

## Abstracts

### 2/2009 Następstwa wybuchu II wojny światowej

Stanisław Żerko

*Poland, Germany and the Genesis of the Second World War*

The detente in relations with Germany which started in 1934 was a great achievement of Poland's foreign policy. In a situation when Paris and London adopted a conciliatory attitude toward Berlin, concern for a favorable atmosphere in Warsaw-Berlin relations appeared to be from the Polish perspective a *raison d'état*. Also a temporary cooperation with the Reich (e.g. when both countries opposed the Eastern Pact project) could be in the interest of Poland. However, during the Sudeten crisis of 1938 this cooperation took a dangerous turn for Poland and there was a threat of her being isolated by Western powers, a risk that had been overlooked by the Polish authorities. At the time of friendlier relations with Poland, Germany formulated offers of a closer cooperation and alliance aimed against the Soviet Union. Those propositions included also a weakening of Poland's alliance with France and were accompanied by demands for consent to incorporate Gdańsk into Germany and to create an extraterritorial road connection across Polish Pomerania. At this point there could be no doubt that the German offer would lead to a degradation of Poland to the status of a satellite state. In this situation, Poland's refusal and efforts to improve the strained ties with Western powers (which resulted in the establishment of an alliance with Britain and a revitalization of that with France) had all the characteristics of a rational decision.

Tadeusz Janicki

*German Economic Policy on Polish Territory Annexed to the Reich in the Years 1939-1945*

The article presents German economic policy on the so-called territories annexed to the Reich in the years 1939-1945. The study provides a synthetic overview of the major sources, objectives, stages and means used by the German occupants in implementing their goals in selected areas and branches of economy. The economic policy which was realized on those lands was an important element of building the German "living space" (*Lebensraum*) in the East of Europe. Its sources were of an ideological, economic and political character. Racism and a glorification of country life became a foundation for the policy of extermination of foreign ethnic groups, Germanization of annexed lands, deportation of their hitherto inhabitants and settlement of German peasants. Factors such as treating the "lands annexed to the Reich" as colonies in terms of economy, natural conditions, the doctrine of the "Great Space Economy" (*Großraumwirtschaft*) and war demands led to a restructuring of the economy of those territories so as to make them complementary to the economy of the so-called Old Reich accompanied by maximal exploitation of their production and population potential. The plunder of property that Germans practiced on mass scale, a policy of concentrating production, escalation of predatory economy and destruction resulting from military operations led to an economic degradation and significant civilizational regress of those areas.

Maria Rutowska

*German Repressions against the Polish People on Lands Annexed to the Third Reich during the Second World War (1939-1945)*

The article presents the Third Reich's occupant policy in Poland which was characterized by the most extremist actions. A variety of methods was used against all social strata and groups. All of these methods were aimed against the greatest goods of the human being, such as freedom and life. People were condemned to displacement from their homeland, forced to do slave labor, deprived of the bare necessities of existence, forbidden to obtain education or participate in cultural life. Furthermore, imponderable material damages were inflicted.

Bożena Górczyńska-Przybyłowicz

*Persecution and Extermination of Jews under Nazi Rule in the Wartheland*

During the German occupation of Poland, the Wartheland played a distinctive role in the persecution and extermination of Jews. It is there that German Nazis developed methods of murdering people and built the first extermination camp in the history of humanity where they partly realized the process of the "final solution of the local Jewish issue" even before the Wannsee conference, murdering there about two hundred thousand people. The remaining persons of Jewish origin from the area were murdered mostly at the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp. They were for the most part prisoners previously concentrated in the ghetto in Łódź. Until its close-down in 1944 the Łódź ghetto functioned as a peculiar kind of factory, operating according to the principles of a concentration camp with a large slave workforce whose labor was exploited both inside and outside the ghetto. Material evidence of the murderous exploitation of Jews during German occupation has remained even until today (e.g. in Poznań: the artificial lakes Rusałka and Malta, the cemetery at Miłostowo, the communication routes to Berlin and the airport at Krzesiny). The above mentioned examples are manifestations of a brutal termination of many centuries of coexistence of Poles and Jews on this territory, a coexistence which was problematic but also based on partnership.

Agata Bachórz

*The Great Patriotic War in Contemporary Russian Cinematography. On Memory Carriers*

The article deals with selected ways of presenting the Second World War in contemporary Russian cinematography on the example of several films produced in the years 2002-2008. The theoretical framework of the analysis is defined by issues pertaining to collective memory, its carriers and the medialisation of memory. In the background of the considerations is the thesis that the victory over fascism was and still is a vital factor in building Soviet and Russian collective identity. This effect is achieved by sustaining the state-controlled, heroic, one-sided and unrealistic image of the war to the exclusion of elements at odds with the paradigm of victory. Contrary to such an interpretation, the author of the article draws attention to the heterogeneity and polyphonicity of the Russian discourse on the past. Analysis includes films which adhere to the legitimized heroic discourse as well as those that present other, alternative or even subvertive narrations.

