

## **Anna Czaplińska, Władysław Czapliński**

**Keywords:** World War II, reparation claims, Germany, Poland, Potsdam Agreement

The study examines the consequences of the Polish government making reparation claims against Germany in connection with World War II. The assumption is that the 1953 waiver of claims was implemented under an international strategy. The Potsdam Agreement established a compensation mechanism that provided for Poland's claims to be met by reparations owed to the USSR. Even if reparations for Poland were not fully paid, any potential claims should be directed to the USSR.

International responsibility is associated with a state's violation of an international commitment, and it encompasses all types of obligations, including unilateral acts. Undermining the Potsdam system would lead to the negation of all provisions of that agreement, including those governing territorial order and boundaries. However, the final regulation of payments for persons injured as a result of the war remains unresolved. German governments compensate them *ex gratia*.

## **Andrzej Furier**

**Keywords:** Caucasus in the 19th century, German settlement, Russia, Germany, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia.

The paper presents the development and consequences of German settlement in the Caucasus, which took place during the period of Russian rule. It was an element of Russia's imperial policy, but it also significantly impacted German-Caucasian relations. In the early 19th century, the settlers were farmers, and thereafter specialists from other economic sectors joined them. This allowed Germany to participate in the modernization of Caucasian agriculture and industry and served as the basis of Germany's political cooperation with the Caucasus in the next centuries.

Research questions concerned the makeup and size of the study group, as well as the types of activities and achievements of German settlers during the early years of their arrival in the Caucasus. The research hypothesis consisted in highlighting the contribution of this group to the economic transformations in the Caucasus and the development of Germany's contacts with the region, which later laid the foundation for the political rapprochement and cooperation between Germany and the Caucasus.

The literature on the subject includes publications in German, Russian and Polish. The results of the author's own research on Polish ties with the Caucasus, particularly on religious issues (some of the Germans were Catholic), were also incorporated. So far, there has been no research on the German group in the Caucasus in Poland, but the subject does occur in numerous publications on other topics, such as studies on Caucasian Catholics.

**Maria Eleonora Hebisz, Jacek Stanislawski**

**Keywords:** War, PTSD, Veterans, Mental health, Treatment, Psychology, Art-therapy, the USA, Ukraine

The article aims to present the application of various therapeutic approaches to the treatment of PTSD sufferers, in particular the servicemen who return from active combat duty. The authors hope to demonstrate how the traditional psychotherapy within a certain stream can be supplemented by new elements.

Special emphasis is placed on art-therapy, which appears to be one of the most successful techniques. Sadly, the development of art-therapy, as well as other non-traditional psychological treatments is often impeded by insufficient funding and inadequate collaboration among institutions studying the use of this particular approach.

The article also discusses the growing awareness of the problem of PTSD in military conflicts in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. The United States and Ukraine were chosen as the case studies in order to observe how new therapeutic elements are implemented in these two nations, which have recently participated in significant armed conflicts. The USA is a pioneer of new scientific solutions, while Ukraine has always had a limited budget for such initiatives. Nonetheless, progress has been observed in both countries though there is still a lot to be done.

**Malgorzata Magdalena Hybka**

**Keywords:** special schemes, VAT, small business, tax preferences, Germany

Value Added Tax has been to a large extent harmonized in the European Union since the 1960s. As a result, most of the general provisions concerning its design are applicable in all Member States. However, there are some variances in how specific categories of taxpayers are taxed. Member States that face challenges in applying universal VAT norms to specific categories of entrepreneurs due to the structure and nature of their activity are permitted to adopt simplified procedures for calculating and collecting the tax. These procedures typically

take the shape of flat-rate schemes, tax exemptions, tax reductions or specific provisions concerning VAT chargeability.

This paper aims to assess the implementation of these schemes in Germany with regard to small businesses. The study provides a multi-level insight into the legal framework that underpins the design and actual implementation of these VAT schemes. It is primarily conceptual in nature. The paper's objective is achieved through the use of selected socio-legal research combined with certain quantitative methods. To determine the demand reported by entities for the procedures in question, as well as the scale of their application, statistical data from the Federal Statistical Office of Germany were used.

