

## FROM MEDIEVAL PRUSSIA TO CONTEMPORARY GERMANY

**Michael Burleigh, The Knights, Nationalists and the Historians: Images of Medieval Prussia from the Enlightenment to 1945**

The history of the Teutonic Order has long inspired not only historians, but also poets, painters, journalists and filmmakers. In Germany, however, after 1945 the circle of those interested in the history of the Order diminished to a narrow group of professional medievalists whose names are obviously not commonly known. This decline in interest was observed both in Western and Eastern Germany. In Poland the situation was altogether different, as the authorities considered supporting the interest in the Teutonic Knights an element of a wider plan of steering social emotions, memory and awareness. At various times the history of the Order, or rather its symbolic version, was exploited to legitimize a range of very different political goals. In the article forwards the claim that the shape of the present largely determines the way of writing about the past. The article provides a compact review of the subject matter from the Enlightenment to the present times, highlighting several aspects of the “posthumous” ideological life of the Teutonic Order.

**Roman Kochnowski, Grand Admiral Erich Raeder – Commander of the German Navy 1928-1943**

Admiral Raeder is an exceptional personality in the history of German Navy. He had been the commander of German Navy for 15 years. He decided to develop the Battle fleet drawing no conclusions from the experience of World War I. He was considered to be a conservative man standing outside the III Reich nazi system. Thanks to him Kriegsmarine represented a very high level battle value at the turn of World War II.

### **Katarzyna Woniak, Former Polish Forced Laborers in Today's Landscape of Memory. Nearly Forgotten**

The article is an attempt to investigate the scale, form and scope of memory about forced laborers in the Polish symbolic landscape. Emphasis is placed on the analysis of monuments and plaques dedicated to former forced laborers. In the period of the Polish People's Republic workers were a group of Second World War victims which was too common to be given a special place in the collective memory of Poles. Only the creation of the Association of Poles – Victims of the Third Reich at the end of the 1980s opened the space for a symbolic commemoration of the deportation of Poles to forced labor in Germany. An opportunity to incorporate forced labor into the memory of the Second World War came with the debate on reparations from the German government at the beginning of the 21st century. In today's Poland there are not many places dedicated to those nearly 3 million people who make up this specific group of victims of the German occupation of Poland. Numerous such places were established in the last few years, mainly as part of grassroots initiatives aimed at discovering the local history of a particular area. However, forced labor is still insufficiently present in the Polish memory of the Second World War.

### **Krzysztof Tarka, Germany, Russia and the Polish Question in the Journalism of Jędrzej Giertych in the Paris Monthly „Horyzonty” (1956–1971)**

The liberalization of the communist system in mid-1950s, disillusionment with the policy of the West, fears connected with West German revisionism, and dwindling chances of change in the situation of Central-Eastern Europe contributed to a differentiation of attitudes among the Polish emigrants. Some of them, notably the nationalists, voiced the need to seek compromise with Russia. This led to the emergence of a pro-Russian option alongside the still dominant pro-Western one. The thesis on the need of an alliance with Russia was propagated by Jędrzej Giertych in his journalism in the “Horyzonty” monthly published in Paris. This ideologically committed opponent of communism and a staunch Catholic was at the same time an ardent champion of an alliance with Russia, which in those circumstances meant an alliance with the Soviet Union, but he did not see it as a contradiction. He claimed that the biggest threat for Poland was Germany supported by the West. He hoped that in appreciation of sincere friendship and loyalty, Russia would restore to Poland the cities of Lvov and Vilnius. For him, alliance with the eastern neighbor was not of a temporary or tactical nature. Giertych consistently repeated that Russia was Poland's natural ally, and Poland was Russia's natural ally. Cooperation between the two countries was to be cemented by the Chinese threat.

**Katarzyna Jedynakiewicz-Mróz, Considerations on the Role of Women in the Democratic Opposition in Late GDR (1981-1989)**

The article presents the activity of women in the circles of the democratic opposition in East Germany in the years 1981-1989. The source base of the considerations were the diaries, memories and interviews of the women-oppositionists in the German Democratic Republic (GDR): Bärbel Bohley, Marianne Birthler, Freya Klier, Vera Lengsfeld (Wollenberger), Ulrike Poppe and Katja Havemann. In the text were also used the collection of the relations and memories of the rank-and-file female members of the opposition.

