

THE EFFECTS OF PAST CENTURY'S WARS

Zbigniew Mazur, Max Weber and the German Defeat

The author presents the views of Max Weber, a German sociologist, historian and political theorist on war and Germany's responsibility for its outbreak. Max Weber (1864-1920) belonged to a generation in which condemnation of war as such was rare while the cult of armed combat as a test of individual fitness and collective organization was not infrequent. Like many of his contemporaries Weber claimed war to be an admissible, at times even a desirable way of regulating international conflicts. He considered politics in Darwinist categories i.e. in terms of ruthless rivalry and struggle for power played out inside and among countries.

Damian Zieliński, Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck – a Flawed "Hero"

The subject of the article is general Paul Emil von Lettow-Vorbeck (1870-1964). He was the commander of the German army in East Africa during the First World War, where he gained the reputation of an invincible and chivalrous leader. For many German people he was a national hero. He never came to terms with the fall of monarchy in Germany, in the period of the Weimar Republic he represented the previous era, continuing to be a champion of colonialism and reconstruction of the German army. In the period of the Third Reich Lettow-Vorbeck did not join the National Socialist German Workers' Party (German: NSDAP), but nevertheless collaborated with the regime. After the Second World War he again became a hero of the collective imagination, however in the 1960s he was strongly criticized. The article presents not only the biography of Lettow-Vorbeck but also how his myth was created in the public sphere and how he was perceived by the society and media in particular periods.

Dariusz Jeziorny, The First World War from the Perspective of Great Britain – a Balance of Gains and Losses

Great Britain, famous for her balance of power policy during the nineteenth century, got involved in the Great War because the growth of German power challenged this European balance of power. The German aggression on Belgium demanded concrete counter-action on the part of London, where the Napoleonic times were still remembered. Great Britain fought mainly against Germany for four years and won the war. Nevertheless, the First World War had no winner. Although Britain achieving her basic political, colonial, military and economic postulates the losses were overwhelming and the whole British power was seriously weakened. Without any doubts this influenced the

government's internal and foreign policy in the interwar period. It was felt in the British capital that participation in any subsequent conflict on such a huge scale would result in the destruction of the United Kingdom's power, a prediction which came true after the Second World War.

Marek Mikołajczyk, Great Britain and European Integration in the Years 1945-1950

During the Second World War Winston Churchill called for a close cooperation among countries in postwar Europe with the purpose of uniting them under the leadership of Great Britain. After the war, on account of its prestige and international status, Great Britain seemed to be a natural leader of Western Europe. In 1945 the Conservative Party was replaced in power by the Labour Party but the latter's attitude toward European integration and the place of Europe in Great Britain's politics did not differ in essentials from that of the Conservatives, although it should be noted that the traditional reasons of reluctance in tightening cooperation with continental Europe were supplemented by the Labourites with new ones, in line with the party's the anti-capitalist socio-economic program. In the years 1945-1950 the British government, contrary to the expectations of Western European countries had no intention of leading the process of European integration or even participating in it. However, it was ready to support such activities similarly to Britain's stance in the interwar period. Churchill, who was then in opposition, championed European integration albeit on the French-German basis, without the participation of Great Britain. When he came back to power in 1951 he continued his predecessors' policy of splendid isolation in relations with Europe. Therefore, one may speak of a continuity of British policy toward European integration from the interwar period to the early 1960s when the British government expressed its will to join the EEC. This policy had far reaching consequences both for Great Britain and Europe which can be experienced even today.

Jadwiga Kiwerska, A Global Power – the United States after the Second World War

The United States took upon themselves the effort to shape the postwar international order already during the Second World War. Therefore the end of the war made a demand on the American politics to meet new challenges on the international arena. The enormous potential of the USA in 1945 and a new geopolitical situation, the threat posed by the Soviet Union included, compelled America to assume the role of a global power with all its consequences. Only the United States could cope with the new responsibilities in international relations. It meant for America a departure from its traditional principle of isolationism and involvement in world affairs on an unprecedented scale. In this way America became for the next decades a major if not the main creator and factor of international order.

Łukasz Cherek, The Creation of the World Bank and its Initial Activity in the Light of the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan 1944-1948

International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, also known as the World Bank, was created together with the International Monetary Fund at the Bretton Woods Conference in July 1944. Articles of Agreement, signed by the countries participating in the conference, defined five major regulations of the existence of the Bank. Those regulations soon proved to be insufficient and the new institution had to face many organizational problems which limited the role of the President of the Bank leaving it unable to make any loan decisions. The task of changing this situation was taken up by John McCloy, who acted as the Bank's president between 1947 and 1949. This article examines the policy of the World Bank during its first years, in which it could not stay indifferent to the changing political realities in international relations, such as the implementation of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. The article reassesses the role of the World Bank in international relations after 1945, presents hearings before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, correspondence between John McCloy and Harry Truman and between McCloy and Averell Harriman from the Economic Cooperation Administration, established to administer the Marshall Plan in Europe.

Krzysztof Siwek, The American Project of Internationalisation of Silesia and of the Polish-German Border from 1945 to 1949

The objective of the United States regarding internationalisation of Silesia and the Polish-German border established in 1945 was based on the needs of European economic reconstruction which included international access to Silesian coal and foodstuffs. Despite U.S. - U.S.S.R. tensions American diplomacy still emphasized the all-European dimension of the Silesian issue in particular during the Council of Foreign Ministers' sessions in Moscow and London in 1947. Accordingly, it was not the opposition to Poland's westward move which determined the U.S.'s critical attitude towards the Oder-Neisse question but the resolve to prevent isolation of Silesian industry behind the Iron Curtain. Nevertheless U.S. plans concerning Silesia were suspended because of the political division of Germany and Europe in 1949.

