GERMAN DEBATES

Piotr Kubiak, **Elections to the Bundestag of 22 September 2013 – Analysis and Consequences**

The author undertakes a detailed analysis of the election results and assesses them from the perspective of the German party system. The following issues are discussed: voting system, electoral campaign, election results and their implications. Although elections to the Bundestag of 22 September 2013 brought a success of the CDU/CSU, yet due to a marked defeat of the liberal FDP, German Christian Democratic Union was forced to seek a coalition partner on the left side of the political scene. After long negotiations a great coalition government of the CDU/CSU-SDP was appointed, with Angela Merkel once again as the head. The election caused extensive changes within the German party system. For the first time in the history of the FRG the liberal FDP did not win any seats in the parliament, whereas the considerable success of the newly created Alternative for Germany showed that a "single-topic party", can within a short time span rock even such a stable political system as the German one. The elections shook the system formed between 2005-2012 which was made up of five parties and substituted it with a transitional system of 4+2 (four parties in the Bundestag: CDU/CSU, SDP, The Left and The Greens; plus two parties just below the electoral threshold: FDP and AfD). Since two parties were just below the electoral threshold, the 18th Bundestag is characterized by relatively low representativity (84.2% of voters). At the same time the 2013 election strengthened the position of the two great Volksparteien. Besides, analysis of the election results showed continued differences in the electoral preferences between the inhabitants of eastern and western Germany, and a traditionally strong attachment of the eldest voters (above 60 years of age) to both Volksparteien.

Ewa Bojenko-Izdebska, **"The East Votes Differently" – Voting Preferences in the New Federal States after 1990**

The author analyzes the evolution of party-political systems in Eastern Germany and the results of subsequent elections to the State Diets (Landtag) and the Bundestag from the unification to the latest elections of 22 September 2013. She presents the process of the shaping of the party system in the new federal states and the causes of their differences, solidified by consecutive elections. Next she undertakes an analysis of the polling results in Eastern Germany in elections to the Bundestag, comparing them to the electoral preferences in the Western part of the country. During the last elections there occurred both an approximation of the polling results to the overall German trend (victory of the CDU) but also the continuation of hitherto preferences, since in spite of losses The Left came

second, while SPD and FDP again lost a part of the voters. However, whether this means a progressive leveling of electoral attitudes in both parts of the FRG will be decided in the elections to the State Diets in 2014 and 2016.

Maria Wagińska-Marzec, East German Writers after the Breakthrough

The building of a new identity in the Federal Republic of Germany after its unification had to start from reckoning the past, a process that concerned also the literary milieu of the GDR. The paper is an attempt to portray the diverse attitudes and dilemmas of GDR writers and journalists relevant to their perception and assessment of the past and the role they played in consolidating the socialist state. The personal quandaries of some prominent spiritual leaders of the nation are also shown as well as the questions and accusations they had to face in connection with the responsibility of the literary circles after the Stasi files had been disclosed. The self-reflections of those writers reveal a peculiar mixture of a sense of failure, and chagrin at the „loss of the homeland" and the idea in which they believed, while on the other hand it is evident that they were aware they had let the society down by legitimizing the communist rule; some of the writers tried to suppress their guilt until the end. A review of attitudes and assessments of the activity of East German writers before and after the fall of the GDR allows us to note far reaching differences of stances in judging one's ideals, dreams and beliefs. The dividing lines and differences in evaluating the situation before and after the breakthrough separated not only the writers of the former GDR from their critics in the West but also those writers who remained in the country from those who had to leave their "democratic" republic at various periods for various reasons or were expelled from it. Also, writers belonging to the older generations had a different view of the past than the younger generation of writers who were not embroiled in the previous arrangements and obligations.

