



# boundaries

book of abstracts

# oblicza wojny

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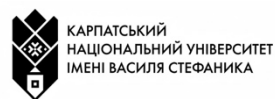
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## Inaugural Lectures

**Robert Litwiński**

Polish Historical Society/ Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin

### **Protection of the Borders of the Reborn Republic of Poland (1918–1939) — Assumptions and their Implementation**

The aim of the presentation is to outline the principles underlying the protection of the state border of the re-established Polish Republic in the years 1918–1939 during peacetime and to analyse their implementation. Particular attention will be devoted to the process of selecting a border security concept following the restoration of independence, taking into account the political, military, and geographical factors that shaped decision-making. The paper will also examine the role of border uniformed services, including the organisation of the border protection system and its operation during the interwar period. This analysis will enable an assessment of the effectiveness of the solutions adopted and their significance for the security of the state.

### **Ochrona granic odrodzonej Rzeczypospolitej (1918–1939) — założenia i ich realizacja**

Celem wystąpienia będzie przedstawienie założeń ochrony granicy państwowej odrodzonej Rzeczypospolitej w latach 1918–1939 w czasie pokoju oraz analiza ich realizacji. Szczególna uwaga zostanie poświęcona procesowi wyboru koncepcji zabezpieczenia granicy po odzyskaniu niepodległości, z uwzględnieniem uwarunkowań politycznych, militarnych i geograficznych. W referacie przeanalizowana zostanie także rola granicznych formacji mundurowych, w tym organizacja systemu ochrony pogranicza oraz jego funkcjonowanie w okresie międzywojennym. Pozwoli to ocenić skuteczność przyjętych rozwiązań oraz ich znaczenie dla bezpieczeństwa państwa.

**Juliusz Tym**

War Studies University in Warsaw

### **Doświadczenia i wnioski z użycia Wojskowego Zgrupowania Zadaniowego „Podlasie” do wsparcia Straży Granicznej w ochronie granicy polsko-białoruskiej**

W latach 2023–2024 w ramach wsparcia Straży Granicznej przez Siły Zbrojne Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w ochronie polsko-białoruskiej funkcjonowało Wojskowe Zgrupowanie Zadaniowe „Podlasie”, którego potencjał został sprofilowany w związku z pojawieniem się na terenie Białorusi tzw. Grupy Wagnera. W ramach trzech zmian dowództwo i sztab tego zgrupowania dowodziło dwiema realizowanymi równoległe komplementarnymi operacjami. Celem działania było przeciwdziałanie zagrożeniom hybrydowym generowanym przede wszystkim przez presję migracyjną na granicy, a także utrzymywanie w gotowości do użycia określonych sił i środków w przypadku pojawienia się symptomów innych działań ze

strony przeciwnika. Działania Wojskowego Zgrupowania Zadaniowego „Podlasie” prowadzone były na terenie powiatów należących do czterech województw: podlaskiego, lubelskiego, warmińsko-mazurskiego oraz mazowieckiego. Realizowane były we współdziałaniu z innymi formacjami umundurowanymi, przede wszystkim Strażą Graniczną oraz Policją, służbami specjalnymi, a także lokalnymi organami administracji zespolonej oraz niezespolonej. Ze względu na różnorodne ograniczenia formalno-prawne część działań przybrała innowacyjne formy i metody ich prowadzenia. Działania Wojskowego Zgrupowania Zadaniowego „Podlasie” przyniosły bardzo dużo doświadczeń w zakresie współpracy cywilno-wojskowej, w ramach której dowódcy rozwiązywali realne problemy, które występują w sytuacji prowadzenia działań nie w ośrodkach szkolenia poligonowego, a w środowisku cywilnym. Wnioski płynące z doświadczeń Wojskowego Zgrupowania Zadaniowego „Podlasie” ukazują, że Siły Zbrojne Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej są jedynym elementem systemu bezpieczeństwa państwa zdolnym do prowadzenia działań wymagających znacznego i długotrwałego zaangażowania znacznych sił i środków.

### **Experiences and Lessons Learned from the Employment of the Military Task Force “Podlasie” in Support of the Border Guard in Protecting the Polish-Belarusian Border**

In 2023–2024, as part of the support provided by the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland to the Border Guard in securing the Polish-Belarusian border, the Military Task Force “Podlasie” operated with capabilities specifically tailored in response to the presence of the so-called Wagner Group in Belarus. During three successive rotations, the force headquarters and staff commanded two complementary operations conducted simultaneously.

The mission aimed to counter hybrid threats generated primarily by migratory pressure at the border, while also maintaining designated forces and assets at a high level of readiness to respond to any indications of other hostile activities. The operations of the Military Task Force “Podlasie” were carried out across districts located within four voivodeships: Podlaskie, Lubelsz, Warmian-Masurian, and Masovian.

Activities were conducted in close cooperation with other uniformed services, particularly the Border Guard and the Police, as well as with intelligence and security services and local government authorities at both consolidated and non-consolidated administrative levels. Owing to various legal and regulatory constraints, some activities required the adoption of innovative approaches and methods of operation.

The deployment of the Military Task Force “Podlasie” generated extensive experience in the field of civil–military cooperation, as commanders were required to address real-world challenges arising from operations conducted not within military training areas but in a civilian environment. The lessons identified from the activities of the Military Task Force “Podlasie” demonstrate that the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland constitute the only component of the national security system capable of conducting operations requiring the substantial and sustained commitment of significant personnel and resources.

## **Panel 1**

**Witold Jarno**

University of Lodz

### **Front Południowo-Zachodni na straży południowej części granicy polsko-niemieckiej w 1919 r.**

#### **The South-Western Front and the Defence of the Southern Section of the Polish-German Border in 1919**

This article examines the history of the South-Western Front, established in May 1919. Its creation was a response to the threat that German authorities might reject the draft Treaty of Versailles, which presented a real possibility of renewed German military action against Poland. Consequently, on 22 May, the Supreme Command of the Polish Army issued a directive outlining preparations for a potential war with Germany. Pursuant to this, four improvised higher operational formations were created along the entire Polish-German border. One of these was the South-Western Front, formed on 15 June through the merger of the Silesian Front and the Cieszyn Front.

The article aims to discuss the reasons behind the South-Western Front's creation, its tasks, organisational structure, the deployment of subordinate troops, and the preparations undertaken to repel a potential German attack. This text is based primarily on archival materials preserved in the Central Military Archives.

**Kamil Śmiechowski**

University of Lodz

### **Problem zachodniej granicy II Rzeczypospolitej z punktu widzenia systemu komunikacyjnego**

#### **The Problem of the Western Border of the Second Polish Republic from the Perspective of the Transport Network**

The aim of this paper is to analyse the border between Poland, the Weimar Republic, and the Free City of Danzig during the interwar period, specifically from the perspective of the transport network. The Polish–German border, established as a result of political decisions and compromises following the First World War, represented an attempt to balance the interests of the two principal parties affected by the conflict: Germany and the re-established Polish state. As is often the case with such arrangements, these decisions gave rise to numerous difficulties in maintaining the coherence of transport infrastructure, particularly the railway network, which at the time formed the backbone of the country's transport system.

The paper will examine three case studies in which the delineation of the state border created significant transport and communication challenges. These cases are Bytom in Upper Silesia, Piła in Greater Poland, and the Kashubian region, situated along the frontier of the Second Polish Republic, Germany, and the Free City of Danzig. While it is difficult to determine definitively whether ethnic or economic considerations should have played the decisive role in the drawing of state boundaries, the paper seeks to assess the proposition that the western borders of the Second Polish Republic constituted a major obstacle to the development of a rational and efficient transport system during the interwar period.

**Łukasz Politański**

Piotrków Academy /Regional Museum in Bełchatów

## **Plan osłony łódzkiego odcinka granicy opracowany w 1926/1927 roku**

### **The Covering Plan for the Łódź Sector of the Border, Prepared in 1926/1927**

The directive issued by General Władysław Sikorski, Chief of the General Staff, on 10 November 1922, introduced the requirement to prepare a mobilisation plan for 1923/24 based on a Western strategic orientation. During the period under discussion, three principal components of the overall war plan were most likely completed: the covering plan, the mobilisation and concentration transportation plan, and the mobilisation plan together with the *Ordre de Bataille* of the armed forces in the event of war.

The primary tasks assigned to the covering forces included securing the mobilisation process, protecting the strategic and operational deployment of forces, and blocking the most important avenues of approach leading into the central area of the Polish theatre of war. At the beginning of 1923, efforts were undertaken to develop a concept for covering the concentration of forces in the Western regions of the country. One of the plans prepared during this period was Covering Plan „S” 26/27. Its implementation was to commence upon the outbreak of mobilisation in Germany or the USSR and involved placing the first covering units on alert and deploying them along the border.

The „Łódź” sector was divided — largely in accordance with the terrain conditions determined by the course of the Liswarta River — into two subsectors: „Wieluń” and „Częstochowa”. During the presentation, the author will discuss the forces and resources allocated to ensure the effective conduct of covering operations within the „Łódź” sector, as well as the tasks assigned to them. Of particular interest is the issue of responsibility for the execution of these covering operations.

**Marek Chmielecki**

Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa

**„Naród pod bronią”. Przynależenie wojskowe w II Rzeczypospolitej jako próba przekroczenia granicy między pokojem a przygotowaniem społeczeństwa do obrony państwa**

**“A Nation in Arms”: Military Training in the Second Polish Republic as an Attempt to Bridge the Divide Between Peacetime and Preparing Society for National Defence**

During the interwar period, military training (*przynależenie wojskowe*) constituted an important component of the defence preparedness system of the Second Polish Republic. Its purpose was not only to prepare young people for future military service, but also to foster civic and patriotic attitudes and to develop the organisational capabilities of society. This concept reflected the idea of a “nation in arms”, according to which state security depended not only on military potential but also on the level of preparedness and engagement of citizens in matters of national defence.

Military training, implemented through schools and paramilitary organisations, served as an important educational and mobilisation instrument. Its role was to build awareness of potential threats and to prepare the younger generation to function in conditions of possible armed conflict. In this context, military training may be interpreted as an attempt to bridge the divide between the peaceful functioning of society — including responses to crisis situations — and its preparation for conditions of military threat. The training programme included physical education, basic military instruction, the cultivation of discipline, and the development of civic responsibility. As a result, military training fulfilled not only an educational function but also an integrative one, uniting society around the concepts of national security and defence.

The aim of this article is to present military training as an element of the state security system in the Second Polish Republic and to analyse its significance in shaping the mobilisation capacity of society. The study employs a historical-institutional approach combined with a security studies perspective, enabling the interpretation of interwar experiences in the context of contemporary concepts of societal preparedness for security threats.

The conclusion argues that the experience of the Second Polish Republic may provide a valuable point of reference for contemporary approaches to defence education and the preparation of society for functioning under conditions of security crises and hybrid conflicts. At the same time, the issue of societal preparedness for national defence remains complex and multidimensional, which justifies the need for further research into the role of defence education within the national security system.

## **Możliwości i kierunki rozwojowe polskich samolotów myśliwskich i pościgowych w 1939 roku w świetle rozwoju napędów lotniczych**

### **Development Prospects and Directions for Polish Fighter and Pursuit Aircraft in 1939 in the Light of Aero Engine Development**

The development of aircraft design is closely linked to that of aero engines. Aircraft performance characteristics, such as speed, service ceiling, range, and other operational parameters, depend largely upon their powerplants' capabilities. During the 1920s, the aviation industry in Poland began to develop, initially relying on licensed production. Subsequently, efforts were made to design the first indigenous aircraft. Most aero engines were either imported or manufactured under licence. The development of domestic powerplants commenced at the turn of the 1920s and 1930s, primarily at the Polish Skoda Works, which possessed the most extensive industrial and technical facilities among Polish manufacturers. Concurrently, licensed production of Bristol engines continued, including the Jupiter and Mercury engines used in fighter aircraft, as well as the Pegasus engine employed in bomber aircraft.

During the second half of the 1930s, the Polish military incorrectly anticipated the future development of fighter aircraft engines. The average power output of aero engines manufactured worldwide at the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s did not increase significantly. Consequently, little need was perceived for the production of engines exceeding 900 horsepower, and the acquisition of appropriate licences was therefore undertaken too late. Research demonstrates that by 1941, the average power output of combat aircraft engines had already reached approximately 1,500 horsepower, increasing to around 1,800 horsepower by 1945. Recognising this problem, Polish engineers initiated the development of more powerful engines, including the nine-cylinder *Waran* (prototype models appeared in 1939, with a projected output of approximately 1,200 horsepower) and the eighteen-cylinder *Legwan* (with a planned output of 2,000 horsepower). Detailed technical information concerning these engines has not survived. However, based on known developmental trends and comparisons with other aero engines manufactured in Poland, a tentative reconstruction may be attempted. If the *Waran* was intended to achieve 2,700 revolutions per minute and maximum power output at an altitude of 4,000 metres, similarly to the Mercury VIII, it would have required a displacement of approximately 32.5 litres. Following a comparable line of reasoning, the *Legwan* would have required a displacement of approximately 55.5 litres.

By employing aero engines manufactured in Poland, it would theoretically have been possible to design a pursuit aircraft whose performance exceeded that of contemporary German aircraft. Such a design could have utilised a configuration similar to that employed in the Fokker D.XXIII, incorporating two Pegasus XX engines, each producing 920 horsepower. This arrangement would have reduced frontal drag. Calculations indicate that such an aircraft could have achieved a maximum speed of approximately 590 km/h.

**Jacek Pietrzak**

University of Lodz

## **Obrońcy granic pod Monte Cassino. Losy byłych oficerów Korpusu Ochrony Pogranicza w szeregach 2 Korpusu Polskiego**

### **Defenders of the Frontiers at Monte Cassino: The Fate of Former Border Protection Corps Officers in the Ranks of the Polish II Corps**

Many officers of the Border Protection Corps (*Korpus Ochrony Pogranicza*), a specialised military formation operating between 1924 and 1939, distinguished themselves following Poland's defeat in 1939, particularly during the campaigns of the Polish Armed Forces in exile. A significant number also served in the ranks of the Polish II Corps during the Italian Campaign. Some of them played a prominent role in the Battle of Monte Cassino. This paper seeks to analyse the careers and wartime service of several selected officers whose experiences may be regarded as representative of this broader group.

## **Panel 2**

**Krzysztof Kwiatkowski**

Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń

## **Wojna „bez granic”: prusko-litewsko-żmudzka strefa przejściowa jako przestrzeń działań militarnych w późnym średniowieczu**

### **A War “Without Borders”: The Prussian-Lithuanian-Samogitian Transitional Zone as a Theatre of Military Operations in the Late Middle Ages**

This paper examines the long-standing armed conflict fought between the Teutonic Order in Prussia and Lithuania (the Grand Duchy of Lithuania) from the late thirteenth to the early fifteenth century. It seeks to demonstrate how widely accepted yet not entirely justified assumptions concerning the geographical, demographic, and political framework of this conflict have hindered the interpretation of both its specific historical events and its overall significance within a broader military, political, and cultural context.

The paper argues that the limitations of earlier interpretations of the Teutonic Order's so-called “Lithuanian war” stem largely from the use of the concepts of “border” and “borderland” in analysing and describing the conflict. These two terms — highly capacious in their contemporary Polish usage — have often been applied uncritically in studies of Prussian–Lithuanian and Prussian–Samogitian military confrontations. As a consequence, they have obscured an understanding of the actual spatial framework of the conflict, which in the terminology of military history may be defined as the “theatre of war”, both in its geo-

environmental and anthropogenic dimensions. This, in turn, has generated a number of interpretative difficulties and broader epistemological problems.

By reassessing the spatial realities of the conflict and questioning the applicability of modern concepts of borders and borderlands to the medieval context, the paper aims to offer a more accurate understanding of the nature, scope, and dynamics of military operations conducted within the Prussian–Lithuanian–Samogitian transitional zone.

**Andrzej Niewiński**

The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin

### **Granice rycerskości na polu bitwy. Bitwa pod Aljubarrota (1385) w perspektywie militarnej**

#### **The Limits of Chivalry on the Battlefield: The Battle of Aljubarrota (1385) from a Military Perspective**

The Battle of Aljubarrota (1385) represents one of the most significant military engagements of the late Middle Ages on the Iberian Peninsula and, at the same time, provides a valuable case study for analysing the limits of the effectiveness of heavy cavalry under the conditions of fourteenth-century warfare. The aim of this paper is to interpret the battle not as a symbolic “end of chivalry”, but rather as an example that reveals the functional limitations of the previously dominant model of warfare based upon the shock charge of feudal heavy cavalry.

From a military perspective, particular attention will be devoted to the operational and tactical circumstances of the engagement, especially the deliberate selection and preparation of the battlefield by the Portuguese forces, the use of field fortifications and obstacles, and the role of cohesive infantry defence in neutralising the momentum of the Castilian cavalry. An analysis of the course of the battle makes it possible to identify the mechanisms that led to the fragmentation of cavalry assaults, the loss of formation cohesion, and the forced engagement of mounted troops in dismounted combat, in which they were deprived of their principal systemic advantages.

To provide a fuller understanding of these limitations, the Battle of Aljubarrota will be compared with the Battle of Nájera (1367), which represents a contrasting model of heavy cavalry employment under conditions favourable to its effective use. Such a comparative approach demonstrates that, during the second half of the fourteenth century, the effectiveness of the chivalric model of warfare became increasingly dependent upon cooperation with other military arms, as well as upon favourable tactical and terrain conditions, rather than upon the dominance of mounted formations alone.

From this perspective, the Battle of Aljubarrota should be viewed not as a point of collapse for chivalric warfare, but rather as evidence of a process of tactical adaptation and battlefield evolution in which heavy cavalry ceased to function as a self-sufficient combat arm, while nevertheless retaining an important role within the increasingly complex military systems of the late medieval period.

**Bartłomiej Gorzkiewicz**

University of Lodz

**Piastowscy książęta pogranicza polsko-czeskiego w wojnach Władysława Jagiełły z Zakonem Krzyżackim w przekazie Jana Długosza**

**The Piast Dukes of the Polish-Bohemian Borderland in Władysław Jagiełło's Wars with the Teutonic Order in the Account of Jan Długosz**

The paper aims to present the activities of the Silesian Piasts during the wars waged by Władysław Jagiełło against the Teutonic Order. The Silesian dukes ruled territories situated on the Polish–Bohemian borderland, which enabled them to pursue a multifaceted policy. The Silesian rulers living at the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were witnesses to and participants in numerous conflicts taking place in the region. On many occasions, they changed their attitude towards the rival states. Jan Długosz, the author of the principal source analysed in this study, referred several times to the role of the Piasts in these conflicts. One of the main aims of the paper is therefore, apart from presenting the role of the Piasts, to attempt to demonstrate the attitude of the Kraków chronicler towards the dukes engaged in warfare. An analysis of the account contained in the *Annals*, supported by the relevant scholarly literature, will make it possible to answer the following questions: Did the dukes participate in these wars as allies or as mercenaries? What was the scale of their activity? What was Jan Długosz's attitude towards the Silesian Piasts? What were the reasons for the Silesian dukes changing sides during these conflicts?

