vienna, baron Wilhelm von Humboldt was also of “*opinión que a su amo le conviene más tener subditos alemanes que polacos*”.⁴⁵ In fact, Metternich’s proposal, which was agreed on by Hardenberg, did not fully protect Prussian interests. On the contrary, it involved resignation from the accession of wealthy Saxony. We have to remember that the Prussian right to this country resulted solely from the possible Polish losses in favour of Russia. Prussia was not even in possession of an argument of power. In contrast to Polish territories, where the Russian troops garrisoned, Prussia did not occupy Saxony. The country was occupied by the tsar’s army, and it was administrated by Russia. If the tsar had been convinced or forced to resign from his plans concerning Poland, Prussia would have lost the only ar-

⁴³ AGMAAEE, TR 10, exp. 068, P. Gómez Labrador al duque de San Carlos, Viena 18.10.1814, n. 192.

⁴⁴ AGMAAEE, TR 10, exp. 068, P. Gómez Labrador al duque de San Carlos, Viena 4.11.1814, n. 209.

⁴⁵ AGMAAEE, TR 10, exp. 068, P. Gómez Labrador al duque de San Carlos, Viena 18.10.1814, n. 192.

gument in the Saxon issue.⁴⁶ Hardenberg informed Metternich about the decision of his monarch on 7 November – the same day when it was announced in Vienna that the Prussian army was given administrative powers in Saxony by Russian troops.⁴⁷

As a result, the tsar rejected the complete three-point counterproposal. Labrador accusingly attributed this fact to Polish advisers of the tsar. By the way, he presented them in a very negative way, which, however, suggests his lack of knowledge and independence in judgement.⁴⁸ Czartoryski did have some influence on the tsar's decision, however, in contrast to Labrador's opinion, his acting neither resulted from a bad will nor perfidy, but fondness of the country.

Meanwhile, all possible actions taken up by Labrador aimed at giving Talleyrand the support for the Polish issue were stopped in November by surprising instructions from Madrid. Referring to the king's desire "de estrechar su alianza con Rusia y de que las dos naciones se apoyen recíprocamente en sus intereses", it was ordered to Labrador that "no sólo no contradiga las pretensiones de Rusia sobre este particular, sino que con la prudente precaución ... para no dar celos a otras naciones ni llamar demasiado la atención de sus representantes en el Congreso, coopere ... con ellas, con especialidad si se trata de establecer como Rey de Polonia a un Gran Duque de Rusia". The diplomat was given an extremely difficult, even impossible to accomplish, task. On the one hand, he was cautioned that Spain should "conservar la mejor armonía" with France and Great Britain, on the other hand, he was reminded that "el pensamiento de Su Majestad de estrechar por vínculos de sangre con la Corte de Rusia ... empeña decididamente a interesarse en favor de esta augusta familia y a encargar igualmente a Vucencia que, aprovechándose de las ocasiones que en el día se le podrán presentar, dé algún paso oportuno sobre este importantísimo y urgente asunto".⁴⁹

At the same time, the tsar's firm position concerning Poland made Castlereagh seek supporters also outside the anti-Napoleonic alliance, and he referred to France. The idea was born before the Congress. In August 1814 Wellington, who held a position of ambassador in France at that time, was given special instructions. He was to poll Talleyrand's opinions on the Polish issue and the possible French support (even military) in order to prevent Russian plans, or even to attract the country to the Prussian side.⁵⁰ Both talks ini-

⁴⁶ H. Kissinger, *A World*, pp. 160-161.

⁴⁷ A. Palmer, *Metternich*, p. 140.

⁴⁸ Labrador wrote that while the tsar was preparing an answer "naturalmente apuraran todos los sofismas, los polacos que han sido los autores del proyecto y que corresponden a la justa idea que de su nación tienen las demás cultas de Europa, pues su nobleza es la mas visiosa, turbulenta y perfida que se conoce, asi como el pueblo que está bajo del yugo de hierro del sistema feudal es el más bárbaro, cruel y miserable". AGMAAEE, TR 10, exp. 068, P. Gómez Labrador al duque de San Carlos, Viena 26.10.1814, n. 197.

⁴⁹ Real orden de 9.10.1814 (after W. Villa-Urrutia, *España*, pp. 140-141).

⁵⁰ Castlereagh Viscount, *Correspondence, Dispatches, and Other Papers*, ed. Third Marquess of Londonderry, v. X, Castlereagh a Wellington, London 7.08.1814, London 1853, p. 76. About these and the previous attempts of France and Great Britain to close their relationships see G. Dallas, *1815*, pp. 69-78, 117-121.

tiated by Wellington, as well as a meeting of Castlereagh with Talleyrand in person, which took place in Paris, turned out to be promising.⁵¹ The significance of Talleyrand's role became obvious after the tsar had rejected British, Austrian, and Prussian counterproposals.⁵² We do not have to add that there was no place for Labrador in a newly formed concept.