Maria Tomczak, Between Multiculturalism and the Leading Culture. German Debates on Immigration

The object of the study was an analysis of the German debates on immigration policy. Their subsequent stages were strongly politicized and focused on various groups of migrants. The particular stages were differentiated by watchwords that defined the axis of the debate and at the same time highlighted German expectations and fears connected with the settlement of large groups of foreigners on German territory. The initial watchword was "multiculturalism", then "parallel societies" and next "leading culture". The last, so far, stage of the discussion is a heated debate triggered by a book by Theo Sarrazin published in 2012 and centres on the concept of "integration". All the above mentioned notions are rather vague, lacking in precision, which made it easy to manipulate and abuse them. In consequence, the balance of the debate is by no means optimistic and in fact it is essentially antimodernist and destructive. Its subsequent stages are mostly concerned with potential dangers and this gives the impression that foreigners (or their large groups) are actually a threat to Germany and its culture. Such an attitude is closer to Huntington's "clash of civilizations" than to the European enlightenment thought and contributes to enhancing hostile sentiments towards "aliens". This might lead not only to their discrimination or exclusion but also to a growth of violence against immigrants.

Przemysław Żurawski vel Grajewski, Poland towards German Leadership in the European Union

The main thesis of this paper is that since 1989 the Polish attitude towards the role of Germany in the EU and towards German's emerging leadership in it: 1) varies in time; 2) is poorly conceptualized; 3) divides the Polish political scene. The scale of compatibility/incompatibility of the interests of Poland and those of Germany varied over time in the period in question. Compatible to it the Polish ability/inability to accept the leading role of Germany in the EU was dynamic. The years 1989-1990 were marked with the dispute on the final recognition of the border and on the problem of the transit of the Soviet troops being evacuated from the Eastern Germany through Polish territory. 1991-2002 was a time of far reaching compatibility of strategic goals of Poland and those of Germany (NATO and the EU enlargements). 2003-2007 was a period of strategic contradictions (the US role in Europe, eastern policy, decision making process in the EU Council, „gas mains geopolitics", climate policy). There has been a profound turn in the Polish Eastern, German, and American policies that results in a deep internal political division in Poland as far as the perception and acceptance of the role of Germany is concerned since the end of 2007. The above periodization should be considered in the context of the evolution of Germany's role in the EU determined by two turning points – the unification (1990) and the EMU crisis (2010 - ?). The dynamics of the Polish capability to accept (or not to do so) the GDR leadership in the EU depends therefore on the evolution of the international situation and the evolution of the EU political system, as well as on the character of the political forces at power in Poland and on the nature of the German policies on the EU, Poland, Russia and the US.

Klaus Bachmann, On the Margins of German Vergangenheitsbewältigung. Germany's Colonial Past Revisited

The colonial policy of the German Empire, which brought large parts of West, East and South-Western Africa under German rule, remains a puzzle. It was initiated for ideological reasons and supported mostly by the nationalist, expansionist strand of Germany's petite bourgeoisie which used to justify colonial expansion pointing to the alleged necessity to find space for emigrants, production surpluses, scarce commodities and cheap labor for the German industry. None of these objectives were ever achieved and colonialism remained a short-lived and loss-making adventure, which ended during World War I, when the German colonies were mostly taken over by Entente troops. Even as an attempt, to export social tensions by directing the attention of the working class to nationalist, expansionist issues, colonialism proved unsuccessful. Instead, the tensions between social, political and economic constraints in the colonies inclined German troops to commit large scale atrocities in East Africa and German South-West Africa against the Herero, Nama and Maji Maji peoples. In German collective memory, colonialism never played an important role, because it was marginalized by the debates about German guilt for the outbreak of World War I, the Holocaust in World War II and last but not least, because the Third Reich directed expansionism toward Central Eastern Europe and downplayed the colonial adventure of the 19th century in propaganda.