The chronological scope covers the period between 1409, when the Great War broke out, and 1433, when the Truce of Łęczyca was concluded. The three main parts of the paper comprise: (1) an analysis of Jan Długosz's account concerning the diplomatic activities of the Silesian Piasts at the beginning of the Great War; (2) the military actions of the Piast dukes during the campaigns of 1410 and their presence at the conclusion of the peace treaty of 1411; and (3) a discussion of the participation of the Silesian dukes in the so-called Hunger War of 1414 and their attitude towards the subsequent wars.

**Andrzej Kobus**

Korczak University – University of Social Sciences (Warsaw)

**Koncentracja wojsk królewskich pod Krzepicami i Dankowem przed wyprawą Kazimierza Jagiellończyka na Śląsk w 1474 r.**

**The Concentration of Royal Troops near Krzepice and Danków Prior to Casimir Jagiellon's Expedition to Silesia in 1474**

The paper is devoted to the concentration of Polish forces near Krzepice, in the Kraków Voivodeship, and the neighbouring town of Danków, in the Sieradz Voivodeship, immediately

prior to the expedition of King Casimir Jagiellon to Silesia in 1474. The purpose of the campaign was to bring this region under the authority of his son Vladislaus and to expel King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary from the area. The author focuses on the conditions encountered by the royal army near Krzepice and Danków, its numerical strength, and the documents issued by the king at Krzepice and Danków before entering Silesia at the end of September 1474.

**Oleg Hański**

University of Lodz

## **Zasoby uzbrojenia Lwowa w latach 1495–1570**

### **The Armament Resources of Lviv, 1495–1570**

Lviv was the most important city in the Ruthenian lands of the Kingdom of Poland during the Jagiellonian period. Although situated within the strategic hinterland of the kingdom, its position as the centre of the frontier Ruthenian Voivodeship made its role within the wider system of defence of the south-eastern borders invaluable. No military campaign conducted in this region, whether defensive or offensive, could disregard Lviv, which served as a logistical and recruitment centre for the *obrona potoczna*. The city was not only a centre of arms production but also the principal arsenal of the Ruthenian lands.

This paper focuses on an analysis of the armament resources stored in the city. The source basis of the study consists of nine inventories containing references to offensive and defensive weapons kept in the High Castle, the Low Castle, and municipal facilities between 1495 and 1570.

**Krzysztof Gryglewski**

University of Lodz

## **W obronie południowo-wschodniej granicy Królestwa. Towarzysze służący w rocie konnej Stanisława Dobrosołowskiego w latach 1534–1542**

### **In Defence of the South-Eastern Frontier of the Kingdom: The Companions Serving in Stanisław Dobrosołowski's Cavalry Company, 1534–1542**

In the study of military history, it is difficult to avoid viewing armies as collective entities. For this reason, research that reveals a more individualised picture of ordinary mercenary soldiers is particularly valuable. Such opportunities are provided by sixteenth-century military and treasury records. As the basis for this study, I have selected the cavalry company commanded by Stanisław Dobrosołowski. This unit served within the framework of the *Obrona Potoczna* between 1534 and 1540 and again in 1542.

This period, with only minor interruptions, makes it possible to analyse changes in the personnel composition of the company. It allows the identification of individuals who regularly served under the command of the rotmistrz, as well as those whose presence was only occasional. The

findings of this study contribute to a broader understanding of military service in the 1530s and provide an outline of the relationships that existed among mercenary soldiers.

### **Panel 3**

**Anna Śmiechowicz**

University of Lodz

#### **Na granicy pokoju i wojny. Rowerowa wyprawa Warszawskiego Towarzystwa Cyklistów do Paryża latem 1914 roku**

#### **On the Border Between Peace and War: The Warsaw Cyclists' Society Bicycle Expedition to Paris in the Summer of 1914**

On a sunny day in July 1914, four Warsaw cyclists — Feliks Wojtkiewicz, Henryk Herbst, Zdzisław Budziszewski, and Marian Fuks — crossed the Poniatowski Bridge, embarking on the first long-distance captain's tour organised by the Warsaw Cyclists' Society (Warszawskie Towarzystwo Cyklistów, founded in 1886). Their objective was a cycling expedition to Paris, an ambitious undertaking that combined sport, tourism, and adventure in the spirit of the belle époque.

Several days later, the expedition unexpectedly found itself at the boundary between two eras. The outbreak of the First World War interrupted the journey, and its participants were interned in a German prisoner-of-war camp. Paradoxically, they were permitted to retain their photographic equipment. As a result, Marian Fuks — a renowned Polish photographer and founder of the first Polish Photographic Agency (established in 1910) — was able to document both the carefree enthusiasm of the cycling adventure and the initial moments of the great conflict. The surviving photographs constitute a unique and rarely discussed historical source. They bring together the world of enthusiasm associated with the early development of cycle tourism and the brutal onset of global war, revealing within a single body of material the boundary between peace and war, freedom and internment, normality and tragedy.

This paper presents the history of this remarkable expedition, analyses the historical value of Marian Fuks's photographs, and demonstrates how a sporting enterprise became unexpectedly intertwined with the dramatic events that shaped Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century.

**Monika Urbańska**

University of Lodz

## **Święci polscy Zygmunta Skarżyńskiego jako strażnicy granic. Między historią a kiczem**

### **Polish Saints in Zygmunt Skarżyński's Work as Guardians of Borders: Between History and Kitsch**

The religious writer Reverend Zygmunt Skarżyński (1865–1915) published *Lives of Polish Saints Compiled against the Background of National History* in 1913. Work on this volume, inspired by Piotr Skarga's *Lives of the Saints*, occupied him for nearly a decade. Although his ambition was to collect "all the lives of our patrons into a single whole", the manner in which they are presented is subordinated to their historical and persuasive utility.

Skarżyński employs the hagiographic form as a textual territory of Poland in order to delineate the spiritual borders of a country absent from the political map and to sustain the religious spirit of Polish society. The extensive work, exceeding 900 pages, contains the lives of forty beatified and canonised figures, from the baptism of Poland to the nineteenth century, arranged according to the Roman Missal. In constructing his narratives, the author draws upon the chronicles of Bielski, Bruno of Querfurt, Jan Długosz, Gallus Anonymus, Wincenty Kadłubek, Maciej Miechowita, Maciej Strykowski, Thietmar of Merseburg, and others.

As my research is particularly concerned with borders in art and propaganda, I examine the means by which Skarżyński crosses intellectual boundaries in order to reach the widest possible readership, as well as the function of the category of kitsch within his work. It appears that kitsch simultaneously delineates and blurs boundaries, carrying aesthetic, linguistic, and axiological connotations.

The scope of my analysis includes, among others, the boundaries between "high" and "low" culture; the aesthetics of the hagiographic representation of history; the boundaries between history and legend; language and axiology in hagiographic discourse; and the scope and purpose of Skarżyński's use of historical sources.

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**Paweł Kaczmarski**

University of Warsaw

## **Dyskretny urok granic. OKTW Wiedeń i transporty materiału wojennego do Polski w latach 1919–1921**

### **The Subtle Charm of Borders: The Vienna Office of Military Transport Control (OKTW) and the Transport of War Materiel to Poland, 1919–1921**

During the wars over its borders, the newly re-established Polish Republic supplied its armed forces in a variety of ways. War booty played an important role; however, even more significant was the assistance of allies, above all France. Large quantities of weapons, ammunition, and technical equipment were purchased at favourable prices or arranged with suppliers with governmental approval. Representatives of the Polish Military Purchasing Mission in Paris were fully occupied with locating, negotiating, verifying, coordinating, and finally dispatching consignments to Poland. Considerable activity also took place in Thessaloniki, Rome, and London.

The question of transport remained crucial. Although sea routes via Gdańsk were used, due to various political and financial considerations, the primary routes were two overland corridors: through Germany via the Koblenz hub, and through German Austria via Vienna.

A key role in the operation of the latter route was played by the Military General Staff Railway Plenipotentiary in Vienna, from September 1919 (for the sake of standardising terminology) referred to as the Vienna Office of Military Transport Control (*Oddział Kierownictwa Transportów Wojskowych we Wiedniu*, OKTW Vienna), headed by Second Lieutenant Stanisław Rola-Arciszewski. OKTW Vienna maintained posts at four main Vienna railway stations, as well as in Hohenau, Innsbruck, Villach, Břeclav, and Bohumín. These offices ensured the smooth passage of transports, timely provision of rolling stock, and proper dispatching, while maintaining contact with other Polish military authorities, local administrations, and Allied representatives, including the French Military Mission in Vienna.

The range of problems encountered was extensive. Trains were at times halted at borders, formally due to coal settlement issues, though in practice more often for political reasons. German Austria remained an important supplier of technical equipment (such as railway bridges and tools), and occasionally even ammunition, although questions of legality frequently arose in this context. As a result, through painstaking work, secrecy vis-à-vis Entente representatives (albeit with tacit French approval), bribery, and various forms of improvisation, an effective international transport system was established, which constituted one of the key factors contributing to success in the Polish-Soviet War.

**Anna Ambrochowicz-Gajownik**

Independent Researcher

### **Granica jako struktura adaptacyjna: Polacy we Francji i mechanizmy reorganizacji życia społeczno-ekonomicznego w latach 1919–1941**

The Border as an Adaptive Structure: Poles in France and Mechanisms of Socio-Economic Life Reorganisation, 1919–1941

This paper aims to analyse the border as an adaptive structure in the experience of Poles in France between 1919 and 1941. Particular emphasis is placed on the border's function as a space for life, adaptation, and the organisation of everyday socio-economic existence on French territory. The border is not understood here solely as a political line separating states, but as a

specific „new home” where Poles were compelled to reconstruct their lives from the ground up under conditions of volatility and uncertainty.

The paper aims to demonstrate that both economically motivated migration and the displacement of Polish refugees associated with wartime conditions created a shared mechanism of experiencing uncertainty, a lack of stability, and the necessity of reconstructing life from the beginning. In this sense, the „border” becomes a specific „new home” where the process of adaptation encompasses not only institutional and economic dimensions but also psychological ones, related to feelings of temporariness, adaptive stress, and the reorganisation of social identity.

Based on materials concerning Polish interwar emigration, it is shown that the process of settlement in France included both labour migration after 1919 and later movements connected with the growing political destabilisation of the Polish state.

The analysis is based on an interdisciplinary approach combining social history, migration economics, and elements of a psychosocial perspective. The main thesis assumes that the experience of the border generated a recurrent adaptive pattern in which uncertainty became a structuring factor in Poles' life strategies. In both cases, the common denominator was the experience of the necessity to reconstruct social and economic life under new conditions.

**Justyna Karkus, Dominika Siemińska**

Institute of National Remembrance

### **Transgraniczne poszukiwania szczątków funkcjonariuszy czechosłowackiej Straży Obrony Państwa zamordowanych we wrześniu 1938 r.**

### **Cross-Border Searches for the Remains of Officers of the Czechoslovak State Defence Guard Murdered in September 1938**

In the autumn of 1938, Czechoslovakia faced intense political and military pressure from the Third Reich. Following the Anschluss of Austria, German demands extended to the Sudetenland, a region with a German-speaking population. Radical German factions called for the incorporation of these territories into the Reich, and units of the *Sudetendeutsches Freikorps* initiated armed sabotage operations and attacks on Czechoslovak border posts.

The most tragic incident occurred on 22 September 1938 in Liptan, where an attack supported by Freikorps militants resulted in the deaths of five officers of the Czechoslovak State Defence Guard and one officer of the financial guard. Following an initial skirmish with a patrol, the disarmed gendarmes Rudolf Mokřý and Vilém Leher, along with financial guard officer Ludvík Svoboda, were murdered. Subsequently, further members of the financial guard — Vítězslav Hofírek, František Čech, and Inocenc Dostál — were also killed.

All victims were buried in Głubczyce without their families or the authorities of contemporary Czechoslovakia being informed. This incident was the most tragic associated with the Henlein movement uprising in 1938, and the investigation documents remained inaccessible for many years. In 1939, the remains of four of the victims were exhumed and retrieved by their families.

However, the remains of Vilém Leher and Ludvík Svoboda remained in the cemetery in Głubczyce.

Between 18 and 21 August 2025, a team from the Search and Identification Office of the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN), in cooperation with the Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic, conducted search and exhumation work at the Municipal Cemetery in Głubczyce (Opole Voivodeship). The objective was to locate the remains of the officers who had not been exhumed in 1939.

As a result of these efforts, the remains of two men were discovered, dressed in full uniforms corresponding to the formation of the sought-after officers. Jewellery bearing the initials of the victims was also found with the remains. Preserved medical documentation further confirmed the identity of the recovered individuals as Vilém Leher and Ludvík Svoboda.

### **Dominika Mierzwa-Szymkowiak**

Museum and Institute of Zoology of the Polish Academy of Sciences

### **Przekraczając granice okupowanej Warszawy. Rola Stanisława Feliksiaka w ratowaniu zbiorów Państwowego Muzeum Zoologicznego w czasie II wojny światowej**

Crossing the Borders of Occupied Warsaw: The Role of Stanisław Feliksiak in the Rescue of the Collections of the State Zoological Museum during the Second World War

Stanisław Feliksiak (1906–1992) was a Polish zoologist and curator of the collections of the State Zoological Museum (PMZ) in Warsaw. During the war, he lectured in clandestine educational courses in medicine, participated in the Warsaw Uprising, and organised efforts to rescue the collections, library, and archive of the PMZ.

During the German attack on Warsaw in 1939, the PMZ building was severely damaged, resulting in the first destruction of museum collections. Further losses were caused by the looting of collections carried out by the SS unit Sonderkommando Paulsen. A serious challenge for the PMZ staff came with the outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising. Many museum employees were killed during the fighting. A true tragedy unfolded after the collapse of the uprising, when the Germans began the systematic destruction of Warsaw.

Feliksiak undertook the mission of rescuing the collections. With the support of the Committee for the Evacuation of Cultural Property from Warsaw, he participated in the organisation of transport operations into the city. The aim was to extinguish the burning museum building, secure the collections, and evacuate them outside Warsaw.

Feliksiak's attitude, combining the determination of a scientist with the courage of a soldier, constitutes a symbol of the struggle to preserve the continuity of Polish science. His post-war activities initiated the reconstruction of the PMZ and the recovery of wartime losses.

**Sylwia Walasik**

Ignacy Mościcki National Academy of Applied Sciences in Ciechanów

## **Granice odporności. Kryzysy nieliniowe jako próba przekroczenia zdolności adaptacyjnych państwa i społeczeństwa**

The Limits of Resilience: Non-Linear Crises as a Test of the Adaptive Capacity of the State and Society

The contemporary security environment is characterised by increasing complexity and non-linear dynamics, where cause-and-effect relationships become dispersed, and minor impulses can lead to disproportionately large consequences. This article begins with the assumption that the boundaries of conflict are not limited solely to the territorial dimension, but also encompass less tangible systemic thresholds of efficiency within political, social, and infrastructural structures. In this approach, resilience becomes the key analytical category, understood as the capacity of the state and society to absorb disruptions, adapt, and transform under crisis conditions.

The study aims to present non-linear crises as processes that lead to the crossing of security systems' resilience limits, thereby revealing the actual boundaries of their adaptive capacity. The analysis adopts a systemic perspective, which identifies the moment a system transitions from a phase of relative stability to a state of destabilisation or collapse. Particular attention is devoted to escalation mechanisms, such as feedback loops, the cascade effect, and the accumulation of disruptions across multiple domains of state functioning.

It is indicated that, under conditions of both historical and contemporary conflict, the limits of resilience become apparent during moments of overload in logistical, social, institutional, and critical infrastructure systems. The findings lead to the conclusion that these limits are dynamic in nature, and their transgression results in a redefinition of the relationship between stability and crisis states. Consequently, contemporary conflicts increasingly involve not the crossing of state borders, but the testing and shifting of their resilience limits.

### **Panel 4**

**Małgorzata Surmacz**

Museum of the History of the City of Lublin

## **Granice dzieciństwa. O dojrzewaniu pokolenia uczestników walk o niepodległość i granice Polski w latach 1914–1920 na przykładzie losów wychowanków męskich szkół lubelskich**

The Boundaries of Childhood: The Coming of Age of the Generation Participating in the Struggles for the Independence and Borders of Poland in

## the Years 1914–1920, as Exemplified by the Experiences of Pupils of Lublin Boys' Schools

A new generation is shaped by shared experiences during the period in which its members enter adulthood. From a biological perspective, youth signifies the attainment of an organism's final stage of development. Socially, it constitutes a condition between childhood and adulthood, marked by the achievement of independence. Psychologically, it is a stage in the formation of an individual's personality.

The year 1914 marked the beginning of a new generation whose character was profoundly influenced by wartime experiences. These experiences defined the end of childhood. For those who participated directly in military operations, they constituted a confrontation with the horror of death and the brutality of war. The generation that emerged through the struggles for the independence and borders of the Polish state between 1914 and 1920 matured on the battlefields. These young pupil-soldiers underwent an accelerated process of initiation into adulthood. Such a fate befell many pupils of Lublin secondary schools. Their wartime experiences reflected those of a new generational formation.

**Anna Idzikowska-Czubaj**

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

## **Między wojną a pokojem. Granice moralne w doświadczeniu młodzieży polskiej po 1945 roku**

**Between War and Peace: Moral Boundaries in the Experience of Polish Youth after 1945**

This paper examines the impact of the Second World War and the occupation on the shifting of moral boundaries in the experience of Polish youth, as well as the difficulties associated with the reconstruction of normative frameworks after 1945. The war weakened previously established educational and moral models and altered the assessment of many forms of behaviour which, under conditions of occupation, could be regarded as justified, but which required re-evaluation following the end of the conflict.

The aim of the paper is to demonstrate how wartime experiences influenced the socialisation process of the younger generation, leading both to phenomena of demoralisation and moral ambiguity, and to the development of qualities such as resourcefulness and independence. The paper contributes to the study of moral and ethical boundaries in wartime, highlighting their instability and long-term social consequences.

**Adriana Krawiec**

Jagiellonian University

## **Na rzecz pokoju: edukacja jako odpowiedź na oblicza wojny**

### **For the Sake of Peace: Education as a Response to the Faces of War**

This paper reflects upon the role of education in counteracting the mechanisms of violence and exclusion that manifest themselves in the various „faces of war”, both historically and contemporaneously. The point of departure is an analysis of memory institutions and the ways in which they construct narratives about the past, while simultaneously shaping civic and ethical attitudes.

Particular attention is devoted to the activities of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum as an institution embedded within the American democratic tradition, yet one that has developed its own distinctive model of narrating the experience of the Holocaust. The history of the Holocaust, initially perceived as distant from American society, was incorporated into broader reflections on collective identity by demonstrating what a democratic community is not — and what it may become in circumstances marked by the erosion of values such as pluralism, individual rights, and civil society.

**Adriana Cieślak-Arkuszewska, Rafał Purzyński**

Lodz University of Technology

## **Urbanistyka w służbie Lebensraum. Architektura miasta jako narzędzie utrwalania nowych granic Rzeszy na Wschodzie**

### **Urban Planning in the Service of Lebensraum: Urban Architecture as a Tool for Consolidating the New Eastern Borders of the Reich**

The Wartheland, incorporated into the Third Reich, represented an unprecedented implementation of the concept of expanding German living space (Lebensraum). In line with Arthur Greiser's ambitions, the region was to become a „model district” (Mustergau). This objective entailed the mass deportation and extermination of the Polish and Jewish populations, who were to be replaced by German settlers.