Magdalena Kałużna

*Sexual Violence in Armed Conflicts. The Trauma of German Women during the Second World War*

The author investigates the problem of sexual violence as a direct result of armed conflicts. The

main topic of her interest is the use of mass rape as a means of repression and pressure towards German women by the soldiers of the Red Army upon entering the former East German territories (East Prussia, Silesia and Pomerania) and the literary depiction of those events in post-war German prose. The author presents the history of rape in Western culture and the mechanisms of using sexual violence during the war: perceiving the woman-enemy as a symbolic personification of the motherland, following the right of the winner who is entitled to loot, desire of revenge, demoralization and barbarousness. Mass rape is also shown as a phenomenon of deprivation, of dispossessing the victim of what is intimate and familiar to her: integrity of body and psyche, self-esteem, identity, female dignity. Selected literary works serve as illustrations of the victims' trauma and ways of coping with it. Emphasis is placed on the necessity of public discourse on the use of sexual violence towards women during the war and the role of literature as a carrier of individual, cultural and collective memory which undergoes traumatization.

Zbigniew Mazur

*Karol Marian Pospieszalski. Studies on German Occupation Undertaken by the Institute of Western Affairs*

The article presents the scientific and organizational activity of Professor Karol Marian Pospieszalski at the Institute for Western Affairs. Special emphasis is placed on his endeavors to maintain a continuity of studies on the German occupation of Polish territory.

Zenon Kachnicz

*Soldiers of the Home Army in the Jogła Camp*

The article addresses the deportations of soldiers of the Polish Home Army, who were transported to the labor camps of the NKVD Nr 270 in the region of Borowicze, Novgorod County in November and December 1944 and returned to Poland in the spring of 1946. Aggressive behavior of the escorts, acute shortage of food and especially water, rationed in very sparse quantities during many days of the journey, lack of any information - such were the physical and mental oppressions which taken together were a foretoken of what might be expected at the unknown place of destination. This destination turned out to be the Jogła labor camp. A majority of the internees were Home Army privates from the Lublin area (the biggest groups came from the counties of Radzyn, Lukow, Krasnystaw, Lubartow and the city of Lublin), Eastern-Warsaw and Rzeszow. The prisoners were detained in inhuman and climatically adverse conditions, in overcrowded barracks, received starvation food rations and were forced to do exhausting physical labor; there was a lack of work clothes and adequate shoes, and the sanitary conditions were fatal. Deaths were frequent also due to diseases such as: dystrophy, pneumonia, dysentery, lung tuberculosis and intestine inflammation. After their release from the camp and return to Poland, many of those Home Army soldiers experienced repressions at the hands of the "people's authority" which was establishing itself in power. They were persecuted and treated as second rate citizens stigmatized with the "Home Army brand".

Wiesław Trzeciakowski

*German Policy of the Displacement of Poles and German Settlement in the Years 1939-1945 in the Area of Gau Danzig-Westpreussen, Świecko County*

The article tackles the theme of displacements of Polish families (as a matter of fact they should be defined as expulsions) from farms and other rural and urban real estates confiscated without

any compensation by the German occupant. The study has been narrowed down to the county of Swiecko in order to show as if under a microscope the structure of the activities of the German administration: from government guidelines through local police and administration on the level of Gau Danzig-Westpruessen down to concrete instances of displacement. In this way we obtain a clear and coherent picture showing the implementation of the German plans of displacements (expulsions) of Poles from territories annexed to the Reich. Whole families were expelled to the so-called displacement camps (Umsiedlungslager) which were then sealed and within a short time transformed into concentration camps with forced labor, like e.g. the Potulice camp (Umsiedlungslager Lebrechtsdorf) - it was built at the turn of 1940/1941 and since 1942 already functioned as a branch of the penitentiary concentration camp Stutthof. The homes of the expelled Polish families were settled by German migrants from the Baltic states, Bessarabia (Moldova, Romania) and Volhynia or passed into the hands of the local Germans. The campaign of expulsion and settlement was personally supervised by H. Himmler by means of security forces and police as well as central and lower level institutions for displacement (in Pomerania - the Central Office for Displacements in Gdansk).

Piotr Saja

*German Sabotage and Battles in Pomerania in September 1939*

The article deals with Polish-German relations in Pomerania preceding the outbreak of the Second World War and gives an account of the sequence of battles fought in 1939. The author discusses German preparations to the invasion of Poland, focusing mainly on the region of Gdansk Pomerania. Attention is drawn to the disproportion of forces engaged in combat on the Polish and German sides. The course of the September Campaign in Pomerania is assessed taking into account the actual strategic-operational capacities of the units of the "Pomorze" Army. The article also highlights some of the documents which provide significant evidence of the real intentions of the generalship of the Third Reich's armed forces.