Kirsten Dyck, *Situating the Herero Genocide and the Holocaust among European Colonial Genocides*

This article situates the German colonial genocides of the 20th century - the Herero genocide and the Holocaust - in a longer history of European colonial genocides, arguing the importance of this wider historical context in genocide scholarship. It explores how the 1948 United Nations genocide convention and the definition of the term "genocide" can affect how one studies various kinds of mass killing, drawing on Christopher Powell's "relational" concept of genocide to argue that genocide scholars should study both physical and cultural methods of genocide as they work to understand colonial violence. After a brief overview of the Herero genocide, this article then demonstrates several important philosophical and practical links not only between the Herero genocide and the Holocaust, but also between these and earlier colonial genocides by other European nations. The concluding section explores why a historically-situated understanding of the interrelationships among European colonial genocides is crucial to a nuanced understanding of genocide overall.

Timothy Musima Okia, *Social Developments in Bakundu during German Colonial Rule in Cameroon 1884-1914*

German colonial rule in Africa in the late 19th century has often been described by scholars and researchers of African history as exploitative, harsh, brutal, and repressive. Motivated by the aforementioned arguments that look at the negative aspects of German colonial rule; this study sets out to show that, in the pursuance of their diverse colonial motives, the Germans directly or indirectly contributed to the social advancement of the Bakundu people. The Bakundu people, who are found in the present day South West region of Cameroon, have been subject to many external influences since the 18th century that have left a trace in the way they presently think and act, in which their encounter with the Germans stands tall. This encounter brought with it; the construction of roads, the introduction of Western education – and a new form of administration that gave a wider horizon to the people -, as well as the establishment of cash-crop agriculture, which introduced the people to the international market, and so improving their income and living standards. This article thus tries to explore the social developments brought by German colonial rule during their 30 year stay in Bakundu. The realization of the aim of this article is based on a constructivist approach and from diverse documentation. Oral reports from elderly people who, in one way or another, lived through these developments, Archival materials from the National Archives Buea (NAB) plus the results of academic research are the main sources for this work. The exploitation of these sources has concretely presented the activities of the Germans during their stay in Bakundu.

Jeremiah Garsha, Picturing German Colonialism: "Simplicissimus" 1904 Special Issue

This article explores the particularity of the "Simplicissimus" 1904 "special issue" by examining three of the illustrations and deconstructing these textual sources against the backdrop of global events. The article begins by setting up the history of the magazine in order to show that "Simplicissimus" represented the attitudes and political mindset of its middle-class authors and audience, who were responding to their lack of political power within the authoritative and militaristic system of government. Next, the article contextualizes the global events surrounding the publication of the forty-first issue, specifically the South African War (1899-1902) and the beginnings of the Imperial German genocide of the Herero and Nama in South West Africa (1904-1908). By connecting the "Simplicissimus" colonial issue to the larger historical context, the illustrations are read as texts in order to unpack deeply ingrained signs and discourses. The three images are united by their depictions of colonial violence as a metaphor for colonial corruption. At their core was a visualization of the brutish European behavior paying out in the periphery, first illustrated by Joseph Conrad in Heart of Darkness (1899). Like Conrad, the "Simplicissimus" protest shows that the imperial backlash was not necessarily a call for humanitarianism on the part of colonized people, but rather was centralized around the concept that colonialism was flawed because it turned "good" Europeans into excessive brutes. In this way, the anti-colonial authors themselves were trapped inside of the imperial discourse, and inadvertently supported the very system they attempted to discredit.

Simon Goebel, Die Konstruktion neokolonialen Wissens in deutschen Dokumentarfilmen über die deutsche Geschichte

The way Germans treat the chapter of their own history connected with the colonial period is characterized by ambiguity. For decades German governments were reluctant to call by that very name the genocide of the Herero and Nama people committed by the German defense troops. The article analyzes a German documentary film on the history of German colonies. The three-part documentary film titled "The German Colonies" was produced and broadcast by the ZDF station in 2005. The authors of the film intended to present the subject in a scholarly but accessible way so that it could be used as a teaching aid in schools. Documentary films draw largely on authentic testimonies and are therefore especially important for the analysis of mindsets pertaining to neocolonialism. Thanks to mass media broadcasting their impact is often understood and treated as a verbal instrument of education.