Karolina Ćwiek-Rogalska, Visions of a United Slavdom and the Settlement Policy on the Recovered Territories in the Czechoslovak Press Published in the Borderland in the Years 1945-1948

The author analyzes the articles from the Czechoslovak press from the years 1945-1948, published in the Borderland, presenting the ideological project of a united Slavdom and its cultural and political role in Europe and in the world. This issue encompasses a range of other specific questions, including the role of the USSR in the community of Slavs, the place of Czechoslovakia, the demands on the correction of Czechoslovakia's borders, the incorporation of Lusatia, as well as narrations about Poland and Poles. A special group of texts are those comparing Polish Recovered Territories to the Czech Borderland. The author emphasizes that their role was not only to show the similarities, but also, though not explicitly, to enhance the value of the solutions implemented in Czechoslovakia in the Borderland.

Rafał Żytyniec, The Role of Poland in the Anti-Fascist Politics of Memory in the GDR (1949-1972)

The object of the study is to show the activity of the Helmut von Gerlach Society for Cultural, Economic and Political Relations with the New Poland and the history of the building of the Memorial to Polish Soldiers and German Anti-Fascists in Berlin- Friedrichshain on the example of the reception of the drama "Niemcy" ("Germans") by Leon Kruczkowski in the GDR. The focus is on the role of Poland in the anti-fascist politics of memory of the GDR in the years 1949-1972. The aim of this politics was to join the community of memory of the camp of winners of the Second World War. Poland, being the first victim of Germany's aggression during the war which was started by Germany, played a special role in this process becoming an important element of the GDR's legitimization strategy aimed against the FRG. Following a relatively short period of official atonement for the war crimes committed in Poland, the politics of memory of the GDR tended to underscore the two nations' allegedly common fight against fascism. The overcoming of the asymmetries between the two countries in the still living memory of the Second World War was effected by a class interpretation of the criminal system thereby excluding individual guilt and responsibility. The reception of the politics of memory described in the study shows that it was used in completely different ways by each country for its own internal purposes. Whereas in the GDR the dominant narration was that of common fight, in the Polish People's Republic emphasis was placed mainly on the Polish contribution to the defeat of Nazism.

Jakub Wojtkowiak, The Great Patriotic War – a Balance of Exclusion

The article deals with the problem of exclusion and repression of whole social groups by the Stalinist regime during the so called Great Patriotic War. It purports to show that Stalin and his milieu tried to consolidate a majority of the society by means of excluding and subjecting to repressions arbitrarily chosen social groups, seeking in this way to reduce the threat posed by instant successes of the German army in the war against the USSR. The first such group comprised Red Army soldiers who surrendered to the Germans and were prisoners of war – they were declared traitors and so their families were to suffer repressions. Another group consisted of the national minorities residing in the Soviet Union – in 1941 those were Germans and later during the liberation of the country from German occupation it meant whole nations whose representatives collaborated with the German occupants. The author argues that contrary to the claims of the Russian propaganda, victory in the war was not treated by Stalin as the victory of all the Soviet Union citizens.

Agnieszka Kisztelińska-Węgrzyńska, The Question of German Assets in Austria as an International Problem in the Years 1945–1949

The problem of German assets in Austria after 1945 was an important element of the debate on the economic condition of the state and its political emancipation. German assets left in Austria after 1945 were under the control of the occupying powers and later the Austrian Government. This problem intertwined after the war with three key issues of an economic nature: 1. Food supply and regulation of the economic situation during the period May 1945 - July 1946; 2. Nationalization Act of July 1946; 3. International debate on the State Treaty. Postwar Austria was completely dependent economically on the decision of the occupying powers and cooperated with them successfully in overcoming the economic crisis. Austrian political elites used the supporting attitude of the United States and Great Britain to convince the international public opinion that a nation of six million people was unable to pay reparations worth hundreds of millions. By means of legal tools in the form of resolutions adopted at the Moscow Conference in 1943 Austrian authorities prepared and introduced a Nationalization Act to protect state assets, also those left behind by Germans, from an expansive Soviet policy. Prolonged work on a State Treaty ultimately resulted in a reduction of the amount of claims on the part of the Soviet Union. In turn the Western powers not only relinquished all claims but even returned the costs of their occupation of Austria. The basic sources which provide an insight into the assessment of the powers' motivation are documents on Foreign Relations of the United States Policy from the Department of State Collections and Archives of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 1947-1949.

Ewa Godlewska, The Influence of the Second World War on the Issue of Nationality in Austria

The article deals with the still tangible consequences of the Second World War for the current situation of national minorities in Austria. After the war this country was granted a special status as it was recognized to be Hitler's first victim and for this reason Austria never answered for its involvement on the side of the perpetrators. The author analyzes the impact of this state of affairs on the so called nationality issue and majority-minority relations. She also addresses a vital question on how the absence of settling accounts with history is the cause of recurring radicalism and to what extent the latter is aimed against national minorities inhabiting the territory of Austria.

Grażyna Strnad, Political Challenges in a Divided Nation: South Korea's North Korea Policy

This article focuses on the political challenges in a divided Korean nation and South Korea's policy toward North Korea. In 2015, the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II is commemorated, and the 70th anniversary of the division of Korea is remembered. The division of Korea resulted in two states: the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. At the core of inter-Korean relations are issues of national identity common to all Koreans. The history of inter-Korean politics consists of complex intertwined currents of confrontation and contested legitimacy, as well as attempts at dialogue, cooperation and reconciliation. Despite changes in world politics, the divided Korean nation still struggles with remnants of the Cold War.