The tsar's counter-project prepared by Stein with contribution of Czartoryski was insufficient.⁵³ Russian concession consisted in declaration Toruń and Kraków free cities. This fact was not satisfactory for Austria. In reaction to that, Metternich relying on the support of the countries which were to form German confederation, mainly Bavaria, suggested Hardenberg in a note of 10 December the possibility of partition of Saxony. Austria was willing to accept only partial accession of Saxon territories provided that the remaining part with Dresden and Leipzig would be still kept as the independent kingdom of Frederic August III. Such a solution, undoubtedly, would strengthen safety of Habsburg borders. The threat posed by the direct Prussian neighbourhood of the Bohemian province would be eliminated.⁵⁴

Alexander's I proposal also could not be approved by Castlereagh. It meant that none of the British aims in Europe, which were fought for in Vienna, would not be achieved. The fiasco of Castlereagh's policy appeared to be foregone. In such situations relationships between Metternich and Talleyrand became closer. The Chancellor sent his own proposal for solution of the Saxon issue to the French Minister, who almost immediately used the long awaited occasion to join the British and Austrian tandem. On 19 December Talleyrand declared an extremely important Memorandum. He argued for integrity of rights of the King of Saxony, but he referred neither to European balance of powers nor peace, but to the principle of legitimacy.

Labrador completely agreed with Talleyrand's argumentation. Regarding the principles of legitimacy as holly would be very beneficial for Spanish interests in Italy. First of all, it would undermine Joachim Murat's claims to Naples, supported by Metternich. Labrador lacked proper instructions this time again. Those obtained in November were invalid and one month later the next instructions were provided, which contradictory to the previous ones. This time he was advised not to engage and stay "una conducta prudente y reservada ... cuando haya de tratarse de agregar al Imperio ruso el Gran Ducado de Varsovia, y de indemnizar a Prusia, de lo que en esto pierda, con Sajonia. Ningún empeño conocido debe manifestar V. E. en este caso, pero sin declararse y huyendo siempre de formar partido hasta el punto que decorosamente lo pueda conseguir; trabajará por evitar estas escandalosas adquisiciones que tarde o tem-

⁵¹ D. Cooper, *Talleyrand*, pp. 244-245.

⁵² Although, to the end of the year, the minister was not convinced about French inclusion into negotiations. On December 23 he rejected such a suggestion made by Metternich and Talleyrand and only on the last day of the month he overcame his hesitations. C. J. Bartlett, *Castlereagh*, pp. 139-141. For more on the arguments for the inclusion of France into Great Powers see R. Albrecht-Carrié, *A Diplomatic History*, pp. 11-12.

⁵³ J. Skowronek, *Adam Jerzy Czartoryski*, p. 198.

⁵⁴ AGMAAEE, TR 10, exp. 068, P. Gómez Labrador a P. Cevallos, Viena 4.11.1814, n. 209.

prano habran de turbar la paz de Europa y tal vez subyugarla”. At the same time, they do not envisage the restoration of independent Poland. There were two reasons against it: “Polonia idolatra de una independencia que jamás ha sabido sostener” and the close friendship and cooperation between the tsar of Russia and the king of Prussia. It is why it was suggested that “sería muy oportuno hacer conocer a los polacos que debían subscribir mejor que a esta desmembración de la Varsovia, a proclamar por su Rey a un Gran Duque de Rusia”.⁵⁵

Talleyrand’s argumentation turned out to be extremely right. It did not deny Prussia the possibility to enlarge the territory at the expense of Saxony in a definitive way. The solution was only dependent on the agreement of the legitimate monarch. What is even more important, Talleyrand’s argumentation was accepted by the tsar. It involved a kind of coincidence, as Alexander I, regarded by many as insane, thought of himself as the one chosen by God. He also supported strongly the idea of legitimism. In consequence, the tsar, despite Prussian objection, not only agreed to introduce Talleyrand into the Great Four, but also he was willing to accept another compromise. It consisted in giving the region of Tarnopol to Austria.⁵⁶

Accepting Talleyrand as a member of the Great Four restoring Europe was sealed with the Treaty of 3 January 1815 signed by Great Britain, Austria, and France. France could, in fact, stop to feel isolated, which was indicated by the defensive character of the ally: In case of aggression against one country, signatories were willing to provide their troops.⁵⁷

The treaty provided a base for the agreement between the Powers. It was clandestine, and its provisions were revealed to Alexander I only thanks to Napoleon late in March 1815, but actually it was known to the whole Vienna.⁵⁸ It was not the only reason of the agreement, however. First of all, we have to remember, that no country was then ready for war. 25 years of military actions was an inhibitor sufficient enough to make all parties compromise, although it was difficult. There were also other arguments explaining the need to reach an agreement. Undoubtedly, the British position in Vienna was strengthened by the information about the end of the war with the United States.⁵⁹ Labrador, although he did not value Castlereagh’s political talent, saw the importance of the already made peace and its influence on negotiations in Vienna. He

⁵⁵ AGMAAEE, TR 10, exp. 068, Real Orden de 2.11.1814. The instructions were send in response to Labrador’s dispatch of 12 October 1814, n. 191.