The eastward extension of the Reich's borders also had a crucial visual dimension. To erase the region's Polish heritage and consolidate the annexed territory's Germanic identity, the occupation authorities prepared 109 urban development plans for the Warthegau, including 33 for towns and cities within the Łódź region. Urban planning and architecture thus served as direct instruments of propaganda and social engineering.

The principal architectural language employed for this purpose was the traditionalist Heimatschutz style. This style drew inspiration from the pre-war building traditions of the „Old Reich” and was characterised by low-rise developments arranged along curvilinear streets. The

standardised designs implemented within this framework envisaged the construction of repetitive one- and two-storey buildings with simple roof forms, intended to create a coherent and homogeneous cultural landscape. This strategy was particularly important for the diverse population of settlers brought to the region from, among other places, the Baltic states and Romania, as it facilitated their adaptation by creating a familiar and reassuring illusion of homeland.

The implementation of this aesthetic programme, applied in the Wartheland on an unprecedented scale — including industrial infrastructure — constituted a form of permanent imprint designed to consolidate the newly established borders. A model case study of this spatial policy was the radical transformation of Wieluń's urban fabric, designed by Herman Jansen. His concept envisaged the creation of an entirely new town centre featuring a redesigned market square dominated by soaring administrative towers, a new town hall, and a monumental headquarters of the NSDAP crowned with the emblem of the Third Reich.

In light of these findings, urban planning emerges as a ruthless instrument of totalitarian occupation policy, serving the physical and cultural appropriation of space. Urban planning and architectural style functioned, in this context, as uncompromising tools of social engineering and occupation policy, intended to achieve the lasting visual consolidation of new cultural boundaries in the East.

**Klaudia Piwowarska**

Warsaw University of Technology

## **Granice tradycji. Przekraczanie lokalnych praktyk materiałowych w budownictwie wiejskim w Polsce po II wojnie światowej**

The Boundaries of Tradition: Transcending Local Material Practices in Rural Construction in Poland after the Second World War

This paper addresses the issue of the „boundaries of tradition” in the context of post-war rural construction in Poland, examining both state policy and the practical application of local building materials after 1945. The point of departure is a series of normative acts: Resolution No. 179 of 10 April 1954 on clay construction and Act No. 1022 of 17 December 1955. These acts, in response to shortages of construction resources, promoted the use of local, substitute, and reclaimed materials.

Drawing upon Franciszek Piaścik's concept of local materials, the paper explores the tension between modernisation and the preservation of regional architectural forms. Particular attention is devoted to the activities of research institutions, including the Building Research Institute, the Institute of Construction Organisation and Mechanisation, and the Institute of Housing Construction. These institutions conducted studies on the properties of clay, slag concrete,

stone, reed concrete, and sawdust concrete, while also carrying out extensive training and promotional campaigns.

Examples of buildings constructed from unfired clay, slag concrete (particularly in the Mazovia and Kielce regions), locally sourced stone (including Szydłowiec sandstone and Pińczów limestone), as well as experimental mixtures incorporating reed and sawdust, demonstrate that although technologies and raw materials were changing, the form and proportions of buildings often remained deeply rooted in local traditions. Consequently, the boundary between the „modern” and the „traditional” lay not in architectural form but rather in the material and technological dimensions of construction.

The paper advances the argument that the post-war use of local materials represented both an attempt to transcend the boundaries of traditional building techniques and a conscious effort to preserve regional architectural identity. The analysis highlights regional diversity and explores the relationships between state policy, expert discourse, and construction practices in the Polish countryside during the 1950s.

**Maciej Wcisło**

Jagiellonian University

## **Fortyfikacja jako granica rozwoju. Wpływ rejonów fortecznych Twierdzy Kraków na urbanistykę i tkankę społeczną miasta**

### **Fortification as a Boundary to Development: The Influence of the Fortress Zones of the Kraków Fortress on the Urban Planning and Social Fabric of the City**

The Kraków Fortress served as a multi-layered boundary — military, legal, and spatial — which for decades dictated the city's development. This paper aims to draw critical attention to the extent of influence the former „iron ring” had on Kraków's contemporary urban fabric. This influence manifested, on the one hand, through stringent building restrictions and control of the fortress foreground, and on the other, through the creation of a lasting infrastructure in the form of access roads and circumferential military routes. A key objective of the paper is to demonstrate the direct relationship between the present-day street network and its origins in the fortress system.

The analysis addresses two scholarly perspectives. Professor Janusz Bogdanowski's concept views the fortress as a ready-made urban planning matrix. This matrix left behind a network of spatial connections that formed the foundation of the expanding city and even held the potential for the large-scale implementation of the garden city concept. This vision proposed the radial linking of forts through belts of greenery, where masking vegetation and fortifications were intended to become the green lungs of a modern metropolis. Unfortunately, the failure of later planners to recognise or regard this logic resulted in the irreversible loss of an opportunity for the systematic integration of this unique infrastructure.

Conversely, Dr Eng. Arch. Filip Suchoń argues that the prolonged enforcement of building prohibitions led to the emergence of areas characterised by dispersed and heterogeneous spatial structures. Following the removal of these restrictions, such areas frequently developed into degraded and chaotically managed spaces.

Employing the methodology of geohumanities, the author interprets contemporary Kraków as a palimpsest where former military boundaries continue to shape the city's spatial structure. The paper posits that a necessary condition for building a coherent urban identity around this unique fortress heritage is the restoration, within the consciousness of both residents and decision-makers, of an understanding of the logic underlying the fortress road system and green infrastructure, as well as the development of awareness of the fortress's very existence.

## Panel 5

**Paweł Więckowski**

War Studies University

**Między wojną a pokojem: dom Augusta jako narzędzie stabilizacji i kontroli granic politycznych po 31 r. p.n.e.**

**Between War and Peace: The Domus Augusta as a Tool for the Stabilisation and Control of Political Boundaries after 31 BCE**

This paper seeks to reinterpret the role of the *domus Augusta* in the transition from the period of civil wars to the stabilisation of the Principate following Octavian's victory at the Battle of Actium. The starting point is the assumption that the boundary between war and peace in the late Republic and early Empire was not exclusively military in nature but was also constructed and negotiated within symbolic and social spheres. In this context, the *domus Augusta* emerges not as a private familial space but as an instrument for organising a new political order.

The analysis focuses on the ways in which Augustus and members of his immediate circle — particularly Livia Drusilla and Tiberius — participated in the redefinition of political boundaries through familial practices such as adoption, marriage, and the control of succession. Within this framework, the *domus* becomes a space in which tensions arising from recent conflicts were neutralised and the experience of civil war was transformed into a narrative of renewal and peace (*Pax Augusta*).

The paper draws upon an analysis of literary sources (including Tacitus, Suetonius, and Cassius Dio), iconographic evidence (most notably the *Ara Pacis*), and epigraphic material to demonstrate how the imperial family functioned as a mechanism for the stabilisation of the political system. Consequently, the *domus Augusta* is interpreted as a key element in the management of the boundaries between violence and order, privacy and publicity, and the Republic and the new form of imperial rule.

**Michał Wilczyński**

University of Lodz

## **Przesuwanie granicy odporności. Oddziaływanie Cezara na postawę żołnierzy podczas bitew i oblężeń**

### **Shifting the Boundaries of Endurance: Caesar's Influence on the Attitudes of His Soldiers during Battles and Sieges**

Gaius Julius Caesar's (100–44 BCE) military successes stemmed not only from his tactical prowess but also from his exceptional understanding of soldier psychology. During the Gallic Wars (58–51 BCE), he forged a profound bond with his subordinates, which subsequently ensured their loyalty during the Civil War (49–45 BCE). Caesar cultivated this relationship by effectively addressing both the material and emotional needs of his legionaries.

Soldiers' emotions were, understandably, particularly susceptible to fluctuation in challenging circumstances, such as an unfavourable turn in battle — as seen at the River Sabis in 57 BCE — or during prolonged sieges conducted under adverse weather conditions, like the siege of Avaricum in 52 BCE. This paper will focus on the methods Caesar employed to motivate his men to persevere in such situations, with particular attention to how this distinguished commander prevented the disintegration of his army. A key factor in this was his demonstrated willingness to share danger with his soldiers, for example, by sending away his horse before the Battle of Bibracte in 58 BCE.

The paper will also explore the threats to military morale Caesar identified during armed confrontations and his understanding of soldier psychology under conditions of mortal danger. The primary sources for this study are Caesar's own works, *Commentarii de Bello Gallico* and *Commentarii de Bello Civili*, supplemented by biographies of Caesar written by Suetonius and Plutarch of Chaeronea.

**Michał Norbert Faszczka**

University of Silesia in Katowice

## **Centurionowie Cezara a granice woli walki**

### **Caesar's Centurions and the Boundaries of the Will to Fight**

Caesar's *Commentarii* offer a unique insight into the functioning of the Roman army during military campaigns, including the psychological influence exerted upon soldiers by commanders, officers, and centurions. The latter's role is particularly difficult to overestimate, as they ensured continuity on the battlefield in the sense attributed to this concept by S. L. A. Marshall and his successors. Every competent commander understood that, by creating appropriate conditions, it was possible to extend the limits of soldiers' physical and psychological endurance — a factor that frequently proved decisive in determining the outcome of combat fought in direct contact with the enemy.

Although this issue was not formally conceptualised in scholarly terms until after the First World War, primarily through the work of Lord Moran, a reading of Gaius Julius Caesar's writings clearly demonstrates that such considerations were not unfamiliar to at least some Roman commanders.

An examination of the topic indicated in the title requires particular attention to three principal areas of analysis:

1. Stressors present on ancient battlefields, considered both from the perspective of contemporary scholarship and through the analysis of source-based evidence — often indirect — that supports the validity of such interpretations.
2. Organisational solutions facilitating the desired influence of commanders over their soldiers, enabling the maintenance of morale, discipline, and combat effectiveness under conditions of extreme pressure.
3. Personality traits favoured for promotion to the rank of centurion, closely connected with the responsibilities entrusted to this category of soldiers during battle and with their role in sustaining the cohesion and fighting spirit of the army.

**Daniel Marek**

Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow

## **Bellum iustum a ius gentium: granice dopuszczalnej przemocy w katolickiej doktrynie wojny sprawiedliwej od starożytności do średniowiecza**

### **From *Bellum Iustum* to *Ius Gentium*: The Boundaries of Permissible Violence in Catholic Just War Doctrine from Antiquity to the Middle Ages**

The doctrine of just war constitutes one of the longest-developed normative systems in the history of Western legal and ethical thought. This paper traces its evolution across more than thirteen centuries — from its Stoic-Ciceronian philosophical roots, through the Augustinian transformation and the scholastic synthesis of Thomas Aquinas, to the concepts developed by the Polish school of international law in the fifteenth century.

The central focus of the analysis is the question of the boundary, understood in a multidimensional sense: as the boundary between lawful war and aggression, between sovereign authority and natural law, and between the Christian community and the world of non-believers. The paper seeks to demonstrate that each historical period conceptualised these boundaries differently, responding to the specific political and moral challenges of its time.

Particular attention will be devoted to two pivotal moments. The first is the fourth and fifth centuries, when Ambrose and Augustine of Hippo effected a fundamental shift from Christian pacifism towards the acceptance of violence as an instrument of justice. The second is the fifteenth century, when the Kraków jurists Stanisław of Skarbimierz and Paweł Włodkowic, at the Council of Constance (1414–1418), challenged the violence employed by the Teutonic Order against non-believers. They formulated a theory of the natural rights of „nations”,

anticipating ideas that would, two centuries later, become foundational principles of modern international law.

The paper argues that the medieval doctrine of *bellum iustum* was not a static body of norms but rather a dynamic field of tensions between theological ideals and political realities. These tensions remain remarkably relevant to contemporary debates concerning the morality of the use of armed force.

**Jakub Jastrząbek**

University of Lodz

### **Kingdom on the Threshold of War — the Prelude to the Gothic War in the Tenth Book of Cassiodorus' „Variae”**

The aim of the paper is to analyse the tenth book of Cassiodorus' „Variae”, with an emphasis on how the worsening relationship between the Kingdom of the Ostrogoths and the Byzantine Empire was presented. To effectively utilise the idiosyncratic type of source — government correspondence, bordering egodocument — the account of „Variae” is compared to other contemporary primary sources, i.e., „The History of Wars” by Procopius of Caesarea and two works of Jordanes: „Romana” and „Getica”. The letters are analysed in order of appearance in the text, which corresponds to their chronological order of being written.

The first analysed letters highlight an atmosphere of continuity — Amalasuintha and Theodahad as coregents cooperate with Justinian both in internal and external policies, as Theodoric the Great and Athalaric did before them. The next messages show the situation after the assassination of Amalasuintha — identified by historians as a *casus belli* of the subsequent war. While the letters to Constantinople suggest earnest attempts at cooperation (or a peaceful transition of power), correspondence with the Senate demonstrates Theodahad's gradual loss of support in the kingdom.

The following batch of letters is mixed — panicked pleas for peace addressed to the Emperor and Empress are mixed with quotidian messages of international relations and the country's administration. The last group of texts comes from King Vitiges, who overthrew Theodahad as a warrior king, as an attempt to win peace by killing Justinian's enemy or to win the ongoing war by leading it skilfully.

In conclusion, the tenth book of *Variae* must be seen as surprisingly lacking in war elements. That could be explained by a later compilation of letters by Cassiodorus, who is believed to have constructed an image of the Ostrogothic Kingdom as a victim of war — a Roman state undeserving of conquest by Justinian.

**Jarosław Pohoralskyj**

Ivan Franko National University of Lviv

**Ворота Русі: оборонні комплекси на кордонах Перемишльської землі (XI-XIV ст.)**

**The Gates of Rus': Defensive Complexes on the Borders of the Przemyśl Land (11th–14th Centuries)**

The Przemyśl Land constituted the south-western territorial and administrative unit of Rus', as well as the western part of the Principality of Halych. Its border with Poland and Hungary gave its location strategic significance. Ruthenian chronicles mention areas referred to as *Vorota* (*Gates*) on two occasions, situated on the frontier of Rus'. From a natural and geographical perspective, these are narrow passages in the terrain, particularly well-suited for defensive purposes. Archaeological sources indicate that the defence of these „gates” consisted of an entire system of fortified settlements (*gordyshcha*) located along the routes leading to these natural choke points.

The most active route in this part of the frontier led from the interior of the Kingdom of Hungary to Przemyśl and further into other lands of Rus'. It passed through the so-called “Hungarian Gates” — the Dukla Pass (the lowest in this part of the Carpathians) — as well as a system of fortified sites along the San River, the most important of which was Sanok.

Another route connected Upper Dniester and Halych with Transcarpathia (via Mukachevo). It had two branches: one from Halych and Zhydachiv (*Zudecza*) along the Stryi River near the fortress of Tustan; and another from Przemyśl via the fortified site of Spas (Staryi Sambir — the last residence of Prince Lev Danilovych), Strilky, Rozluch, towards the upper reaches of the Dniester and Stryi rivers, and towards the Vorota (*Veretsky*) Pass. Similar „gates” also existed along routes through the Roztocze valley, linking the Volhynian lands with the Przemyśl region. Their defence was ensured by fortified settlements at Lviv, Zavadiv, Shchekotiv, Fijna, Vereshchytsia, Horodyszczce, Stradch, Potelych, and Vorobliachyn (*Vorotnia*).

**Panel 6**

**Grzegorz Klein**

Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa

**Propaganda bez granic — zbrodnia i przemoc w czasopiśmie „Dabiq” w latach 2014–2016**

**Propaganda without Borders — Crime and Violence in the Magazine *Dabiq* (2014–2016)**

The terrorist group known as the „Islamic State”, which sought the re-establishment of a „caliphate”, established a quasi-state entity between 2014 and 2019 in parts of Syrian and Iraqi

territory. Crime and violence were hallmarks of these terrorists, deliberately made central to their propaganda. This represented a certain novelty, as even the most criminal regimes of the twentieth century tended to conceal terror and violence. By contrast, for the „Islamic State”, graphic depictions of bloodshed became a tool for deterring opponents, attracting supporters, and constructing politico-religious unity within the „caliphate”.

Film productions (ranging from short, several-minute clips to productions exceeding half an hour), the Twitter platform (which functioned as an effective communication tool thanks to its hashtag system, thereby mitigating the impact of successive account suspensions), and the magazine *Dabiq*, published between 2014 and 2016, played a leading role in the terrorists' propaganda. The latter may be regarded as an example of the comprehensive deployment of diverse propaganda motifs. It contained articles and photo reports of political, religious, social, and military content. Particularly in the latter domain, crime was not omitted; indeed, it was not merely an embellishment of the message but constituted its very foundation.

Research into the propaganda of the so-called Islamic State is thus research into a new form of propaganda — one in which the display of violence became a central element. It is therefore essential to address questions such as why such propaganda emerged and why it proved so effective. The answers are significant not only for understanding these events but also for countering similar threats in the future.

## **Milena Świeboda**

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

### **Jak w Chinach (nie) mówi się o rewolucji kulturalnej**

#### **How the Cultural Revolution is (Not) Talked About in China**

When observing the history of contemporary China, it is difficult to find more striking examples of the deregulation of interpersonal relations than the numerous political campaigns of the Mao Zedong era. Among them, the Cultural Revolution occupies a particularly disreputable position — an episode characterised by normalised lawlessness, the disruption of traditionally understood duties, and cultural chaos. The trauma of the Cultural Revolution has left a lasting imprint on Chinese society, becoming part of a collective identity transmitted across generations, often in conditions of complete silence.

The bleak legacy of these experiences has resulted in the memory of the Cultural Revolution being subordinated to a policy of enforced forgetting, and formally reduced to one of many „mistakes” of Mao Zedong, which may be selectively assessed alongside his other achievements.

Collective memory always operates within specific social, cultural, and political frameworks that define the permissible boundaries of its expression. In conditions of a totalitarian system, the indoctrination underlying the legitimisation of power further complicates the reconstruction of the past. The imposition of strict constraints on discussion of the Cultural Revolution — often involving partial or total enforced silence — has significant social consequences. Firstly, it disrupts the process of working through trauma, thereby delaying societal „healing”.

Secondly, institutionalised practices of reshaping the past transform the trauma itself into a political resource, serving the legitimisation of Party authority. In this way, boundaries become an essential instrument of state memory policy.

The aim of this paper is to analyse the political boundaries of expressing experiences and trauma associated with the Cultural Revolution, and to demonstrate their impact on processes of social memory. The analysis will be conducted with reference to two dimensions: the private (silent) and the official (overwritten). The theoretical framework draws upon the concepts of memory management developed by Maurice Halbwachs, Jeffrey C. Alexander, and Aleida Assmann.

**Joanna Maj**

University of Lodz

### **Napięcia na granicy chińsko-indyjskiej w XXI wieku: geneza historyczna i znaczenie dla bezpieczeństwa międzynarodowego**

Tensions on the Sino-Indian Border in the Twenty-First Century: Historical Origins and Implications for International Security

The aim of this paper is to analyse Sino-Indian border tensions in the twenty-first century, considering their historical determinants and consequences for international security. The starting point is the genesis of the border dispute, which dates back to the decolonisation period and the absence of a clearly demarcated boundary — a situation that culminated in the 1962 war. Despite attempts since the 1990s to stabilise the situation through dialogue and military agreements, the area remains one of Asia's most volatile regions.