The first part of the article analyses the activity of women in different trends of the East German Opposition: pacifistic, ecological and the human rights movement. The text shows also the women activity in the demonstrations in Berlin in January 1988, in the action of monitoring of the communal election in the GDR in May 1988 and in the democratic protests in the autumn 1989. These part of the article presents the participation of the female leaders of the opposition in the Central Round Table deliberations at the turn of the years 1989 and 1990 as well.

The second part of the text analyses the main features of the female involvement in the democratic opposition in the GDR. It were several questions under investigation, concerning: age, legal status, the level of the education, the world outlook in the moment of the entering into the oppositional activity and the motives of the participation in the opposition. These part of the article considers also specific female aspects of the oppositional activity, for example: the female interest in the problem of the educational system in the GDR, the female fear about their children in the case of the possible imprisonment and the relations of sexes in the oppositional groups.

The ending part of the text shows the public career of the women leaders of the opposition in the GDR after the unification of Germany.

**Joanna Trajman, Rita Süßmuth – The Conservative Reformer and the CDU Policy towards Women**

Social and political changes taking place in Germany since the late 1960s contributed to the creation of a new women's movement and the alteration in the status of women. These transformations were also evident in the voting preferences, mostly of the young women, who began to vote, not for the CDU as was previously the case, but for the left-wing parties. Therefore, the assumption of the Chancellor's office by Helmut Kohl in 1982 could not mean a continuation of the traditional policy of the Christian Democrats towards women; on the contrary, it had to lead to its alteration. A highly symbolic expression of that change was the national party congress on women's issues held in Essen in 1985 and the appointment of Rita Süßmuth as the first Federal Minister of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. The new minister, who was led by Christian values, attempted to adjust the Union's policy towards women to the changed social realities, thus becoming a conservative reformer. Her views and actions relating for instance to the

women's quota, extension of the institutional care over children or the pension for women, encountered the opposition from the party. Her activity as the President of the Bundestag was also criticized on the grounds that she was involved in the issues regarding the condone of abortion and the marital rape – the topics which were considered to be controversial by the Christian Democrats. However, because of the ability to engage in cross-party alliances and her conviction of the validity of her solutions, Süßmuth has become the symbol of the modern CDU policy towards women.

### **Dorota Masiakowska-Osses, Immigration – A New Perspective of the German Cultural Memory**

Contemporary Federal Republic of Germany defines itself as an immigrant country, and the statement fully corresponds with the actual situation. As a result of a mass inflow of foreigners, which began in 1950s, one out of every five German citizens can tell his/her own or family history of immigration. These facts serve as a basis for the question concerning the extent to which immigration that turned the FRG into a multicultural country, has become a part of the German collective memory. While referring to the concept of cultural memory by Jan and Aleida Assmann, the author presents and analyzes modern ways of preserving the immigrant past as well as expressing remembrance about it in the public sphere (jubilees, exhibitions, and monographs on culture). The process of including migration in the national history is highly dynamic, with its initiators being most often the descendants of immigrants who demand greater pluralism within Germany's cultural memory.

### **Izabela Janicka, The Attitude of the German Middle Class towards Right-wing Extremism in the Light of Researches by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation**

The article presents the results of the researches on right-wing extremism moods in the German middle class, which are conducted on regular basis by Friedrich Ebert Foundation since 2006. The condition of social awareness is measured in many categories. The described empirical studies focus on the spreading ideology of right-wing extremism. Antidemocratic populism and hostility to many alienated social groups create the climate of suspicion and hatred. Next to the dominating rhetoric of injustice the anti-system activities are appearing, which lead to failed political elections. Presented data in combination with precise sociological analysis facilitate to define dangers and provide specific arguments for the debate. The evaluation of ideology and mentality of the middle class, which is the most effective and decision-making social group, is the starting point to draw conclusions. Those inferences confirm only the diagnosis that first scratches appear on the fragile surface of the middle class.