⁵⁶ A. Palmer, *Metternich*, pp. 140-141.

⁵⁷ T. Lentz, *De l’expansionnisme révolutionnaire au système continental*, [in:] *Histoire de la diplomatie française*, prés. de D. de Villepin, Paris 2005, pp. 496-497; L. Theis, *Entre besoin de repos et désir de gloire*, [in:] *Histoire de la diplomatie*, pp. 513-514; R. Albrecht-Carrié, *A Diplomatic History*, p. 13.

⁵⁸ A. Palmer, *Metternich*, p. 145; G. Dallas, *1815*, p. 247.

⁵⁹ The Treaty of Ghent was signed on 24 December 1814. The information about that the end of the war in America came to Vienna on New Year’s Day. C. J. Bartlett, *Castlereagh*, pp. 141-142.

supposed that it would enable to act Great Britain “con mayor resolución”.⁶⁰ Equally important was the fact that London still paid its continental allies indispensable subsidies.⁶¹ Talleyrand’s argumentation made Alexander’s I position more flexible.

Arguments about Polish and Saxon issues finally finished on 11 February 1815. The next partition of Poland took place. The great part of Grand Duchy of Warsaw formed by Napoleon, along with its population amounting to three – million inhabitants, remained connected to Russia, forming the Kingdom of Poland. Galicia with the Tarnopol region was kept by Austria, while Kraków was declared an independent city and the capital of the small Republic of Kraków. Prussia retained Poznań and its surrounding region, as well as Toruń.⁶² Prussia also took 2/3 of the territory of Saxony with its half-million population. Prussian losses in Poland were compensated with Swedish coastal areas, the Rhine lands at the river’s left bank, as well as Duchy of Westfalia. The remaining Saxon areas together with Dresden and Leipzig remained in the hands of Frederic August III.

Austria did not protest against such strengthening of Russia in central Europe and of Prussia in Germany, because it was granted an aggrandizement guarantee in Italy. It was then in actual possession of the northern part of the Apennine Peninsula, namely Lombardia and Venice with its Balkan territories (with exception of the Ionian Islands, which remained British). Due to dynastic relationships it also enjoyed influential position in Parma, Tuscany and Modena. The issue of Naples was a separate matter. Austrian support for Murat found no understanding among European countries. Castlereagh and Talleyrand preferred a Bourbon on this throne, all the more, the ruling of Napoleonic general and his brother-in-law caused visible increase in national aspirations of the Italians.⁶³ They also warned Austria that Murat’s presence in Naples posed a threat to its own possessions and influences in Italy.⁶⁴ The support for Murat had been retreated before he offered his help to Napoleon after his escape from Elba. In consequence, in May 1815 Ferdinand IV returned to Palermo.

The final Act of the Congress of Vienna was signed on the 9 June 1815. The Polish and Saxon dilemma was one of the most complicated, and without doubt one of the most difficult to solve during negotiations. It made us realise that unity among the coalition members lasted as long as France posed a threat to European balance. When it seemed that the restoration of Bourbon French is permanent, that France abandoned its territorial aspirations and its shape established in the Treaty of Paris guarantees reconciliation, antagonistic opinions were voiced among the coalition members. Labrador was convinced that Vienna lacked “aquella perfecta unión de voluntades y aquel ner-

⁶⁰ AGMAAEE, TR 10, exp. 068, P. Gómez Labrador a P. Cevallos, Viena 3.01.1815, n. 244.

⁶¹ C. J. Bartlett, *Castlereagh*, p. 142, see footnote 3.

⁶² A. Palmer, *Metternich*, p. 142.

⁶³ G. Dallas, *1815*, pp. 119-120.