Particular attention will be devoted to the escalation of tensions in the Ladakh region, including the 2020 clashes in the Galwan Valley, which exposed the fragility of existing conflict management mechanisms. The analysis also encompasses factors contributing to these tensions, such as the militarisation of the borderlands, infrastructural development, and strategic rivalry between two nuclear powers.

**Kacper Krzeczewski**

Jan Kochanowski University of Kielce

### **Granice komunikacyjne w mediach tradycyjnych i social mediach na przykładzie wojny na Bliskim Wschodzie w 2026 roku**

Communication Boundaries in Traditional Media and Social Media: The Case of the War in the Middle East in 2026

The concept of boundaries in relation to war carries a broad, multidimensional significance, not limited solely to state, political, or legal issues. Of particular importance are also communicative boundaries (or their absence) in traditional and social media. Based on the

narratives presented within them, society constructs in its collective consciousness an image of a given armed conflict, shapes beliefs regarding its causes and the actions of individual parties, and attributes responsibility to specific states and political actors.

The aim of this paper is to compare media narratives concerning the war in the Middle East in 2026 with reference to traditional and social media. Traditional media are understood in this context as fulfilling the condition of one-way communication, without the possibility of immediate audience response (taking into account the phenomenon of media convergence, and thus including textual and audiovisual materials published on online portals). This distinguishes them from interactive social media, in which the user is not only a recipient but also a co-creator of content.

Using examples of television news services, their online counterparts, and selected social media platforms (X and Facebook), the paper discusses the boundaries involved in the construction of such narratives. The analysis draws upon agenda-setting theory and framing theory, which facilitate an understanding of how war-related topics are presented in the media and how they are framed. The paper attempts to answer the question of what communicative boundaries characterise traditional and social media in relation to the reporting and discussion of armed conflicts.

**Agnieszka Biesiekierska**

4th Warmian–Masurian Territorial Defence Brigade in Olsztyn

### **Zadania Misji Obserwacyjnej Unii Europejskiej w Gruzji w zapewnieniu bezpieczeństwa i stabilizacji wzdłuż Administracyjnych Linii Granicznych regionów Abchazji i Osetii Południowej**

The Tasks of the European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia in Ensuring Security and Stabilisation along the Administrative Boundary Lines of the Regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia

Following the Russo-Georgian war of August 2008, one of the most significant security challenges in the South Caucasus became maintaining stability along the so-called Administrative Boundary Lines (ABLs). These lines separate territory controlled by Georgia from the separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. In response to the conflict, the European Union established the European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM) on 15 September 2008. This unarmed civilian monitoring mission's principal task is to prevent renewed escalation of the conflict and support the region's long-term stabilisation.

This presentation aims to outline the significance of the ABLs as contemporary „conflict boundaries” and analyse the EUMM's role in stabilisation, monitoring, and confidence-building processes between the parties. The Administrative Boundary Lines are not classical state borders recognised by the international community; rather, they are lines of division with political, military, and social implications. Their functioning directly affects the everyday lives

of local communities, restricting freedom of movement, access to education, healthcare, and property, as well as the ability to maintain family and economic ties.

The EUMM conducts round-the-clock patrols along the ABLs, monitoring the security situation and the process of „borderisation”. This phenomenon involves the gradual strengthening of the dividing line through constructing fences, installing barbed wire, and erecting watchtowers and surveillance systems. These measures further isolate the population living in border areas and exacerbate the conflict's humanitarian consequences. The mission's permanent presence is preventive, reducing the risk of incidents and enabling rapid response in crisis situations. An important element of EUMM activities also remains confidence-building between the parties to the conflict through dialogue mechanisms, including the mission's hotline and the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM). These means help reduce tensions and create channels of communication in a region characterised by a high level of political and social distrust.

The analysis of the EUMM's functioning demonstrates that contemporary boundaries of hybrid conflicts do not have solely a military dimension; instead, they become a space of political, social, and humanitarian interaction. Despite a relative stabilisation of the security situation, the main limitation of the mission's activities remains the lack of access to the territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which hinders the full implementation of its mandate. The case of the ABLs in Georgia therefore constitutes an important example of contemporary challenges associated with monitoring frozen conflicts and the role of international organisations in maintaining peace and regional security.

**Grzegorz Piątkiewicz**

Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa

## **Wpływ NATO na rozwój odporności społeczeństwa w warunkach zagrożeń współczesnych**

### **The Influence of NATO on the Development of Societal Resilience in Conditions of Contemporary Threats**

One of the pillars of societal resilience in NATO member states is their armed forces. From the Alliance's perspective, properly functioning armed forces strengthen societal resilience against adversary information activities. This is not merely a “symbolic” effect; the mechanism operates through several channels. According to the NATO Strategic Concept of 2022, these include, above all: the credibility of deterrence and the reduction of psychological vulnerability, the resilience of the state system, and an organisational „military order” as a factor of informational stabilisation.

In NATO terminology, resilience is a “combination” of civil preparedness and military capability. The development of information resilience is not an activity undertaken exclusively for crisis situations, but rather a continuous process embedded in the maintenance of readiness and the ability to operate across the full spectrum of threats. In NATO's understanding, this

implies the necessity of treating the information component as an integral part of leadership and organisational training, rather than as a narrow communications speciality.

**Magdalena Pogońska-Pol**

University of Lodz

## **Granica izraelsko-arabska w brytyjskich planach podziału Palestyny**

### **The Israeli-Arab Boundary in British Plans for the Partition of Palestine**

This paper examines the concept of the Israeli-Arab boundary within British partition plans for Palestine between 1937 and 1947. Its primary aim is to analyse the evolution of British territorial proposals and evaluate their significance for subsequent international approaches to Palestine's future.

Particular attention is given to the recommendations of the Peel Commission (1937), which presented the first official proposal for separate Arab and Jewish states, and to the work of the Woodhead Commission, which assessed the feasibility of implementing partition.

The paper also addresses post-war efforts to resolve the Palestinian question, including the activities of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry (1946). This Committee's findings underscored the limitations of British mandatory policy and contributed to the internationalisation of the Palestine issue.

In this context, the study examines the United Nations' role, focusing on the work of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) and the significance of United Nations General Assembly Resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947, which recommended Palestine's partition into two states.

Through a comparative analysis of British boundary proposals and the partition plan adopted by the United Nations, the paper seeks to determine the extent to which British territorial concepts influenced later partition schemes and the subsequent development of the Arab-Israeli conflict. This study is based on an examination of primary sources, official commission reports, and relevant scholarly literature.

## **Panel 7**

**Victoria Shekerova**

Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski”

### **Vazov's cemetery of the immortals**

Since ancient times, particularly in Ancient Greece, the concept of self-sacrifice for one's homeland (the polis) has been prevalent. Thucydides, in his *History of the Peloponnesian War*, recounts that the Athenians who fell at Marathon were to be buried on the battlefield itself, their sacrifice deemed exceptional. Pericles was chosen to deliver a eulogy in their honour. In his speech, as quoted by Thucydides, he elevates the memory of their ancestors, setting it as an

example for future generations — a sentiment that would find parallels in subsequent wars throughout world history.

In this context, last year marked the 140th anniversary of the Unification of the Principality of Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia, and the subsequent Serbo-Bulgarian War.

The Bulgarian soldier, too, embodies self-sacrifice for their homeland. Their memory endures as a monument or pantheon — sacred, unshakable, eternal, and perpetually alive in the consciousness of future generations. This is precisely the significance that Ivan Vazov, the Patriarch of Bulgarian literature, imparts to this historical episode through his work. Despite pain and sorrow, the "restless children" achieve their ultimate goal: self-sacrifice leading to immortality, as Vazov portrays them as giants.

Monuments serve a similar purpose. One such example is the "Mother Bulgaria" Pantheon in the village of Gurgulyat. It powerfully embodies mourning, pride, and the timelessness of history in a single image. Within its heavy, rough concrete walls resides the sacred, beautiful, and powerful image of the mother. She appears to await her son's return from the battlefield, or rather, she represents an image of dignity and pride that has accepted her son's sacrifice in the name of a sacred cause.

## **Hristo Yotsov**

Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski

### **Humanism vs. Militarism through the Idea of the Monument**

This paper explores the dynamic tension between humanism and militarism as historically contingent cultural paradigms, examining their manifestation in urban space and collective memory in the aftermath of the Serbo-Bulgarian War (1885). It focuses on the case of Vidin, where, in the late nineteenth century, an ossuary monument was conceived to commemorate the Bulgarian victory. Notably, the sculptural representation diverges from the conventional iconography of Bulgarian martial monuments: the soldier is not depicted in an aggressive "charge" pose, but rather with a lowered head, expressing mourning for the fallen adversary, who is implicitly recognised as fundamentally similar to himself. In this sense, the monument articulates a distinctly humanistic and romantic sensibility. By the 1930s, however, this representation had become ideologically incongruent with the resurgence of nationalism in Bulgaria, particularly in the context of revisionist attitudes towards the Treaty of Neuilly. The ascendance of militaristic discourse precipitated the relocation of the "Mourning Soldier" and its replacement with a monumental composition glorifying offensive action and the annihilation of the enemy. The juxtaposition of these two monuments reveals a profound transformation in cultural and emotional attitudes — from an ethics of empathetic remembrance, resonant with the poetry of Dimcho Debelyanov, to a more antagonistic paradigm that echoes Carl Schmitt's conceptualisation of the enemy. As such, the monuments serve as material indices of shifting ideological and affective frameworks within Bulgarian society.

## **Interpretations of the Auschwitz Album: Frameworks of Identity in the Borderlands**

This paper examines museum representations of the 'Auschwitz Album' (1944) through the lens of identity politics. It addresses variations in terminology used to identify victims, ranging from 'Hungarians' (framed as 'betrayed citizenship' at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum) to 'Czechoslovaks' (emphasising pre-war identity) at the Jewish Museum in Prague. This distinction highlights how national memory frameworks often simplify the complex identities of borderland inhabitants.

Applying a 'borderlands perspective,' the study emphasises that victims' identities were not static but shaped by shifting political borders. Transcarpathia is viewed as a space where intersecting states (Czechoslovakia, Hungary, USSR) fostered fluid identities rooted in local context rather than solely in state citizenship. It is argued that the category 'Hungarian Jews' often reflects the perpetrators' bureaucratic logic, which contemporary museums uncritically reproduce, thereby rendering the specific experiences of Carpathian Ruthenian Jews 'invisible.' The story of Lili Jacob (from Bilky, now Ukraine) illustrates how an individual biography 'breaks' national categories, revealing multiple layers of belonging (local, religious and state). Her biography was 'structurally incompatible' with the Soviet ideological canon due to the fluidity of borders, the ethnic specificity of the Holocaust and her post-war emigration. Consequently, the 'Auschwitz Album' became an inconvenient source for the Soviet narrative, which replaced complex borderland identities with a unified image of 'peaceful Soviet citizens.' Particular attention is given to Transcarpathia's place within the Ukrainian Holocaust narrative. Currently marginalised by the 'Holocaust by bullets' model (Babi Yar), the region offers a unique example of organic inter-ethnic coexistence. Survivors' testimonies regarding the 'lived world' of Transcarpathian villages reveal a model of social interaction that challenges simplified national narratives.

Ultimately, 'adding Transcarpathia' to the museum narrative represents a radical shift in perspective. Instead of imposing a single 'correct' identity, museums should create space for multiple trajectories of experience, amplifying voices long overlooked due to ideological or national selectivity.

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**Damien Stewart**

La Trobe University, Melbourne/ University of Warsaw

## **Intergenerational Trauma in Poland: Voices of the Generations Born to WWII Survivors**

Research was conducted to explore whether Intergenerational Trauma (IGT) exists within the Polish population, emanating from the devastation perpetrated by the German invasion in September 1939, that not only breached the boundaries of Poland but also the limits of human decency. Initial research sought to explore what effect social processes, specifically social acknowledgement, might have on the transmission of IGT in Poland. Two studies were conducted to investigate whether IGT exists within the Polish population. Results showed that the diagnosable rate of PTSD within the Polish population was 14.1% (study 1; N = 297), and 13.1% (study 2; N = 413), inclusive of the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th generations born to WWII survivors. With rates of PTSD in Poland significantly higher than other countries (e.g., Australia 2-4%), it can be argued that IGT is responsible for the high rate of PTSD in Poland. Further, whereas research has shown that IGT diminishes from generation to generation, the rate of PTSD in Poland is increasing, i.e., the 4th generation of Poles showed higher rates of PTSD than their parents and grandparents. Analysis showed social processes were related to the transmission of IGT in Poland. Specifically, severity of trauma of ancestors who survived WWII was significantly and positively associated with participants perception of trauma within their family which was in turn positively associated with participants PTSD. Results also showed that PTSD was moderated by social acknowledgement whereas a lack of social acknowledgement of ancestor-related WWII trauma within families was associated with the maintenance and transmission of trauma, as was a lack of social acknowledgment of Polish WWII trauma by the international community. This paper will present the themes that emerged from interviews with 11 Poles from the three generations born to Polish WWII survivors about their perceptions of IGT within their families and the Polish population.

**Nazan Çiçek, Evren Ahmet Demir**

Ankara University

## **Crossing and Negotiating the Boundaries of Image in Times of War: The Perception of Syrians and Ukrainians in Turkey (2012-2026)**

When faced with war, whether it be a civil conflict, a war caused by external powers, or widespread violent events stemming from a failed state, large numbers of people cross the borders of neighbouring or nearby states seeking safety, healthcare, food, and shelter. These individuals, fleeing for survival (variously termed refugees, displaced people, illegal immigrants, legal immigrants, temporary residents, or guests depending on the context), not only traverse physical state borders but also the mental and psychological boundaries that define their country and culture in the public perception of the receiving nation. The existing repertoire of representations, stereotypes, and imagery predominantly attributed to them as a specific group before war-related developments plays a profound role in their process of negotiating and crossing these borders in all senses when building a new life in foreign lands. Reactions to and interest in their ordeal, as well as the levels of empathy and support their status as war

victims may invoke, are strongly informed and affected by the prevailing images associated with them.

In this paper, we document and discuss manifestations of Turkish public opinion, as expressed in Ekşi Sözlük (Sour Times), a collaborative online dictionary (Akca, 2010: 25; Soylu, 2025: iv) and one of Turkey's most popular social media forums (Yavuz, 2020: 108). We examine attitudes towards Syrian and Ukrainian people who crossed borders after being forced to leave their homelands from 2012 and 2022 onwards, respectively, using these as case studies. Through a comparative analysis, we highlight how Syrians and Ukrainians were perceived and represented asymmetrically and contrastingly, and how their "choice" to flee war was judged on unequal terms, frequently implying deficits in moral rectitude and integrity for the former.

We detected and documented a total of 26 subject headings covering 15,018 entries pertaining to Syrian refugees and 21 subject headings including 1,842 entries regarding Ukrainians relocating to Turkey in Ekşi Sözlük between 2012 and 2026. Our data attest to the striking contrast in the discursive treatment these two groups received.

Utilising the findings from Ekşi Sözlük — described by The Guardian (2023) as the Turkish "Wikipedia, a social network and Reddit all rolled into one," which receives an average of 74.5 million visits per month (similarweb.com) and where people from all walks of life write anonymously — we draw attention to the additional, presumably invisible yet unswervingly firm boundaries that people fleeing wars encounter beyond actual state borders.

**Mirena Legurska, Petar Petrov**

Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski”

## **A Culture of Peace as a Response to Violence: School-Based Peace Education Programs in Bulgaria**

This report examines peace education as a contemporary pedagogical approach for cultivating the values, behavioural patterns, and skills essential for peaceful coexistence. It delineates an educational model designed to prevent school violence, developed within the framework of a national qualification programme for pedagogical specialists. In this model, a culture of peace is presented as an integral component of school policy aimed at fostering a positive psychological climate and sustainable relationships. The report highlights the Bulgarian experience in establishing school-based peace programmes through pedagogical interaction between the school and the family. It emphasises that a culture of peace is not merely the absence of violence, but a comprehensive system of values comprising respect, dialogue, cooperation, justice, and responsibility. The paper posits that peace education is a strategic resource for the modern Bulgarian school, creating the necessary conditions to transform conflict from a destructive force into a developmental one. Ultimately, it prepares young people for democratic participation, social solidarity, and sustainable coexistence within a society increasingly characterised by new divisions and boundaries. By integrating these theoretical frameworks into practical school leadership, the study offers a replicable roadmap for building resilient educational environments capable of addressing the complex social challenges of the twenty-first century.

## Panel 8

### Myroslav Voloshchuk

Vasyl Stefanyk Carpathian National University

#### **Kingdom of Rus' in the 14th century: borders**

In the 14th century, several Eastern European dynasties attempted to restore the Kingdom of Rus', which began with the coronation of Danylo Romanovych at the end of 1253. Based on a study of diverse sources, this paper will demonstrate the fluidity and vagueness of the borders of the Kingdom of Rus'. An important element in marking these borders will be the settlements mentioned in the texts of charters that refer to the Kingdom of Rus'. Such settlements are particularly prevalent in documents from Louis I and his daughter Mary of the Anjou dynasty, dating from the second half of the 14th century. The inventory of movable and immovable property, initiated in the Rus' lands by Casimir III in the 1350s, intensified in the 1370s–1380s during the Anjou family's reign. Concurrently, chancellors frequently employed the Latin terms 'terra' and 'regnum' to refer to Rus' possessions. This presents challenges in determining the status of these possessions within the extensive territories of the Anjou dynasty.

### Aleksander Bołdyrew

University of Lodz

#### **Straż polna jako element stałej (?) obrony granicy Królestwa Polskiego za Jagiellonów na przykładzie oddziału chorążycy Sieniawskiego**

#### **The Field Guard as an Element of the Permanent (?) Defence of the Border of the Kingdom of Poland under the Jagiellonian Dynasty, on the Example of the Unit of “Chorążyc” Sieniawski**

The defence of the south-eastern frontiers of the Kingdom of Poland gained particular importance during the period of intensified Tatar raids at the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The system of permanent border defence, planned as early as the reign of Casimir IV Jagiellon in the form of the *obrona potoczna* (standing defence), began to function with relative regularity only under his successor, John I Albert. Comprising combined forces of the *pospolite ruszenie* (feudal levy), royal paid troops, and private units of border starostas, it at least partially fulfilled its role in the first decades of the sixteenth century.

An attempt to modernise the system was undertaken only with the Lwów ordinance dated 28 April 1520. Within this reform (and possibly even earlier), there functioned a typically thirty-strong guard detachment, whose contracted service usually lasted longer than that of other soldiers of the standing defence. The field guard unit, sometimes referred to as the hetman's guard, is best documented in fiscal and military sources for the years 1529–1537, when it was commanded by Mikołaj Sieniawski the Elder.

Interestingly, Sieniawski was not officially appointed Field Guard Commander until 1531, and only became Field Hetman in 1539. It may therefore be hypothesised that the recruitment and maintenance of the guard unit prior to 1531 could have resulted from Sieniawski's own initiative, rather than from central decision-making authorities.

This contribution aims not only to discuss the functioning of the guard itself, but also to serve as an introduction to broader reflections on the structure of frontier defence in the Jagiellonian era.