For many years, Germany was among the member states that implemented all the simplified VAT schemes outlined in the 2006/112/EC Directive to reduce the tax burden imposed on firms. However, these schemes were and continue to be applicable only to a limited extent. They are an example of legal concepts that are diversely understood depending on the legal systems, despite the advanced harmonization process of VAT. Studies and publications addressing the problem of the application of simplified VAT schemes are therefore extremely rare. The issue covers both the legal and economic aspects of VAT design. The present paper uses one country as an example, but a comparative study was also conducted to juxtapose the provisions adopted at the European Union level and those implemented at the national level.

**Katarzyna Kamińska-Karolczuk, Jakub Potulski**

**Keywords:** Germany-China relations, Sino-German relations, German political parties, Germany's strategy towards China

The study presents the analysis results of the electoral programmes developed by the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) parties for the 2021 *Bundestag* election campaign and from the Strategy of the Federal Government towards People's Republic of China (PRC) (*China-Strategie der Bundesregierung*) adopted in 2023. The analysis pertains to the parties whose representatives won seats in the *Bundestag* as a result of the 2021 elections. We ask the following research questions: 1. Did the parliamentary FRG political parties refer to the PRC in their electoral programmes for the Bundestag in 2021? 2. If so, which terms in relation to the PRC were used and which issues were emphasised? 3. Were the terms and challenges relating to the PRC used by the FRG parties reflected in the 2023 Strategy of the Federal Government towards PRC? This study was conducted according to systematic literature review and an analysis of the identified documents.

The analysis shows that the programme of each and every FRG political party with representation in the *Bundestag* for the 2021–2025 term contained references to the PRC. The PRC is therefore a relevant subject for all relevant FRG parties. However, these parties differ in their perception of the PRC's role, which is also reflected in the strategy towards PRC prepared by the parties forming the federal government in the current term (2021–2025).

### **Michał Kosman**

**Keywords:** German foreign policy, *Zeitenwende*, China, Russia, United States, Olaf Scholz, Xi Jinping, international order

The aim of the article is to describe the evolution of Germany's policy towards the People's Republic of China in the conditions of the emerging new international order. The text is divided into several parts. The first one characterized the main features of the emerging international order, which is moving from the stage of unipolarity to multipolarity. Its two main links are the United States and the growing China, the third - with less potential - is Russia. These changes require adjustment actions from the European Union and Germany, especially in the wake of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Then, the outline of Sino-German relations in the previous decades was described. The next part includes the most important program documents of the German authorities and economic institutions on policy towards China, as well as German diplomatic activity in relations with Beijing. The last part contains a summary and conclusions. The article uses the method of examining documents and studies.

### **Dariusz Łukasiewicz**

**Keywords:** Aleksander Wielopolski, Adam Skałkowski, Gerard Labuda, war, Chrobrze

Adam Skałkowski, a historian and professor at the University of Poznań, was one of the key signatories to the foundation act of the Institute for Western Affairs in 1945. In 1919, he was invited to Poznań from the Jan Kazimierz University in Lviv and together with Kazimierz Tymieniecki created the so-called "historical seminar" at the University of Poznań in the same year. On Prof. Edward Taylor's incentive, Skałkowski undertook work on the biography of

Aleksander Wielopolski. He even signed a printing contract with the Książnica-Atlas publishing house, where it was agreed that the book would deal with the margrave's private life.

The article aims to highlight Adam Skałkowski's exceptional and heroic history of scientific work during wartime (1939-1945) under the threat of death. His research was based on sources made up of handwritten correspondence and memoirs. At the beginning of the war, Professor Skałkowski was among the refugees in Warsaw besieged by the Germans, then he was invited to the Wielopolski palace in Chrobrze to continue his work begun in 1937, when he was researching sources for Aleksander Wielopolski's legacy.

The article discusses the problem of how scientists of that time (Skałkowski, Handelsman, Konopczyński) understood the importance of their research and educational work, which was conducted under the conditions of Nazi occupation without remuneration or fees. The author hypothesizes that scientists perceived the German threat and undertook efforts to preserve Polish cultural legacy and Polish archival resources, in which task they were able to garner major assistance from the landed nobility.