⁶⁴ J. Clarke, *British Diplomacy*, p. 136.

vio que serían menester para contener la desenfrenada ambición del gabinete ruso".⁶⁵ The hitherto coalition of four Powers was transformed into coalition of two camps, British-Austrian and Russian-Prussian.⁶⁶

All agreements were to guarantee balance in Europe, but each power understood it in a different way. For Labrador it became obvious that the actual aim of Vienna Congress was to share European regions among the great powers.⁶⁷

Labrador did not sign the Final Act. His objection had nothing to do with Polish issues. It was a consequence of his lack of approval for the Spanish infant's rights to Parma, and the recommendation that Spain should return Olivenza to Portugal.⁶⁸ Labrador constantly repeated that Russian ambitions concerning Poland and Prussian ambitions concerning Saxony were nothing but usurpations: they were against the principle of balance of powers and they threatened European peace. He regarded them as conflicting with Spanish interests. The opinion resulted mainly from Italian interests. It is difficult to decide if this opinion was formulated by the Spaniard himself or if it was influenced by Talleyrand's position. Regardless of whether his opinion was independent and original or not, Labrador provoked Alexander's reproach because of his position in Vienna, who suggested him alliance with actual allies, not with France.⁶⁹ The attitude of Madrid towards Poland is even more difficult to define. Labrador, even if not independent in his opinions, constantly reminded about unrestrained ambitions of Alexander I and their negative consequences for Europe. The actual support given to Napoleon's wife, Marie Louise, by the tsar, proved how valuable was the Russian alliance about which they thought in Madrid. The instructions which were sent to him by the government, were full of contradictions. Once they ordered not to engage in the upcoming events, the other time, they ordered to form a secret alliance with France, finally, they suggested to be closer to the remaining Powers.

Such inconsequence did not result from the lack of interest in the problem of organization of central Europe. Although the Polish issue was not directly connected with Spanish interests, in Madrid it was obvious that it was crucial for stability of peace in Europe, as well as for the future of Italy. Those who were responsible for the foreign affairs in Europe during the Congress, the very Ferdinand VII and his two ministries duque de San Carlos and Pedro Cevallos, were not able to assess the situation in a proper way. They instantly defended interests, which were not defendable. What is more, they could not form alliances. In consequence, all attempts of Vienna were doomed to fail. It has to be added that Russia was perceived as an important, potential ally in Vienna, despite the widely held opinion on the tsar's unrestrained aspirations.

⁶⁵ AGMAAEE, TR 10, exp. 068, P. Gómez Labrador al duque de San Carlos, Viena 18.10.1814, n. 192.

⁶⁶ R. Albrecht-Carrié, *A Diplomatic History*, pp. 9, 13.

⁶⁷ AGMAAEE, TR 10, exp. 068, P. Gómez Labrador al duque de San Carlos, Viena 3.11.1814, n. 204.

⁶⁸ W. Villa-Urrutia, *España*, pp. 176-181; M. Artola, *La España*, p. 449.

⁶⁹ M. Artola, *La España*, p. 442.

Ferdinand VII had great expectations connected with Russia to strengthen his country, restore absolute monarchy, restore Spain as one of European empires, and to reclaim colonies with the tsar's assistance.

Summary

SPAIN AND POLISH AFFAIR DURING THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA

The final Act of the Congress of Vienna was signed on the 9th of June 1815. The Polish and Saxon dilemma was one of the most complicated ones during negotiations. Spain did not sign the document. The objection had nothing to do with Polish issues, but the Spanish diplomat P. Labrador thought that Russian and Prussian ambitions concerning Poland and Saxony were nothing but usurpations: they were against the principle of balance of powers and they threatened European peace. He regarded them as conflicting with Spanish interests. The opinion resulted mainly from Italian interests in Spain.

Although the Polish issue was not directly connected with Spanish interests, in Madrid it was obvious that it was crucial for stability of peace in Europe, as well as for the future of Italy. For Labrador it became obvious that the actual aim of Vienna Congress was to share European regions among the great powers.

Keywords: Congress of Vienna, Spain, Poland, International Relations

Streszczenie

HISZPANIA A SPRAWA POLSKA NA KONGRESIE WIEDEŃSKIM

Akt końcowy Kongresu wiedeńskiego został podpisany 9 czerwca 1815 r. Dylemat polsko-saksoński był jednym z najbardziej skomplikowanych podczas negocjacji. Hiszpania nie podpisała dokumentu. Sprzeciw nie miał związku z decyzjami w sprawie polskiej, ale hiszpański dyplomata P. Labrador uważał, że ambicje rosyjskie i pruskie wobec Polski i Saksonii są zwykłymi uzurpacjami: są niezgodne z zasadą równowagi sił i zagrażają pokojowi w Europie. Uznawał je także za sprzeczne z interesami samej Hiszpanii. O opinii takiej decydowały przede wszystkim włoskie cele Hiszpanii. Mimo że sprawa polska nie miała bezpośredniego związku z interesami hiszpańskimi, w Madrycie także zdawano sobie sprawę z jej znaczenia dla trwałości porządku europejskiego i dla przyszłości Italii. Dla Labradora było oczywiste, że faktyczny cel mocarstw na Kongresie sprowadzał się do zamiaru podzielenia między siebie całej Europy.

Słowa kluczowe: Kongres wiedeński, Hiszpania, Polska, stosunki międzynarodowe

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