**Tadeusz Grabarczyk**

University of Lodz

### **Nadgraniczny Wieluń w działaniach wojennych 1587–1588**

#### **Borderland Wieluń in the War of 1587–1588**

The royal town of Wieluń in the 16th century was situated near the border with Silesia, along important communication routes connecting Kraków with Greater Poland and leading from Wrocław to Ruthenia. During the war of 1587–1588, the town lay on the route of the marching army of Archduke Maksymilian III Habsburg. Entries from this period, preserved in the Wieluń municipal account book, document the preparations made to repel the Austrian troops and the consequences of their presence in the town. They also reference the Battle of Byczyna (24 January 1588). This information enhances existing knowledge of military operations in the Polish-Silesian borderland.

**Hubert Juchimiuk**

Central Military Library/ Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw

### **Przygotowanie granicy państwa na zagrożenie tureckie w świetle polskiego XVI i XVII-wiecznego piśmiennictwa wojskowego**

#### **Preparation of the State Border for the Ottoman Threat in the Light of Polish Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Military Literature**

The subject of this presentation is an analysis of Polish military thought in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, focusing on the strategic and tactical preparation of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth's south-eastern borderlands against the threat posed by the Ottoman Empire. During this period, the border was not merely a line of demarcation but a dynamic zone of confrontation, necessitating specific organisational, logistical, and doctrinal solutions.

The presentation will analyse works by Polish military theorists of the period, including Hetman Jan Amor Tarnowski's *Consilium rationis bellicae*, Stanisław Sarnicki's *Xiegi hetmanskie z dzieiow ryczerskich wsitkich wiekow zebrane*, and Book II of Andrzej Maksymilian Fredro's *Militarivm, Sev Axiomatvm Belli*.

Texts of a more political and polemical nature, rather than strictly military treatises, which addressed the issue of state preparedness for war with the Ottoman Empire, will also be examined. These include, in particular, Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski's *O poprawie Rzeczypospolitej*, Stanisław Orzechowski's *O zagrożeniu tureckim* and *Napomnienie królowi Zygmunтови Augustowi*, Jan Dymitr Solikowski's *Rotmistrza i żołnierza dawnego myśli patriotyczne względem wojny z Turczyńcem*, and Piotr Grabowski's *Polska Niżna albo osada Polska*.

The analysis will also incorporate selected examples of military legislation from the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Conclusions drawn from the examination of these works will be compared with contemporary scholarly literature concerning the military system of the Polish-Lithuanian state and its relations with the Ottoman Empire during this period.

The resulting conclusions may serve as a starting point for further research into the influence of the Ottoman threat on early modern Polish military practice and literature.

**Dariusz Kupisz**

Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin

## **Smoleńsk jako kluczowa twierdza pogranicza polsko-moskiewskiego w latach 1611–1654**

### **Smolensk as a Key Frontier Fortress of the Polish–Muscovite Borderland in the Years 1611–1654**

In 1611, Polish-Lithuanian forces recaptured Smolensk after a prolonged siege. The city had been lost ninety-seven years earlier when it fell from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania to Muscovy. At the time of its recapture, the fortress had a markedly different appearance compared to the early sixteenth century. It was surrounded by powerful stone-and-brick walls, constructed at the end of the aforementioned century, which, despite their older vertical layout, were capable of resisting the siege artillery of the period.

The aim of this presentation is to demonstrate the role played by this city-fortress within the defensive system of the borderland between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Muscovy, from its recapture in 1611 until its subsequent loss to the Grand Duchy of Moscow (Russia) in 1654. This issue will be analysed in terms of Smolensk's garrisoning, the repairs and expansion of its fortifications, and its importance for frontier defence in comparison with other fortified points.

In this context, it is necessary to consider whether Smolensk truly constituted a key defensive barrier protecting the communication route running between the drainage basins of the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea (the so-called “Smolensk Gate”). Furthermore, it will be examined whether effective military operations directed against the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth could have been conducted while bypassing its fortifications and garrison.

**Tomasz Ciesielski**

University of Opole

## **Pogranicze w ogniu. Podole i sandżak chocimski w latach 1768–1769**

### **Frontier in Flames: Podolia and the Khotyn Sanjak in the Years 1768–1769**

In 1768 and 1769, Podolia became a theatre of intense military operations. This was a direct result of the formation of the Bar Confederation on 29 February 1768, which ignited clashes between the Confederates and Russian and Crown forces, deployed to suppress the uprising, throughout the winter and spring of that year. The intensity of hostilities significantly decreased after June 1768, following the fall of Berdyczów (14 June) and Bar (19 June), when the remnants of Confederate forces sought refuge in the Khotyn sanjak and Moldavia. A period of relative calm prevailed in Podolia until late autumn 1768. However, with the Ottoman Empire's declaration of war on Russia on 6 October, the Bar Confederates once again became active.

At the turn of November and December 1768, approximately 600 Confederates, under the command of Kazimierz and Franciszek Pułaski, seized Żwaniec and the Holy Trinity Forts (*Okopy Świętej Trójcy*). By winter 1769, they had established control over the Dniester region, operating with relative freedom to secure provisions and levy financial contributions. It was only the deployment of substantial Russian forces — tasked with clearing the operational rear for the planned offensive against Khotyn — that led to the elimination of Confederate strongpoints on the northern bank of the Dniester. On 8–9 March, Russian forces captured Okopy Świętej Trójcy, Żwaniec, and Braha. During these operations, the Ottomans attempted to support the Confederates with artillery fire, and the forces expelled from Żwaniec maintained resistance in the village of Braha for over a day.

In the second half of March 1769, Ottoman forces shelled the Russian corps of Major General Aleksandr Pozorovski as it marched along the Dniester from the fortress of Khotyn. The Russians subsequently garrisoned Okopy and Żwaniec with irregular cavalry to secure the concentration of the First Russian Army under General Aleksandr Golitsyn, whose objective was the capture of Khotyn. The first attempt to seize this frontier fortress occurred at the end of April. Despite an initially successful crossing of the Dniester and the capture of an Ottoman camp established on the fortress's forward positions, the Russian army began a retreat on 2 May, returning to Podolia on 5 May.

A second attempt was undertaken in the last decade of June. Following a long march and several weeks of engagements, the Russians commenced the siege of the fortress in mid-July. The Ottomans responded effectively, deploying the main forces of their army towards Khotyn. With the approach of the Ottoman vanguard, the Russians abandoned the siege and, on 12–13 August, withdrew across the Dniester to the Polish side. The Ottomans then seized the operational initiative, attempting to attack Russian units deployed over a wide area extending from the Dniester to Międzybóż.

The two unsuccessful offensives led to the removal of General Golitsyn from command, although he was simultaneously promoted to the rank of Field Marshal. His successor as commander of the First Army was General Pyotr Rumyantsev, who required time to assume

command of the Second Army and arrive in Podolia. Without waiting for his arrival, Golitsyn moved a significant part of the First Army closer to the Dniester in the second half of August, in the Żwaniec region. This provoked Ottoman commanders into attempting to cross the Dniester and engage Russian forces in a decisive battle. However, efforts to establish a sufficiently large bridgehead and pontoon crossings ended in disaster. The destruction of a bridge on 17 September, caused by the swollen river, isolated Ottoman units on the left bank from their main forces.

The Russians exploited this situation, and in an evening assault on 17 September, completely destroyed the Ottoman forces located on the Polish side of the river. The Ottomans suffered losses estimated between 5,000 and 12,000 soldiers, which severely undermined morale in the Ottoman army. As a consequence, the Ottoman forces withdrew on 19 September from their camp on the Dniester and abandoned the fortress of Khotyn. On 20 September, Russian forces occupied Khotyn without resistance. This not only concluded six months of fighting for the Khotyn sanjak but also ended military operations on the Podolian frontier. The Ottoman forces definitively lost operational initiative and, until the end of the war in the summer of 1774, did not again approach the borders of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth.

## **Panel 9**

**Katarzyna Stelmasiak**

War Studies University

### **Między imperium a republiką. Granice polityczne, lojalnościowe i ideowe w wojnie o niepodległość Stanów Zjednoczonych**

Between Empire and Republic: Political, Loyal, and Ideological Boundaries in the American War of Independence

The American War of Independence was not merely a conflict that altered political borders and led to the emergence of a new state; it was also a process that redefined the boundaries of loyalty, legality, and political belonging. This paper aims to present the American Revolution as a transitional experience between an imperial and a republican order, an experience shaped decisively by ideological and communal boundaries as much as by territorial ones.

The analysis begins by examining the tension between the existing colonial bond with the British metropolis and the nascent concept of political sovereignty, rooted in natural rights, representation, and a republican vision of citizenship. The discussion will focus on how the War of Independence created new divisions: between loyalty to the Crown and support for the Revolution, between obedience and resistance, and between the status of subject and that of citizen. Particular attention will be paid to the Loyalists and to the political and ideological dimensions of the rupture with the empire.

The central thesis of this paper is that the War of Independence was a conflict concerning boundaries in a far broader sense than simply spatial ones. It was simultaneously a dispute over the limits of legitimate authority, the scope of the political community, and the foundations of

a new republican order. From this perspective, the American Revolution can be understood as a process of redefining political and cultural dependencies, in which state borders represented only the most visible aspect of a profound ideological transformation.

**Dominik Szczęsny-Kostanecki**

National Library of Poland

### **Od Fuengirola do upadku Ciudad Rodrigo: granice propagandy prasowej Księstwa Warszawskiego względem hiszpańskiej wojny Napoleona (1810–1812)**

From Fuengirola to the Fall of Ciudad Rodrigo: The Boundaries of Press Propaganda in the Duchy of Warsaw in Relation to the Spanish Theatre of the Napoleonic Wars (1810–1812)

The general-information press constituted one of the pillars of Napoleonic propaganda in the Duchy of Warsaw between 1807 and 1813. Potential editorial dissent was effectively restrained by restrictive press legislation, formulated in the 1807 Potocki Rescript. One of the thematic areas in which editors engaged in this propagandistic activity was Napoleon's Spanish war, which, in effect, lasted throughout the entire existence of the Duchy. There were moments — such as during the reporting of the charge at Somosierra — when it occupied a substantial part of the issue in which it was discussed.

In this way, the press representation of the war in Spain contributed to the articulation of governmental expectations towards society on several levels simultaneously: by encouraging enlistment in the national army, it obscured the quasi-mercenary character of Polish service on the Iberian Peninsula; while, by attributing exclusively base motives to British interventionists, it reinforced among readers a sense of moral righteousness or even the lack of any alternative to the Napoleonic option.

It is nevertheless impossible to overlook the fact that the authors of these optimistic reports and accompanying commentaries encountered certain boundaries in their work — both mobile and fixed, yet in all cases real. These constraints were determined by factors such as the political position of the Duchy in relation to the Napoleonic centre of power, technical conditions, public interest, and ethical limitations. A separate issue is the question of maintaining an appropriate degree of rationality.

Ultimately, the reality of the war in Spain itself exerted a decisive influence on propaganda, gradually evolving to the detriment of Napoleonic forces. It is significant that the chronological framework of this article has been set between the end of 1810 and the spring of 1812 precisely because this period allows for the observation of the greatest dynamism in the aforementioned criteria, without losing the sense of continuity of the phenomenon. It should also be noted that the image of the Spanish war fixed in the Duchy's press during the early months of the conflict has already been adequately addressed in Polish historiography.

**Krzysztof Augustyniak**

Museum of Kurpie Culture in Ostrołęka

**Prusy wobec powstania listopadowego - w świetle raportów władz administracyjnych województwa płockiego**

**Prussia and the November Uprising in Light of Reports by the Administrative Authorities of the Płock Voivodeship**

The aim of the paper is to present a little-known issue: the image of Prussian actions towards the November Uprising as it emerges from reports of the administration in the Płock Voivodeship. During the November Uprising, the authorities of border districts were obliged to report on "disturbances" in neighbouring states. In the case of the Płock Voivodeship, most reports containing information about neighbouring countries concern Prussia. The author will examine how foreign intelligence was obtained, how the content of these reports corresponded to the actual actions undertaken by Prussia during the November Uprising, and whether the information contained within them influenced the actions of the supreme authorities of the uprising. The material for analysis will primarily consist of archival documents stored in the Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw. These archival sources will be supplemented by memoir accounts of participants in those events. The paper corresponds with earlier findings, including those of Professor Henryk Kocój, partially updating and complementing them.

**Jarosław Kita**

University of Lodz

**Granice nie stanowiły przeszkody. Pomoc dla powstańców styczniowych ponad kordonami**

**Borders Were No Obstacle: Assistance for the January Insurgents Across Partition Borders**

The largest Polish national uprising of the nineteenth century primarily encompassed the territories of the Kingdom of Poland and the so-called Taken Lands. Approximately 1,200 battles and skirmishes took place in these regions of the former Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. The uprising was also the longest-lasting of the Polish national insurrections, despite the overwhelming military superiority of the Tsarist army. Such endurance would not have been possible without substantial support from Poles living in the other two partitions. Above all, the inhabitants of Greater Poland and Galicia undertook a wide range of activities aimed at supporting their compatriots fighting under Russian rule. Despite heavily guarded borders controlled by Prussian and Austrian troops, not only individual volunteers but also entire organised partisan units managed to cross into the Kingdom of Poland. Weapons, food supplies, uniforms, and correspondence were smuggled across the partition borders, while

emissaries and volunteers from Western Europe also penetrated the cordons. Various forms of aid for the struggling Kingdom of Poland were organised by the structures of the clandestine Polish state established in the Prussian and Austrian partitions, as well as among émigré communities. The aim of this paper is to present the diverse forms of cross-border assistance provided to the January insurgents fighting in the Russian partition.

**Jakub Jastrzębski**

Museum of Krakow

### **Przesuwając granice: Twierdza Kraków i osiedle Salwator**

#### **Shifting Boundaries: The Kraków Fortress and the Salwator Housing Estate**

From the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Kraków was encircled by the fortifications of the Kraków Fortress. For over fifty years, the city awaited an evolution in military doctrine that would allow the line of fortifications to be shifted beyond its immediate city centre. These changes spurred the implementation of Mayor Juliusz Leo's vision: the creation of "Greater Kraków" through the incorporation of neighbouring communes and the adjacent town of Podgórze. Within these newly delineated boundaries, the Salwator housing estate, built between 1908 and 1913 on the grounds of former field fortifications, was particularly notable. The alteration in the 'fortified zones' boundaries enabled the transformation of a military area into a civilian administrative colony. Although the estate was laid out on land purchased from the military by the city, it was still formally located outside Kraków's administrative boundaries at the time. To this day, a tangible trace of the former military boundary survives there in the form of a boundary stone bearing the inscription "Bau Verboten Rayon".

This paper addresses the relationship between the boundaries of fortified zones and the city, as well as the implementation of investment projects on land transferred by the Engineering Directorate of the Kraków Fortress at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Special attention will be given to the Salwator housing estate, which was included in the first urban planning competition in Galicia. Its final form was significantly shaped by the area's earlier military function, situated at the foot of St. Bronisława Hill.

**Beata Piecha-van Schagen**

Upper Silesian Museum in Bytom

### **Żołnierska pobożność indywidualna w sytuacji granicznej w czasie I wojny światowej w świetle feldpostu Kazimierza Wallisa**

#### **Soldiers' Individual Piety in a Boundary Situation during the First World War in the Light of Kazimierz Wallis's Field Post Correspondence**

Kazimierz Wallis's (1896–1918) wartime religious experience — that of a private soldier from Upper Silesia serving in the German Army — stands in tension with the "theology of war"

promoted by the clergy. Aware of the significance of communal religious rites, the clergy provided soldiers with spiritual and patriotic support, as collective acts of piety strengthen the bonds between members of a group, as well as between a religious community and wider society. This implies that Kazimierz Wallis's religious experience does not fit within the criteria of national or ethnic identification, nor is it a form of religiosity transferred from home to the front; rather, it is constructed solely to achieve a concrete temporal aim — namely, the preservation of life.

This practice clearly reflects the model of lived religion based, as Robert A. Orsi has indicated, on "existential invention". However, a reading of Wallis's field post correspondence suggests that his individual religiosity arose from religious experience in a boundary situation. Collective piety offered by the ecclesiastical elite undoubtedly constituted an important element of this experience, yet solitude on the battlefield meant that soldiers were left alone with their emotions, with the religious inheritance brought from home, with neophyte fervour, or with doubt and heresy.

Those praying during field masses, offering supplications to their heavenly patrons, but also those who lost faith in the face of overwhelming suffering, all testify to the importance of trust in God on the battlefield.

## **Panel 10**

**Kaveh Farrokh**

Langara College

### **Cultural, Irredentist and Historiographical Consequences of Imperial Russian Conquests of Iran's Caucasian Territories in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century**

This article examines the cultural, irredentist and historiographical revisionist consequences of wars fought between Imperial Russia and Qajar Iran in 1803–1813 and 1826–1828 which resulted in border and territorial changes in the Caucasus. The military defeats of Iran were stipulated respectively by the Treaty of Golestan (1813) which forced the yielding of the Yerevan Khanate (modern-day Republic of Armenia) to imperial Russia and the Treaty of Turkmenchai (1828) which obliged Iran to yield its remaining Trans-Caucasian territories (known as the Khanates, corresponding to modern-day Republic of Azerbaijan) to Russia. Perceiving the historical legacy of Iran in the Caucasus as a liability against Russian political and cultural consolidation in the region, Imperial Russia implemented a series of anti-Persian cultural policies from the 1830s designed to eliminate Persian language and culture in the Caucasus. These policies were continued by the pan-Turkist Musavat movement (founded 1911) which also introduced the first historical appellation “The Republic of Azerbaijan” on 28 May 1918 to the former Iranian Caucasian territories known as the Khanates, laying the basis of irredentist territorial claims to western and north-western Iran. Anti-Persian cultural systems and institutionalized historiographical revisionism were sustained by the Soviet Union (1917–1990), with policies enduring into the 21st century.

**Cosmin Mihut**

„Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași

### **A Confederation That Never Was: Rethinking Boundaries on the Lower Danube (1837)**

This presentation examines a little-known 1837 project for a Romanian-Serbian confederation as a lens through which to understand the nature of boundaries in a region shaped by overlapping imperial orders. Centred on a "treaty" (Pacte Fondamental) uncovered in Bucharest in 1839, the study approaches the document not as a concrete political programme, but as an echo of political imagination emerging at the intersection of Russian protectorate authority, Ottoman suzerainty, and British diplomatic influence.

The paper argues that the confederative scheme reveals how boundaries in the Lower Danube were not only imposed from above but also reinterpreted by local and transnational actors. Through its language of oath, fraternity, and constitutionalism, the document projected an alternative political space that crossed established territorial divisions and reconfigured ideas of sovereignty and political community in transnational terms. In this sense, boundaries in the region functioned not only as lines of division but also as sites of negotiation, projection, and contestation.

Drawing on archival sources and diplomatic correspondence, and tracing the circulation of confederative ideas across networks linking local elites, British officials, and Polish émigré actors, the paper highlights the role of transnational interactions in shaping political horizons. Though never realised, the 1837 project reveals the performative power of political imagination in nineteenth-century southeastern Europe and underscores the fluid and contested nature of boundaries in a frontier region.