The author mainly used materials from the archives.

**Oleksandra Moskalenko, Dominika Bochańczyk-Kupka**

**Keywords:** war, NATO membership, EU integration, *Zeitenwende*, security system, Ukraine, Germany

This review paper aims to comprehensively analyze Germany-Ukraine relations in the context of Ukraine's pursuit of NATO and EU membership amidst the ongoing conflict. It focuses on Germany's shift from a pro-Russia stance to actively supporting Ukraine's NATO and EU aspirations. While tensions persist between the two countries, Germany has become a crucial ally, aiding Ukraine in repelling the Russian invasion and strengthening its Western ties. The article explores the factors driving these contradictions and highlights Germany's policy reevaluation in response to Russia's actions in Ukraine, including implications for Ukraine's NATO aspirations. It delves into Ukraine's historical path towards NATO and EU integration, critically assessing the Normandy format and Minsk agreements in the evolving German-Ukraine relationship. The article also examines how the war has transformed Germany's National Security System, as seen in Scholz's *Zeitenwende* speech. Ultimately, it underscores the importance of Ukraine's NATO and EU membership for its democratic future and security.

The analysis of Germany and Ukraine's relationships regarding NATO membership and EU integration is made until September 2023.

The goal of the article is to provide a comprehensive overview of the evolution of German-Ukraine relationships during the Russo-Ukrainian war, highlighting turning points from tensions to strong support while analyzing Ukraine's path to membership in NATO and the EU.

To reveal this, we employed descriptive research methods commonly used by political scientists and economists, examining historical events, policy documents, and official statements to provide a nuanced understanding of this evolving relationship.

**Tomasz Nodzyński**

**Keywords:** changes, western border, Poznań/Greater Poland Voivodeship, 20th century

The aim of this study is to present the changes to the western border of Poznań/Greater Poland Voivodeship in relation to the transformations of the border with Germany and the successive reforms of Poland's administrative-territorial division during the specified period. The author seeks to demonstrate how the political and social influences shaped this border. The article covers the following topics:

- the western border of Poznań Voivodeship from 1919 as a border with Germany, then from 1922 to 1938 with *Grenzmark Posen-Westpreussen* province, which included the Greater Poland counties (Wschowa, Babimost, Międzyrzecz, Skwierzyna, Piła, Złotów, Noteć);
- the abolition of the border during the war and occupation years of 1939-1945;
- the shift of Poland's western border and the border of Poznań Voivodeship to the Oder and Lusatian Neisse rivers, and the incorporation of the newly created Lubusz Land to Poznań Voivodeship between 1945 and 1950;
- the role of Greater Poland in forming the new region and its identity;
- the distancing of Poznań Voivodeship from the border with Germany (GDR) following the creation of the Zielona Góra Voivodeship in 1950;
- adjustments of the western borders of Poznań Voivodeship, Piła Voivodeship, and Leszno Voivodeship in 1975;
- the new border between Greater Poland Voivodeship and Lubusz Voivodeship after 1999.

Moving Poznań-Greater Poland Voivodeship away from the border with Germany in

1950 appears to be a permanent solution, although future changes in the country's administrative-territorial division cannot be predicted.

The article was written using both philological and geographical research approaches.

**Volker Wild, Jan Ferdinand**

**Keywords:** Brandt, Nuremberg Trial, guilt, responsibility, Vansittart, Jaspers, T. Mann

The study is the first fundamental examination of the narrative that Willy Brandt developed about the Nazi era in his book “Criminals and other Germans” published in Norway in 1946. Contrary to the widespread opinion in research and public, the authors come to the conclusion in a historically embedded text analysis that Brandt paints a dichotomous picture of Germany. He contrasts the Nazis with “the Germans” as “other Germans” and distinguishes between “guilt” and “responsibility”. By arguing that responsibility does not equal guilt, he tries to exonerate the majority of society from its complicity in the regime’s policies in order to restore the nation’s reputation and reconcile Germans with their history. The study places Brandt's interpretation in the post-war guilt discourse and identifies the book as a basic narrative from which his later politics of the past become understandable.