**Miłosława Borzyszkowska-Szewczyk, A Crime Story as a Space of the Polish-German-German Reckoning with the Past?**

Magdalena Parys' "Magik" ("The Magician")

The article contains an interpretation of the crime story 'Magician' (2014) by Magdalena Parys. In this interpretation a special attention is paid to the picture of contemporary Germany sketched in the text. Magdalena Lasocka who was born in Gdańsk in 1971 is a bicontextual Polish and German writer who as a child experienced 'Solidarity' emigration to Germany (the one that took place in the wake of the martial law of 13th December 1981). The history plays an important role in her novels and she presents cultural and social processes taking place in Germany. In the convention of a crime story she introduces a dispute on German-Polish and German-German entanglements and memory. 'Parys-Berlin' (according to Justyna Sobolewska) can be perceived as a kind of lens of collective and individual peregrinations of contemporary Germany. This also a story of polyphonic narratives functioning in social space and coping with the past of the representatives of the society that experienced subsequent waves of migration. In this cast of characters a significant part is played by the protagonists whose experience reflects Polish and German cultural complexity.

**Dorota Litwin-Lewandowska, Areas of Conflict in Polish-German Relations in the Media Coverage for 2015-2016**

After the political change in Poland as a result of the presidential and parliamentary elections of 2015, the foreign policy guidelines, including bilateral relations with Germany, have been redefined. The previous government introduced innovations in relations with Germany, motivating it to European leadership, with emphasis on the priorities of the Polish foreign policy, i.e. close Polish-German partnership, continuation of the idea of reconciliation and economic cooperation, with the historical policy withdrawn into the background. The present government does not fully continue these ideas: there has been a return to the traditionally understood relations between the two countries. Furthermore, the relations with Germany are handled in a twofold mode – the official ones are proper and develop in a favourable atmosphere, while the public discourse refers to the resentment policy with clear anti-German undertones. The effects of this duality are deteriorated relations with Germany and worse opinions about Germany among the public. Without doubt, the relations have been further exacerbated by the exodus of refugees to the EU and Poland's lack of readiness to accept immigrants under the relocation policy. In view of the current crisis in Eastern Europe and inside the EU, the future of the Polish-German relationship is burdened with a degree of uncertainty.

### **Maria Wagińska-Marzec, The Official Opening of the Elbphilharmonie – A New Symbol of the Free City of Hamburg**

The long awaited opening of the Elbphilharmonie, the new hall of the Hamburg philharmonic raised an avid interest not only among the inhabitants of this city. Indeed, the occasion turned out to be an event of a much larger scale and socio-cultural significance, important not just to music lovers in Germany and worldwide, but also prominent from the perspective of the prestige of the proud city of Hamburg. The solemn opening concert on January 11, 2017 was attended by many leading representatives of the world of politics, culture and business, as well as music lovers from Germany and abroad, journalists, music critics and correspondents from all over the world. On account of the flourish of the structure, its unique form, external circumstances and expectations concerning the acoustics, this impressive cultural project posed an immense architectural, technical and above all financial challenge. From the beginning it provoked doubts whether the work could be successfully completed, so when the construction was finally brought to an end, the satisfaction was all the greater. The object of the study is to present the conception of the entire enterprise and the various purposes that the building serves, with a focus on the merits of the Great Concert Hall and its acoustics. Also the first reactions and commentaries following the official opening of the new building are considered. From the numerous accounts it can be concluded that the Elbphilharmonie has undoubtedly become a new icon of the Free City of Hamburg.

### **Agnieszka Bielawska, Angela Merkel's Ostpolitik in the Face of the Ukrainian Crisis**

This article presents the positions of Angela Merkel's eastern policy during the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and her impact exerted on the activities of the European Union and the Russian Federation. When analyzing Merkel's attitude toward both sides of the conflict one notices that the Chancellor paid much attention to maintaining good relations with the Russian Federation and with Ukraine as well. The entrance of the Russian troops to Crimea became a turning point in Merkel's "Ostpolitik". Since then on the Chancellor began to assess the Russian policy more decidedly as activities that are impossible to accept since they violate the principles of international law.