**Nikola Ivanov**

Sofia University „St. Kilkenny Ohridski”

### **All Must Fight in the Name of Unity: The Macedonian Battalion and the Serbian-Bulgarian War of 1885**

The Serbo-Bulgarian War of 1885 stands as a defining moment in the young Principality of Bulgaria's struggle for territorial unification. Despite lasting less than three weeks, it can be argued that this was one of the most important conflicts in modern Balkan history. It emboldened the Bulgarians to pursue their grand plans for national unification, while simultaneously shifting the Kingdom of Serbia's focus towards the yet-to-be-liberated Macedonian province, then still part of the Ottoman Empire. The Macedonian people did not remain neutral in this conflict. Hundreds of students, revolutionaries, teachers, and even known hajduks from the lands of Macedonia volunteered to form the "Macedonian Battalion," which proved instrumental in the capture of Pirot during the final stages of the war. Some of these volunteers, such as Nikola Genadiev and future Prime Minister Andrei Lyapchev, would later

form the crux of Bulgarian political life and thought. Therefore, the topic of Macedonian volunteer groups in the Serbo-Bulgarian War warrants further investigation, as it offers a richer perspective on the conflict itself and on how the war shaped the burgeoning new elite of the Principality of the Third Bulgarian Estate.

**Gabriel Leanca**

„Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași

### **Managing Imperial Borderlands: The Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia and the Creation of a Subsystem of International Relations in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century**

Moldavia and Wallachia were part of the Ottoman Empire from the time of Suleiman the Magnificent. However, these two principalities differed significantly from other Christian provinces under Ottoman control because they retained their local aristocracy. Furthermore, their ruling princes were chosen by the Sultan from among his Orthodox subjects, mostly, though not exclusively, from local families.

During the long Ottoman dominion over these two small political entities, no Muslim colonisation occurred, and consequently, no mosques were built in their territories. There were almost no fortified places and no true army. They were tributary principalities.

To the east of Moldavia and near Wallachia lay the Crimean Khanate, also autonomous under the suzerainty of the Sultan. To the west was the Principality of Transylvania, the only political entity that preserved a Hungarian form of statehood, also under the authority of the Sultan. To the north, the Ottomans maintained control for a short period over the key fortress of Kamenetz-Podolsk and for a very long time over Khotyn, situated precisely on Moldavia's northern border with Poland.

However, from the very end of the 17th century, Moldavia and Wallachia experienced a prolonged period of instability. They became a complex theatre of war and international politics between three major competitors: the Habsburg Empire, the Ottoman Empire, and the Russian Empire. There were eight Russo-Ottoman wars (1710–1711; 1736–1739; 1768–1774; 1787–1792; 1806–1812; 1828–1829; 1853–1855; 1877–1878). The Habsburgs and the Ottomans clashed three times (1716–1718; 1736–1739; 1787–1791). Austria and Russia acted together against the Ottomans in 1736, and again in 1787.

This paper aims to position Moldavia and Wallachia (which became the Kingdom of Romania from 1878) within the 19th-century international system. It introduces into the debate the dynamics of centre-periphery relations in the international system, focusing not only on the idea of domination but also on the interdependency between empires as superstructures and national entities.

**Jan Hnělička**

Technical University in Liberec

### **Corrupted by War? Soldiers conscripted below the legal age limit before the field courts of the Czechoslovak Foreign Army 1939–1945**

The paper will focus on the military service of the youngest soldiers of the Czechoslovak Foreign Army during the Second World War and the criminal acts for which they were tried by Czechoslovak field courts. The group under analysis will consist of boys and girls who, according to the Czechoslovak Republic's Military Service Act of 1920 and its 1927 amendment, were not obligated to participate in the liberation struggle. Nevertheless, they voluntarily joined the foreign army at the ages of fourteen to seventeen and actively participated in war operations.

The first part of this paper will therefore present the circumstances of the conscription of these soldiers by fronts (Poland 1939, France 1939–1940, Great Britain 1940–1945, Middle East 1940–1943, Soviet Union 1942–1945), as well as the strategies employed by recruitment commissions and military command in accepting underage soldiers. The second part of the paper will be devoted to presenting the results of an analysis of the court records of these soldiers, who were tried by field courts during the war. The presenter will introduce their most common criminal offences and, by examining their motivations, assess whether these acts were caused by a disruption in the moral values of the young soldiers as a result of their wartime service or were rather the consequences of their immaturity.

The concluding section of the paper will answer the question of how field courts handled the trials of the youngest soldiers and how they reacted to the discovery that these soldiers had been conscripted below the age limit set by the Military Service Act.

**Ivan Fukalov**

Al-Farabi Kazakh National University

### **Border conflicts in the Fergana Valley at present**

Since the fall of the Soviet regime, the nature of border conflicts in the Fergana Valley has changed. During the Soviet era, conflicts were typically characterised by everyday disputes over resources such as roads and water. Today, old grievances and new borders have ignited entirely new conflicts, which could have a significant impact across Eurasia if not addressed in time. Authoritarian regimes in Central Asian countries have long been waging a covert war, hidden amidst conflicts in the former Soviet space. The war in Ukraine has revealed that conflicts in the former USSR are a ticking time bomb. Without a timely response, this bomb will claim many lives.

## Panel 11

**Agnieszka Jędrzejewska**

Association of Military Historians

### **Służba żołnierzy 28 pułku Strzelców Kaniowskich na polsko-litewskiej linii demarkacyjnej na przełomie 1919/1920**

Service of Soldiers of the 28th Kaniowscy Rifle Regiment on the Polish-Lithuanian Demarcation Line at the Turn of 1919/1920

The demarcation line separating Polish and Lithuanian forces was established on 24 July 1919 by decision of the Paris Peace Conference. This was a response to the deepening Polish-Lithuanian conflict, which originated from mutual territorial claims, the status of Vilnius, and issues concerning national minorities.

Units of the Polish Army, including the 28th Kaniowscy Rifle Regiment, were assigned to service along the established demarcation line on the Polish side. Soldiers of the regiment's Second Battalion were deployed in locations such as Nowe Troki, Landwarów, Owanta, and Szyrwinty. Their duties included securing the assigned sector, controlling border traffic, combating smuggling, and conducting routine garrison service and training exercises.

Although seemingly peaceful, service in this area was conducted under difficult weather conditions, and border incidents involving both Polish and Lithuanian soldiers occurred frequently. In March 1920, the soldiers of the Second Battalion of the 28th Kaniowscy Rifle Regiment left their positions on the demarcation line and withdrew to Vilnius.

Their service at the turn of 1919/1920 represents only one fragment of the broader Polish-Lithuanian dispute between the two states, which lasted throughout the entire period of the Second Polish Republic and culminated in the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1938.

**Aleksander Furtak**

National Museum in Lublin

### **Problem granicy polsko-litewskiej i przynależności Wilna w poglądach i działalności społeczno-politycznej Michała Römera**

**The Problem of the Polish-Lithuanian Border and the Status of Vilnius in the Views and Socio-Political Activity of Michał Römer**

Michał Römer (1880–1945) was one of those remarkable figures whose life trajectory mirrored the Polish-Lithuanian experience of the twentieth century. A jurist and a social and political publicist, he hailed from a Polish family with patriotic traditions. Concurrently, as an unconventional representative of the *krajowcy* (regionalist) movement, he advocated for the reconstruction of historical Lithuania as an independent political entity. This entity, he

envisioned, would foster the coexistence of the diverse nationalities — Poles, Lithuanians, Belarusians, Jews, and Russians — who had inhabited these lands for centuries.

As a witness to his era, Römer found himself at the heart of borderland environments, where he endeavoured to preserve a democratic space resilient to external and antagonistic ideological influences. His *Diaries (Dzienniki)*, penned over the greater part of his life, serve as an inexhaustible resource for studying Polish-Lithuanian relations from the early twentieth century until the end of the Second World War.

One of the most compelling issues emerging from Römer's notes and socio-political activities is his ultimately unfulfilled vision for establishing just Polish-Lithuanian relations. In this context, a particularly complex and intricate question is the determination of what Römer considered the appropriate Polish-Lithuanian border. This challenge arose after the end of the First World War, during the re-emergence and consolidation of Polish and Lithuanian statehood and especially following the conclusion of the Polish-Soviet War.

In April 1919, at Józef Piłsudski's request, Römer undertook a secret diplomatic mission to Kaunas to persuade Lithuanians to enter into a state union with Poland. He was also considered a potential prime minister of a Polish-Lithuanian government in Vilnius. Following the failure of these efforts and observing the formation of Lithuanian state structures, he became convinced that he should participate in this process from within, maintaining loyalty to the newly re-established Lithuanian state.

He subsequently largely withdrew from active politics, dedicating himself to professional and scholarly work in Kaunas. However, between 1920–1923 and 1939–1940, he attempted to re-engage in resolving the Vilnius question and worked towards mitigating Polish-Lithuanian tensions.

His views and activities encapsulated, as if through a lens, the inherent difficulty of establishing a border on contested lands inhabited by multicultural societies, all grappling with the challenges of the first half of the twentieth century.

## **Tadeusz Srogosz**

Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa

## **Olga Gaidai**

University of Warsaw

## **Niespokojna granica między II Rzeczypospolitą a Ukrainą Radziecką po traktacie ryskim: przypadek nielegalnego przekroczenia**

The Unstable Border between the Second Polish Republic and Soviet Ukraine after the Treaty of Riga: The Case of an Illegal Crossing

Following the Treaty of Riga, the demarcation of Poland's border with Soviet Ukraine proceeded slowly, and during this period the situation along the Polish–Ukrainian frontier

remained unstable. Taking advantage of the permeability of the border, smugglers, spies, deserters, and members of armed diversionary units moved freely in both directions. On the Polish side of the frontier, particularly in Volhynia, in the first years after the war, numerous communist agitators crossed the border, and even entire armed groups carried out attacks on Polish administration and estates.

This paper discusses the illegal border crossing on 24 February 1923 by the Bolshevik official Waclaw Stroński. He claimed that his act was motivated by love for a woman; however, more plausible hypotheses suggest that he was fleeing prosecution for abuses of office, or even escaping due to alleged intelligence activity on behalf of Soviet services. Prior to his escape to Poland, he had served — owing to his veterinary education — as a senior official in the Ukrainian Ministry of Agriculture.

From Stroński's testimony given to police officers, we gain insight into the mechanisms of illegal border crossing. A whole network of organisers, guides, and intermediaries existed, including officials of Bolshevik services, operating from Kyiv to border villages and facilitating access to Polish frontier posts. This process, naturally, involved significant financial expenditure in the form of money and valuable goods. Monetary and material transactions were usually conducted in a relatively calm manner, although Stroński also encountered instances of blackmail.

The paper will also examine the actions undertaken by Polish security services in response to such cases.

**Janusz Zuziak**

Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa

## **Polskie przygotowania do odzyskania Zaolzia**

### **Polish Preparations for the Recovery of Zaolzie**

Poland, unwilling to accept the 28 July 1920 decision of the Conference of Ambassadors regarding the demarcation of the border with Czechoslovakia and the consequent loss of Zaolzie, undertook diplomatic, propagandistic, and clandestine operations aimed at its eventual recovery. These efforts intensified during the second half of the 1930s and culminated in the entry of the Independent Operational Group “Śląsk” (Samodzielna Grupa Operacyjna “Śląsk”) into Cieszyn on 1 October 1938, during the Sudeten Crisis.

**Adam Lajdenfrost**

National Digital Archives Warsaw

## **„Wiernie ciebie będziem strzec...” Międzywojenne wysiłki na rzecz obrony polskiej granicy morskiej**

### **“We Shall Faithfully Guard You...” Interwar Efforts to Defend the Polish Maritime Border**

By decision of the Paris Peace Conference, confirmed by the Treaty of Versailles on 28 June 1919, Poland was granted access to the Baltic Sea, with a maritime border extending approximately 147 km.

Even before this formal acquisition, on 28 November 1918, Head of State Józef Piłsudski ordered the establishment of the Polish Navy. It was built by officers from the three partitioning powers. Initially, the fleet comprised small vessels such as gunboats, minesweepers, and torpedo boats. From the mid-1920s, it was expanded with destroyers, minelayers, and submarines ordered from foreign shipyards, as well as minesweepers constructed in domestic shipyards.

The home ports for these vessels were established in Hel, Puck, and Gdynia. Aircraft of the Naval Aviation Squadron were also stationed in Puck.

In 1924, a project for the land-based defence of the coastline was developed, focusing on expanding a system of fortifications and heavy-calibre artillery. The principal defensive point was located on the Hel Peninsula.

A maritime education system was created from scratch. Naval personnel were trained at the Naval Officer Cadet School, established in Toruń in 1922 (renamed the Naval Cadet School in 1928), the School of Naval Specialists in Świecie, and the Training Centre for Fleet Specialists in Gdynia.

Maritime issues were actively promoted among the public. The Maritime and River League, founded in 1924, supported the expansion of the fleet. In the 1930s, it organised fundraising for the Maritime Defence Fund, established in 1933. The funds raised contributed to the construction of the submarine ORP *Orzeł* and were also earmarked for the construction of motor torpedo boats.

In 1939, operational plans were developed in the event of war with Germany: "Worek" (defence of Hel by submarines against a naval landing) and "Rurka" (laying a mine barrage in the Bay of Gdańsk). The "Peking" plan envisaged the withdrawal of part of the naval forces from the Baltic Sea to Great Britain, enabling uninterrupted combat cooperation with the Allies and affirming the continuity of the state despite the occupation of its territory.

**Jarosław Suchoples**

Centrum Europejskie Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego

## **Problem granicy w traktatach pokojowych zawartych przez Rosję Radziecką w roku 1920 z Estonią i Finlandią**

### **The Problem of Borders in the Peace Treaties Concluded by Soviet Russia in 1920 with Estonia and Finland**

Although the First World War ended in 1918, in certain regions it continued until October 1922, as was the case with the Greco–Turkish War. This also applied to areas of the former Russian Empire situated on the shores of the Gulf of Finland and further north. As a result of the turbulent events of 1917–1920, two new independent states emerged there: Estonia and Finland. These states sought to stabilise their newly acquired independence and to establish borders in accordance with their national interests, guided above all by considerations of security, which from the very moment of their appearance on the map of Europe was threatened by Soviet Russia. Ultimately, both of these new states signed peace treaties with their eastern neighbour. These agreements, among other provisions, defined the course of the borders between Soviet Russia and Estonia and between Soviet Russia and Finland.

The aim of this paper is to present the significance of territorial issues in the Estonian-Soviet and Finnish-Soviet peace treaties concluded in 1920, as well as their importance for both the Soviet side and the newly independent states located on the shores of the Gulf of Finland. Furthermore, the paper explains the circumstances and reasons that led to significant differences between these treaties.

## **Panel 12**

**Robert Majzner**

Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa

## **Granice neutralności — Chile wobec I wojny światowej**

### **Borders of Neutrality — Chile and the First World War**

The outbreak of war between the European powers in the summer of 1914 was received by the government of the Republic of Chile — similarly to other countries of the Western Hemisphere — with a calm derived from the conviction that its origins had no connection with the American continent. In the absence of political and economic conditions compelling participation, the only rational solution appeared to be the maintenance of neutrality. Accordingly, this position was expressed in the relevant declarations of 3 and 7 August 1914, which did not anticipate that the conflict could pose any threat to the state's territorial or political sovereignty.

However, the operations of the German East Asia Squadron under Vice-Admiral Maximilian Graf von Spee off the coast of the American continent between October 1914 and March 1915 proved to be a serious challenge to Chilean neutrality, compelling Santiago to engage both its navy and its diplomatic apparatus. The principal aim of this presentation is to examine these actions undertaken in response to numerous violations of neutrality committed by both German and British naval vessels and merchant ships.

In addition to an analysis of the movements of the Chilean fleet and diplomatic notes submitted in Berlin and London, the presentation will also address the complex socio-economic context arising from the presence in Chile of both British and German minorities, whose economic influence significantly shaped the political attitudes of the Chilean population.

As in the case of Switzerland or Sweden in Europe, Chile's position during the First World War thus provides a valuable field for analysing the impact of a global conflict on border security and the economic security of a neutral state.

**Antonina Pawłowska**

University of Lodz

### **Linie preferowane, linie akceptowalne — spór o kształt granicy irlandzkiej w latach 1920–1925**

#### **Preferred Lines, Acceptable Lines — the Dispute over the Shape of the Irish Border in 1920–1925**

The border of Northern Ireland remains one of the most persistent and periodically recurring political problems in twentieth- and twenty-first-century Europe — ranging from the conflict of the 1970s, through the peace process culminating in the Good Friday Agreement, to the negotiations associated with Brexit. The aim of this paper is to analyse the determinants that influenced the establishment of its shape in the years 1924–1925, and to reconstruct the political discourse accompanying this process.

The source basis for these considerations will consist of materials of the Boundary Commission held in the collections of The National Archives in London. Their juxtaposition with statements made by British, republican, and unionist politicians will allow the analysis to be expanded to include elements of the contemporary political discourse. This will make it possible to capture both the formal and informal determinants of the border delimitation process, as well as to assess the role played in the negotiations by ideological, social, political, and economic factors.

Situating these findings within the broader context of border transformations in Europe following the end of the Great War, the application of the principle of national self-determination, and efforts to achieve regional stabilisation will provide a deeper understanding of the specificity of the Irish case, as well as the long-term significance of the division established at that time.

**Dawid Zębik**

Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa

## **Wybuch konfliktu granicznego między Boliwią a Paragwajem o Chaco w 1932 r. w świetle raportów Poselstwa RP w Buenos Aires**

### **Outbreak of the Border Conflict between Bolivia and Paraguay over the Chaco in 1932 in the Light of Reports of the Polish Legation in Buenos Aires**

The aim of this presentation is to examine the *casus belli* of the border conflict over the Chaco between Bolivia and Paraguay, which escalated into war on 10 May 1933. The discussion will cover the initial phase of the conflict, beginning on 15 June 1932, when a Bolivian unit attacked and destroyed the Paraguayan fort Carlos Antonio López.

Particular attention will be devoted to how the Polish Legation in Buenos Aires interpreted the origins of the conflict, its initial phase, and the political reactions of individual states in the region. Special emphasis will be placed on assessing the strategic importance of the Gran Chaco region, which, for the belligerent states, constituted a borderland of potential resource and communications significance.

Based on diplomatic reports, a reconstruction will be undertaken of the Bolivian–Paraguayan tensions that led first to armed clashes and subsequently to full-scale war. Analysing the conflict through the prism of the reports from the Polish Legation in Buenos Aires will make it possible to capture not only the dynamics of the initial diplomatic reactions but also how the dispute was perceived by the Polish diplomatic mission observing events on the ground from the perspective of Argentina — a state closely interested in their development.

Furthermore, particular importance will be attached to presenting the position adopted by Poland towards these hostilities, including the attempt undertaken at the end of August 1932 to contribute to the restoration of peace between Paraguay and Bolivia, in which the Polish Legation in Buenos Aires participated. The presentation will be based primarily on archival materials from the Central Archives of Modern Records in Warsaw and the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America.

**Leonard-Denis Păușan-Barna • Eusebiu-Marcel Narai**

West University of Timișoara

## **Reconfiguration of Poland's borders in 1939 and the political-military consequences until June 1941**

This paper analyses how the military actions undertaken by Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union in September 1939 were reflected and interpreted. These actions were initially marked by the signing of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, which established the political-diplomatic framework necessary for the dismemberment of the Polish state. Following the Nazi German invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939 and the Soviet invasion on 17 September, Polish territory was

divided between Germany and the Soviet Union, leading to the temporary disappearance of the Polish state from the map of Europe until the winter of 1944. The paper examines Poland's territorial transformations from 1939 and the geopolitical implications generated until June 1941, within a European context characterised by escalating conflicts and competition between the great powers.

The work's structure incorporated three press organs, selected based on the relevance and diversity of their ideological orientations. Their editors largely reflected both their own convictions and the positions of their patrons or the political formations on which they depended. Although these publications were situated on different, sometimes even diametrically opposed, political coordinates, their selection was deliberate, aiming to highlight the plurality of media discourse on international events. Concurrently, the level of analysis and commentary varied, with some benefiting from collaborators who offered informed interpretations of major international developments. Thus, the analysed corpus includes the newspaper 'Vestul', founded on 1 May 1930 by Sever Bocu; the publication 'Dacia', launched on 21 July 1939 as a daily organ for Romanian affirmation in the Timiș region under the aegis of ASTRA Bănățeană; and the newspaper 'Biruința', edited during the interwar period as a press organ of the Legionary Movement. While 'Dacia' initially supported the authoritarian monarchical regime, later showing a situational sympathy towards the Legionary Movement, 'Biruința' distinguished itself by its consistent promotion of an extreme right-wing ideology, characterised by a pro-Axis orientation and anti-communist discourse. In this context, a comparative analysis of these sources allows for a nuanced understanding of how the press reflected and interpreted the era's major events.

The paper examines the administrative-territorial reorganisation imposed by the two occupying powers, including direct annexations carried out by Germany and the establishment of the General Government, as well as the integration of the eastern territories into Soviet structures. Concurrently, the socio-political consequences of the dual occupation are analysed, characterised by repressive policies, deportations, and the destruction of state institutions, but also by the emergence of resistance forms and the maintenance of state continuity through the Polish government in exile. A turning point was the launch of Operation Barbarossa on 22 June 1941, which radically altered the geopolitical configuration of the region, placing the entire territory of former Poland under German control. This change marked the transition from a dual to a unitary occupation, with major implications for the dynamics of the war on the Eastern Front. By adopting a chronological and analytical perspective, the study highlights, with the help of both the Banat press and specialised works, how Poland's territorial transformations reflected the strategic interests of the great powers and contributed to redefining the European geopolitical balance in the early years of World War II.

**Jan Stanisław Ciechanowski**

University of Warsaw

## **Granice Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w hiszpańskiej myśli politycznej od Wielkiej Wojny do utrwalenia się porządku jałtańsko-poczdamskiego**

**Borders of the Republic of Poland in Spanish Political Thought from the Great War to the Consolidation of the Yalta–Potsdam Order**

This paper analyses the borders of the Republic of Poland as perceived in Spanish political thought from the Great War until the consolidation of the Yalta–Potsdam international order after the Second World War. The perspectives and opinions on the shape of the reborn Polish state's borders, formulated in Madrid within political, diplomatic, and journalistic circles, became particularly prominent during periods of heightened international interest in the subject.

In this regard, several distinct phases can be identified: (1) the First World War and the four years following its conclusion (up to 1922); (2) the period immediately preceding the outbreak of the Second World War, the duration of the conflict, and its final stage; (3) the two years following the war, until the complete consolidation of communist rule in Poland in 1947.

These perspectives and assessments were articulated in statements by Spanish politicians, diplomatic reports from representatives of the Madrid Ministry of Foreign Affairs and press analyses. The presentation will examine the mechanisms that shaped these positions, identify the principal tendencies in this area, and explore their association with specific political groups.

**Bartosz Kaczorowski**

University of Lodz

## **Hiszpańskie próby rewizji granic w czerwcu 1940 r.**

**Spanish Attempts at Border Revision in June 1940**

The aim of this presentation is to analyse the attempts at border revision undertaken by Francoist Spain in the context of the French defeat in June 1940. The regime of General Francisco Franco regarded this moment as a favourable opportunity for the realisation of its colonial ambitions. Consequently, a series of diplomatic initiatives were undertaken with the objective of obtaining territorial gains at the expense of France (Morocco) and, to a lesser extent, the United Kingdom (Gibraltar).

Although this issue is often interpreted by historians as evidence of Spain's willingness to enter the Second World War on the side of the Axis powers, an analysis of archival material suggests that Madrid was more inclined to pursue territorial revision through pressure exerted on a weakened neighbour rather than by initiating full-scale military operations.

**Aleksandra Durakiewicz**

The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin

## **Granice suwerenności: Strefa Kanału Panamskiego w XX wieku**

### **Boundaries of Sovereignty: The Panama Canal Zone in the Twentieth Century**

The Panama Canal Zone represents one of the most striking examples in the twentieth century of tension between a state's formal sovereignty and its de facto external control. This paper aims to analyse the Zone's operation as a distinct political space where the United States' presence limited Panama's autonomy, despite the preservation of its formal independence.

The analysis begins with the Zone's establishment in 1903 and its legal status, which practically allowed the United States to exert almost complete administrative, military, and economic control over the area. The paper then examines the extent to which the Panama Canal Zone can be interpreted as a form of extraterritoriality and how it contributed to redefining the concept of the state border.

Particular attention is given to the power relations evident in the Zone's daily functioning, as well as to the social and political tensions that developed in Panama in response to the American presence. The analysis also covers Panama's gradual recovery of control, culminating in the Torrijos–Carter Treaties, which initiated the Zone's dismantling. This perspective allows the Panama Canal Zone to be viewed not merely as a piece of strategic infrastructure, but primarily as a space where the boundaries of sovereignty were negotiated, contested, and redefined.

## **Panel 13**

**Wojciech Michalski**

Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin

### **Idea miasta jako „przedmurza/tarczy (*propugnaculum*) chroniącej przed okrutnymi i barbarzyńskimi ludami” jako fundament lokalnej tożsamości historycznej w staropolskim Lublinie**

### **The Idea of the City as a “Bulwark/Shield (*propugnaculum*) Protecting Against Cruel and Barbarous Peoples” as a Foundation of Local Historical Identity in Old Polish Lublin**

The idea of the “bulwark of Christendom” is more widely known as an expression of the political ideology of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. In fact, this conceptualisation was articulated even before the Jagiellonian dynasty. It was also employed in other countries whose borders once marked the frontier between the Christian world and aggressively oriented non-Christian polities.

In the Polish lands, the idea of the kingdom as a “shield” (scutum) protecting other European countries from the invasion of dangerous and powerful enemies (the Tatars) appears already in the diplomatic correspondence of Władysław Łokietek with the Holy See. However, the construction of identity in relation to the idea of defending a broader cultural community against the brutality of a threatening adversary took place in the early modern period not only at the level of the state organism.

This content is also present in the oldest narrative concerning the origins of Lublin, derived from local urban circles. It refers to the description of the city’s history in volume six of *Civitates orbis terrarum*, published by Georg Braun and Abraham Hogenberg in 1618. The foundation of the city, identified with its granting of Magdeburg law by Władysław Łokietek in 1317, is presented there precisely as an expression of the idea of creating a “bulwark/shield” (propugnaculum) protecting not only Poland, but also Silesia and Moravia, against the Mongol threat.

This representation should be interpreted in the context of living historical traditions in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Lublin concerning the turbulent and glorious history of the town during the Tatar invasion of 1340/1341, as well as in relation to the sense of threat posed by these adversaries, observable in the Lublin centre in the first half of the sixteenth century.

Particularly significant sources for research into the vision of Lublin as a “bulwark/shield” protecting against a well-known yet culturally distinct enemy are visual representations preserved within the urban space, produced in the milieu of the local patriciate and aristocracy in the sixteenth century. They allow for a more precise understanding of the wider circulation of this idea within the local community.

**Adam Rogowski**

Jagiellonian University

## **Wojna jako stan zniesienia granic lokalnej społeczności na przykładzie parafii św. Mikołaja w Jedlni**

### **War as a Condition of the Dissolution of Local Community Boundaries: The Case of the Parish of St. Nicholas in Jedlnia**

The paper aims to analyse the experience of war from a microhistorical perspective, using the example of St. Nicholas parish in Jedlnia (Radom County). The main thesis is that armed conflict acts as a force that dissolves the boundaries of local distinctiveness. This occurs against the will of the community, which is compelled to become an actor in events, even if only in a passive role. The parish of Jedlnia, geographically centrally located, constitutes a model case in this respect. Despite lacking the status of a typical “borderland,” its history demonstrates that the boundary between safe everyday life and the chaos of history can be crossed suddenly and irreversibly.

Based on archival sources, memoirs, scholarly studies, and local publications, the paper will chronologically trace successive conflicts affecting Jedlnia: from the impact of the Teutonic

Order wars, the Swedish Deluge, the partitions of Poland, and the January Uprising, to the two world wars. This will demonstrate how, in wartime conditions, the boundary between local *sacrum* and global *profanum* becomes blurred.

I also intend to present the actions and attitudes of the local community in response to the challenges brought by wartime conditions. Although everyone was, in a sense, a compelled actor, they cannot be regarded as devoid of agency or subjectivity, even if some of these aspects have faded over time. Stories from, for example, the Second World War are still very much alive and gain fuller shape with each archival inquiry (oral tradition, in many cases, omitted certain aspects).

**Michał Widera**

University of Opole

### **Zaangażowanie ks. Antoniego Korzybskiego w odbudowę kościoła w Białotarsku (1921–1922)**

#### **The involvement of Fr. Antoni Korzybski in the reconstruction of the church in Białotarsk (1921–1922)**

The article presents Father Antoni Korzybski's efforts to repair the war damage sustained by the Church of the Transfiguration of the Lord in Białotarsk, near Gostynin, resulting from military actions in 1914. His work also encompassed completing its construction and bringing it into use.

Construction of the church began in 1907, reaching a shell condition by 1914. However, between 13 and 15 November 1914, the church became central to clashes between German and Russian forces during the Łódź Offensive. Its proximity to the border between the Prussian and Russian partitions, approximately 30 km, exacerbated its exposure. Shelling completely destroyed the roof and vaults, and severely damaged the walls and towers of the unfinished church. Due to the difficult economic situation during the First World War and a post-war lack of funds, reconstruction, led by Father Antoni Korzybski, only began in 1921–1922.

Father Korzybski had prior experience in church construction and property management, gained, among other places, in the parish of Rzęśnia. During his brief ministry in Białotarsk, he successfully undertook key works with the support of parishioners. These included repairing the damaged walls of the side aisles and chancel, constructing new vaults over the chancel, nave, and transept, and repairing the roofs of the side aisles and some gutters, with missing elements being reconstructed. Inside, plastering and flooring were completed, and wooden main doors and metal windows, including the first stained-glass windows, were installed. Concurrently, the damaged presbytery was renovated. The parish priest's foresight allowed for the purchase of essential building materials for subsequent work stages before a sharp rise in inflation.

Despite numerous economic successes, conflicts with parishioners and legal ambiguities surrounding properties acquired by the priest led to his removal from the position of parish

priest in Białotarsk. His successor continued the church's finishing works, and in 1924, Bishop Stanisław Zdzitowiecki consecrated the church.

**Grzegorz Sokołowski**

Archdiocesan Archive in Wrocław

## **Problem granic jednostek Kościoła katolickiego na Ziemiach Zachodnich po II wojnie światowej**

### **The problem of the boundaries of Catholic Church units in the Western Territories after the Second World War**

After the end of the Second World War, as a result of the decisions of the Potsdam Conference, Poland acquired territories located east of the Oder and Lusatian Neisse rivers. The incorporation of the so-called Western and Northern Territories, which constituted compensation for lands lost to the Soviet Union, was accompanied by an almost complete population exchange and a radical transformation of the confessional structure of these areas. This process compelled the Catholic Church to organise, on an ad hoc basis, a new ecclesiastical administration in territories that had previously belonged to German or Czechoslovak dioceses.

The main research problem of the paper is the phenomenon of the mismatch between pre-war diocesan boundaries and the new political reality. Using Lower Silesia as a case study, the author analyses the process of taking over jurisdiction over territories that historically belonged to the Archdiocese of Prague (the Kłodzko region) or the Diocese of Meissen (the Zgorzelec area). This situation created a form of legal dualism: while state borders had been delineated, the Holy See did not formally alter diocesan boundaries for nearly three decades, treating them as provisional.

The presentation discusses the factors that determined such a late (1972) establishment of a permanent ecclesiastical hierarchy. The author points to the complex diplomatic interplay between the Vatican and the government of the Polish People's Republic, pressure from the German episcopate, and the issue of the lack of international recognition of Poland's western border by the Federal Republic of Germany until 1970. The analysis is based on archival research conducted at the Archdiocesan Archives in Wrocław, which allows the problem to be presented from the perspective of local ecclesiastical administration, confronted with pastoral and political challenges in a borderland context.

**Zofia Bizan**

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

**Miasto przygraniczne jako przestrzeń walki o narrację i dominację symboliczną: studium przypadku Stepanakert/Chankendi w konflikcie o Górski Karabach**

**Borderland city as a space of struggle for narrative and symbolic dominance: a case study of Stepanakert/Khankendi in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict**

The aim of this paper is to analyse the struggle for narrative and symbolic dominance within the Armenian–Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, focusing on the borderland city of Stepanakert (Armenian name) / Khankendi (Azerbaijani name). Particular emphasis is placed on characterising the role of discursive and toponymic practices employed by both sides throughout the conflict. These practices are examined in terms of their function in defining, shifting, and contesting borders, both territorially and symbolically. The city under discussion is a liminal and borderland space where competing projects of sovereignty, historical memory, and political order intersect, revealing the border itself as a dynamic and multilayered construct rather than a static line of division.

The paper employs qualitative discourse analysis, encompassing institutional materials, media coverage, official communications, and selected examples of toponymic changes in physical and digital space (maps, news portals, administrative documents). This analysis captures how specific linguistic practices contribute to the multi-layered transformation of the city's status.

In this paper, Stepanakert/Khankendi is analysed as a borderland space where the border is not merely an external line of division but has, for decades, permeated the city itself, organising its political, linguistic, and perceptual status. Within the context of Nagorno-Karabakh, borderliness is not a given condition but a process of continuous negotiation, in which competing state and national narratives attempt to stabilise their own visions of space through toponymic and discursive practices.

**Panel 14**

**Helena Diakova**

Regional Municipal Institution “Kharkiv scientific and methodological center of cultural heritage”

**Формування гітлерівцями територіального ландшафту Харківщини: плани та їх реалізація**

**The shaping of the territorial landscape of the Kharkiv region by the Nazis: plans and their implementation**

Having captured the Kharkiv region during the German-Soviet War in the autumn of 1941, the Nazis established both their own military and local civilian authorities. The formation of local administration adhered to the Wehrmacht High Command's directives, approved in the spring of 1941. These included the "Guidelines for Special Areas to Directive No. 21" of 13 March 1941 and "Special Instructions on Provision, Part C" of 3 April 1941.

According to these documents, the occupied territory of the Soviet Union was divided into two zones during hostilities: the rear zone, subordinated to the Imperial Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories headed by A. Rosenberg, and the front zone, dependent on the commanders of the ground forces. The Kharkiv region fell under the authority of the commander of the operational area of Army Group "South".

The region was further subdivided into 9 "gebieten" and 33 "kreisen," headed by German agricultural Gebiets- and Kreisführers, respectively. Commandant's offices, led by military commandants, were established in the region's cities.

Alongside their own authorities, the occupiers also formed a civil administration comprising local residents. In villages and hamlets, this involved village heads, while in cities, councils were formed and led by burgomasters. Military commandants controlled the areas adjacent to the cities through these burgomasters.

Kharkiv itself was divided into 19 district burgomasterships, established in November 1941 according to the former police sub-districts. Village heads and district burgomasters were responsible for social, household, and economic matters.

In February 1942, a decision was made to create the general district "Kharkiv," which was intended to encompass five large cities (Kharkiv, Belgorod, Kursk, Orel, and Bryansk) and 33 district centres across the Kharkiv, Kursk, and Orel regions. Such a merger of settlements into a single administrative-territorial unit demonstrated a disregard for the national, historical, and economic characteristics of the regions.

Ultimately, the Germans aimed to enlarge the administrative-territorial units within the USSR by reducing the number of regions. However, this plan was never implemented due to the defeat of German troops in the war and their retreat from the Kharkiv region in August–September 1943.

## **Oleksandr Saltan**

Kharkiv State Academy of Physical Culture

### **Організація навчального процесу у загальноосвітніх школах прифронтового Харкова під час нацистської окупації (жовтень 1941 — серпень 1943 рр.)**

### **The organisation of the educational process in general secondary schools in frontline Kharkiv during the Nazi occupation (October 1941 — August 1943)**

The article examines the specifics and peculiarities of the organisation of the educational process in Kharkiv's general education schools under the extreme conditions of the Nazi

occupation regime (October 1941 — August 1943). The author analyses the dire state of the city's educational sector, which maintained its frontline status for an extended period, directly impacting the stability and curriculum of schooling.

The primary focus is placed on the attempts by the occupying authorities and local self-government bodies (the Uprava) to resume primary school operations. These efforts aimed not only at providing basic knowledge but also at exerting ideological influence on Ukrainian youth. The study highlights the key challenges of the period: a chronic shortage of qualified teaching staff, the critical physical condition of school buildings, a lack of heating, and a deficit of textbooks. Furthermore, the article explores the revision of curricula, which involved the removal of Soviet ideologies and the introduction of national-patriotic educational elements that often conflicted with the strict censorship requirements of the German administration.

Special emphasis is given to the daily lives of teachers and students, for whom the school often served not only as a place of learning but also as a means of survival amidst famine and the constant threat of military action. Drawing on archival materials and eyewitness accounts, the author reconstructs the atmosphere of the contemporary educational environment and analyses the reasons behind the gradual decline of the school network as the front line approached and the occupiers' repressive policies intensified. The scientific novelty of this research lies in its comprehensive approach to studying Kharkiv's local history through the lens of transforming educational institutions during World War II.

**Dmytro Tytarenko**

Heidelberg University

### **Нацистські злочини у Донбасі: обставини скоєння, особливості дослідження, межі пам'яті**

### **Nazi crimes in the Donbas: circumstances of their perpetration, specific features of their study, and the limits of memory**

During the Nazi occupation (1941–1943), existing estimates suggest that approximately 350,000 civilians and over 200,000 Soviet prisoners of war were killed in the Donbas region. Based on published sources and materials from Ukrainian, German, and Russian archives, the main categories of Nazi victims have been defined, and the structures responsible for the killings of civilians and prisoners of war have been identified.

The activities of the "Extraordinary State Commission for the Establishment and Investigation of the Crimes of the German-Fascist Invaders and Their Accomplices..." are characterised, and Soviet and German post-war practices of investigating crimes committed in the occupied territory of Donbas are analysed. The paper examines how Nazi crimes in the Donbas have been represented in academic literature, educational programmes, and museum activities during the Soviet and post-Soviet periods.

Amidst the war that has continued in Donbas since 2014, significant changes have occurred on both sides of the front line in the academic and public commemorative discourses dedicated to the Second World War and, in particular, the events of the Nazi occupation. The article

examines the actions of the actors who influenced these processes and describes the local population's public reactions to the paradigm shift in the study and commemoration of the Second World War.

### **Liudmyla Zhuravlova**

Dragomanov Ukrainian State University, Kyiv

## **Візуалізація «останнього рубежу»: космос як ідеологічний кордон в американській культурі та пропаганді ХХ століття**

### **The visualisation of the “last frontier”: outer space as an ideological boundary in American culture and propaganda of the twentieth century**

This study explores the historical transformation of space into an ideological and cultural borderland within the United States during the 20th century. Utilizing an interdisciplinary historical approach, it analyzes how the deeply rooted American myth of the „Frontier” — the historical experience of expanding civilization westward across the „Wild West” — was repurposed and projected onto outer space following World War II.

Central to this analysis is the concept of the „Last Frontier” a rhetorical and visual construct masterfully employed by American policy-makers and media to frame space not as a neutral void, but as a territory demanding civilization, mastery, and, ultimately, defense. The study examines how this „Space Frontier” was constructed as a vital new border against the encroaching threats of the Cold War, primarily Soviet expansionism. By casting space as an analog to the dangerous yet promising western territories of the 19th century, NASA and the military-industrial complex successfully fostered public support and mobilized resources. This visualization of space as a „threatened border” proved crucial in justifying unprecedented peacetime military expenditures required to „secure” this new domain and ensure American technological and ideological supremacy. The paper will scrutinize archival materials, propaganda visuals, and popular media from the late 1950s through the 1980s to demonstrate how this cultural imaginary converted abstract orbital dynamics into a concrete arena for asserting national identity and safeguarding the American way of life at the apex of the Space Age.

### **Mykola Bryvko**

National Historical Memorial Reserve „Graves Bykivnya”

### **Olha Bryvko**

National Historical and Architectural Museum „Kyiv Fortress”

## **Штурм Савур-Могили мовою митців**

### **The assault on Savur-Mohyla in the language of artists**

Pages in the history of humankind are etched in our minds for many years. The memory of these events, for those who experienced them, including the participants themselves, can be

preserved through literary works about war and its many battles. Many writers, poets, and artists who participated in the Second World War or the modern Russian-Ukrainian war are known to have written about these conflicts. For a significant number of residents of the Donetsk region, a pivotal event is the storming and defence of Savur-Mohyla, both in 1943 and 2014, which has become a symbol of courage, immortality, and the will to win, and today holds a prominent place in Ukraine's patriotic and memorial landscape.

By highlighting the theme of the assault on the Savur-Mohyla height in literature and art, we not only preserve the memory of the past but also shape an understanding of these important historical events for future generations and counteract Russia's distortion of historical facts. This topic has been explored in works by both renowned writers and poets, such as Vadim Sobko, Mykhailo Stelmakh, and Oles Honchar, as well as lesser-known authors, residents or natives of the city of Snizhne. Some of these authors, including Anatoly Shapochka, Oleksiy Bilyaev, Mykola Khyzhnyak, and Fedir Serebryansky, were participants in the fighting on Savur-Mohyla. Additionally, famous contemporary artists Igor Fedchyshyn and Yuriy Raf have addressed this theme. All of them, in their works, endeavour to convey the theme of war through the lens of the fighting on the Savur-Mohyla height.

## **Tetiana Tsybal**

Kyryvi Rih National University

### **Екзистенційна межа війни: невимовний досвід і страх забуття**

#### **The existential boundary of war: inexpressible experience and the fear of forgetting**

The report examines the phenomenon of silence in the experience of modern Ukrainian defenders as an extreme anthropological and metaphysical category. The author analyses frontline silence not as a passive absence of sound, but as an active space of the “inexpressible,” where familiar civilian meanings are destroyed. The study focuses on the existential conflict between oblivion as a mechanism of psychological salvation and the fear of the final annihilation of personal meanings. Drawing on the philosophical legacies of T. Adorno and P. Celan, a parallel is drawn between the 20th-century “crisis of language” and the contemporary “existential aphasia” of the soldier. The problem of experiencing catastrophes as fundamentally inexpressible is explored. In this context, the results of the search for an answer to whether our attempts to conceptualise the silence of the front line will become a form of intellectual violence against the living pain of defenders are presented. The possibility of a culture that has gone through a stage of complete annihilation of meaning in the silence of the trenches returning to humanistic narratives, rather than being doomed to create a completely new “apophatic” language of being, is analysed. The question of the distinction between “salvific oblivion,” which allows a soldier to survive, and “tragic oblivion,” which turns a person into a function of war, is raised. The current Ukrainian frontline silence is seen as both a unique phenomenon and a universal state of being for people in the 21st century, who suddenly find themselves in a void between the collapse of the old world order and the uncertainty of the new. Particular attention

is paid to frontline literary reflection as a way of overcoming semantic emptiness and restoring the ontological status of the individual in the context of the extreme experience of an existential crisis.

## **Panel 15**

**Claudiu-Lucian Topor**

„Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University Iași

### **Romania Under Foreign Occupation — The Boundaries of the Military Administration (1916–1918)**

At the end of a failed military campaign, two-thirds of the Kingdom of Romania were under the occupation of the Central Powers coalition. Several historic Romanian provinces, such as Muntenia, Oltenia, and Dobrogea, remained under foreign control. Only Moldova (north of the city of Focșani) still breathed the air of freedom. Here, the government, parliament, royal family, and numerous residents from the occupied territories had found refuge. The new borders were established as a result of the war's progression. The front line became a new military border stretching 40 kilometres. In occupied Romania, new administrative-territorial structures were established to meet military and economic needs. These structures proportionally reflected each occupying power's influence in governance, but the Germans assumed absolute control. This study aims, on the one hand, to highlight the contrasts and similarities between occupied Romania and free Romania from the perspective of the new war frontiers, which effectively covered the front line. Two distinct identities seemed to take shape on either side of the front, reminiscent of the separation of the Romanian principalities (Moldavia and Wallachia) prior to 1859. The border in Dobrogea underwent significant changes and sparked heated debates even among the victors, at least until the Entente powers tipped the balance of the war in their favour. The end of the war brought to light numerous issues related to borders. In 1918, territories were lost, but some were also regained. The union with Bessarabia (the historic territory between the Prut and Dniester rivers) altered the configuration of the eastern border and created a new security challenge. A requirement of the separate peace treaty was also the reconfiguration of the western border. The aim was to revise Romania's old border with Austria-Hungary, which traversed a vast mountainous region where Romania had attacked the Habsburg Monarchy in 1916. Consequently, this study simultaneously analyses the course of Romania's borders, revealing military requirements, strategic needs, and political interests. Against a backdrop of frustrations and fears that emerged in a society exhausted and deeply scarred by the experience of war, the border issue remained a hotly debated topic.

**Alexandru-Murad Mironov**

National Institute for the Study of Totalitarianism. Romanian Academy/ University of Bucharest

### **Crisis at the Northern Border of Romania: Violence and Refugees after the Fall of Poland in 1939**

The Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact of August 1939 took Europe by surprise, creating panic in the eastern part of the continent. A few weeks later, the outbreak of World War II had immediate effects on Romania, even though the country was not initially involved in the conflict. A massive flow of military personnel and official refugees poured into the cities, making the consequences of the war a tangible reality for Romanians. It was no longer just another violent story in the newspapers.

Until September 1939, Romania and Poland shared a common border. By October, the Soviets controlled this border, and it was closed. This study discusses the effects of the outbreak of war directly on this border, examining how it affected people in the former Polish territories and how they attempted to escape to Romania by crossing the demarcation line. The scale of the catastrophe in the neighbouring country was recorded in reports from the Police and Gendarmerie in the northern regions, documents found in the National Archives of Romania, and these form the basis of the present analysis. The suffering of neighbouring communities, some of whom shared ethnic origins and with whom long-standing ties had been established, significantly impacted the morale of Romanians. They would suffer a similar fate starting in June 1940, when the Soviet Union occupied Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina.

**Tamara Kutsaieva**

National Historical and Architectural Museum „Kyiv Fortress”

### **The Pogrom in Ottynia (Ukraine; Summer 1941): The Limits of Historical Responsibility and Inconvenient History**

This research explores the multicultural history of Ukraine at a local level, focusing on the Jewish community in the townlet of Ottynia (Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast). The study investigates whether Jewish heritage remains an integral part of Ottynia's urban landscape and local history, and how the modern Ottynia community remembers its Jewish neighbours.

To comprehensively address the topic, the author employed the concept of national coexistence. This framework encompasses not only positive and neutral aspects of neighbourly relations but also confronts the uncomfortable chapters of shared Ukrainian-Jewish and Ukrainian-Polish history during the Second World War.

In analysing the Ottynia pogrom of summer 1941, the research synthesises existing information about the tragedy and identifies its specific characteristics. An effort was made to provide a clearer description of "The Ottynia Pogrom List," which documented many victims, and to commence compiling "The List of Ottynia Pogrom Victims." Significant attention was also

given to the methodology and sources for constructing "The List of (Possible) Perpetrators of the Pogrom."

To discuss the boundaries of acknowledging historical responsibility and societal acceptance of uncomfortable historical facts — specifically, instances where Ukrainian neighbours may have participated in the pogrom — the research considers the investigation into the Jewish pogrom in Jedwabne (summer 1941) conducted by the Polish Institute of National Remembrance as a comparative example.

### **Bozena Cierlik**

University College Cork

### **Little Poland in Cork**

When scholars use the terms 'borders' or 'boundaries' outside their classical political or territorial meaning, they refer to social, cultural, symbolic, and psychological lines that shape how groups live, interact, and perceive themselves. This is particularly relevant for diaspora studies, where groups move across state borders but maintain other forms of boundaries. Symbolic boundaries are invisible lines that structure meaning, such as 'we' versus 'they', stereotypes, and feelings of inclusion and exclusion. They influence how communities imagine themselves. Diaspora borders are fluid, multilayered, and symbolic, defined not by territory but by identity, memory, community practice, emotional connection, and cultural expression. This paper will examine the example of the Polish diaspora in Ireland, specifically 'Little Poland' in Cork in 1948, to illustrate how migrant groups construct non-territorial borderlands that preserve their identity.

### **Daniel Filip-Afloarei**

Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences

### **Romanian-Polish Relations in Early Cold War Détente: between Superpowers Constraints and Divergent Visions**

During the communist period, Romanian–Polish relations did not enjoy the privileged status they had held in the interwar years. They were largely confined to a limited number of official visits, with the centre of gravity shifting to Moscow. Nevertheless, following the relaxation of tensions between the two superpowers in Europe, Romania and Poland were better positioned to promote their respective interests. Thus, while Romania sought to achieve a higher degree of economic autonomy, Poland aimed to secure international recognition of its western borders. At first glance, these objectives appeared divergent; however, they shared a less visible common concern: the fear that negotiations would be conducted exclusively between the United States and the Soviet Union, marginalising small and medium-sized states.

The central theme of this presentation is the ideological boundary that socialist countries were expected to observe within the communist bloc, particularly when pursuing objectives that did

not fully align with Moscow's position. At the same time, this research interrogates the limits of this boundary and seeks to understand how it was shaped by the negotiations surrounding détente. Although there is a substantial body of scholarship on détente and its impact, relatively few studies focus on intra-bloc cooperation, tending instead to emphasise relations either with the superpowers or with the countries of the Common Market.

In order to pursue this inquiry, the study draws on both Romanian and Polish sources. First, it examines transcripts of bilateral meetings, the findings of which are corroborated by diplomatic reports sent by the embassies of the two countries to their respective capitals. Finally, the press of the period provides the broader framework for understanding the dynamics of bilateral relations.

**Jacob Thomas-Llewellyn**

Rabdan Academy

### **Starving Mars: A Study of Cross Border Anti-Access Logistical Operations During the Algerian War, 1954–1962**

An integral part of campaign planning is determining how an opponent acquires and sustains their war effort. During the French-Algerian War (1954–1962), the French Navy, Army, and Air Force collaborated closely to interdict vital materiel intended for the National Liberation Front (FLN). In the process, France mounted an international campaign that eventually spanned the globe. Whilst their main focus was on building physical barriers across Algeria's land borders with Tunisia and Morocco, France also initiated operations to identify and target Algerian assets in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. This paper will examine how France largely succeeded in its mission to organise anti-access logistical operations, especially in the Mediterranean. This research is based on a range of primary source memoirs and a wealth of secondary sources that have examined various areas of the war since 1962. The study of cross-border operations, however, remains a largely overlooked aspect of the French-Algerian War and is worthy of detailed investigation.

## Panel 16

Volodymyr Lahodych

Ivan Franko National University of Lviv

**„Непевний лімес”: військова адміністрація Соломона та феномен пограниччя у війнах Римської імперії з берберами (533–544 рр.)**

**“Uncertain limes”: the military administration of Solomon and the phenomenon of frontier zones in the wars of the Roman Empire with the Berbers (533–544 CE)**

Following the destruction of the Vandal Kingdom in 534 CE, the Roman Empire faced a paradoxical problem: instead of a stable frontier in the Maghreb, it acquired a shifting line of confrontation with Berber tribes (the Maurusians). This paper examines how the military commander Solomon — appointed by Justinian I (527–565) as *magister militum* and Praetorian Prefect of Africa Proconsularis — sought to implement the Roman concept of the *limes* in conditions where conventional frontier systems no longer functioned.

The analysis focuses on three key aspects:

### **1. The military frontier as a zone of perpetual warfare**

Berber leaders, who initially acknowledged the authority of Constantinople, repeatedly shifted between the status of *foederati* and that of enemies. This was particularly evident during the campaigns of 535–536 against the rebel leader Iaudas, when the leaders Massonas and Ortaias defected to the Roman side.

### **2. Solomon's fortification strategy**

He restored a network of Roman forts, including Tebessa and Timgad, attempting to materialise the frontier in stone. However, the logistical and demographic limits of imperial presence rendered this defensive line fragile.

### **3. The collapse of the frontier**

In 544 CE, at the Battle of Cillium (modern Kasserine, Tunisia), Solomon was defeated and killed by the Berber noble Antalas. This marked a symbolic moment in which the military, political, and even physical boundaries of Roman authority in Africa effectively disintegrated. Thus, Solomon's activities demonstrate how, in the context of the late antique frontier, the concept of the "border" evolved from a clearly defined line into a zone of negotiation, betrayal, and continuous military presence that ultimately failed to secure lasting peace.

## **Vitalii Kalinichenko**

Yurii Fedkovych National University of Chernivtsi

## **Sergii Pivovarov**

I. Krypiakevych Institute of Ukrainian Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine

### **Предмети озброєння з Рідківцького археологічного комплексу VIII-XI ст.**

#### **Weapons from the Ridkivtsi archaeological complex (eighth–eleventh centuries)**

Weapons constitute one of the most striking and important categories of archaeological finds from the Middle Ages. They serve as a valuable source for studying various aspects of the history of the population of Central and Southeastern Europe. Furthermore, weapons are a crucial chronological indicator; their typological characteristics and associated artefacts provide insights into the military-political history of populations across different regions.

A substantial collection of weapons, encompassing both close-combat and long-range types, as well as equestrian equipment, was unearthed during excavations at the Rydkivtsi archaeological complex. These finds include over 100 arrowheads, parts of quivers, darts, axes, spurs, elements of horse equipment, and fragments of chain mail, among others. Collectively, the weapons from the settlement are vital for reconstructing the military and political history of the region during the 9th–10th centuries. They attest to the developed military culture of the local populace and suggest the presence of a nomadic substratum within the settlement's structure.

## **Vadym Chepizhenko**

Odesa I. I. Mechnikov National University

### **‘Hethenesse’ як простір для реалізації „хрестової обітниці” англійськими рицарями XIV ст.**

#### **‘Hethenesse’ as a space for the fulfilment of the “crusading vow” by English knights in the fourteenth century.**

This paper proposes a reinterpretation of the concept of 'heathennesse' as a specific frontier space in which English knights of the fourteenth century fulfilled and actualised the crusading vow after the loss of the Holy Land. Focusing on English participation in the Preußenreisen — the seasonal crusading expeditions of the Teutonic Order against Lithuania — the paper argues that 'heathennesse' functioned not merely as a geographical boundary between Christendom and pagan territories, but as a multidimensional frontier of chivalric experience.

The Baltic crusading frontier operated as a space where the boundaries between the sacred and the secular, warfare and ritual, and pilgrimage and military service were constantly negotiated and redefined. For English knights, participation in these 'reysen' offered a way to perform the

crusading vocation in a form that was simultaneously theologically legitimate, politically safe, and culturally meaningful within the contemporary honour-based framework of chivalry. This explains why service in 'heathenness' regularly appears in English heraldic records, literary texts, and chronicles alongside warfare in France or Scotland as a marker of martial reputation and social standing.

The paper further examines 'heathenness' as a space for testing and stretching boundaries — of physical endurance, disciplined violence, emotional control, and male solidarity. Drawing on approaches from masculinity studies, the presentation interprets the Northern Crusades not simply as religious or military enterprises, but as cultural mechanisms for the reproduction of knightly identity in a period marked by the erosion and transformation of traditional crusading frontiers. In this sense, 'heathenness' emerges as a crucial arena in which late medieval English chivalry renegotiated the meaning of holy war and masculine virtue.

**Yaroslav Andrusyak**

Uzhhorod National University

## **Битва при Мохачі у 1526 р. та позиція чеської шляхти**

### **The Battle of Mohács in 1526 and the position of the Czech nobility**

This paper proposes a reinterpretation of 'heathenness' as a specific frontier space where English knights of the fourteenth century fulfilled and actualised the crusading vow after the loss of the Holy Land. Focusing on English participation in the Preußenreisen — the seasonal crusading expeditions of the Teutonic Order against Lithuania — the paper argues that 'heathenness' functioned not merely as a geographical boundary between Christendom and pagan territories, but as a multidimensional frontier of chivalric experience.

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**Друга українська колонізація Дикого поля як визначальний фактор прикордонного протистояння у Північному Причорномор'ї (1533–1647 рр.)**

**The Second Ukrainian colonisation of the Wild Fields as a determining factor of borderland confrontation in the Northern Black Sea region (1533–1647)**

Ukrainian historiography has a centuries-old tradition of studying colonisation processes and the related border confrontation in the western part of the Wild Field during the early modern period. This is evidenced in the works of M. Markevych, M. Kostomarov, D. Yavornytsky, M. Hrushevsky, D. Bahaliy, Ya. Dashkevych, I. Chornovil, S. Tytsky, and others.

The Ukrainian colonisation of the Wild Field involved the gradual displacement of the semi-nomadic pastoral civilisation of the Crimean Tatars from Central and Southern Ukraine by the settled agricultural civilisation of the Ukrainians. This process spanned from the Battle of the Blue Waters to the mid-17th century, marking the beginning of the Ukrainian bourgeois revolution, but was interrupted by the tragic events of the Crimean Tatar Ruin from 1478–1533. Significant qualitative and quantitative differences in the Ukrainian colonisation movement towards the Black and Azov Sea coasts, both before and after the Ruina, warrant its categorisation into the First and Second Ukrainian Colonisations of the Wild Field.

The First Ukrainian Colonisation of the Wild Field extended from the Battle of the Blue Waters to the transformation of the Crimean Khanate into a vassal of the Ottoman Empire (1362–1478).

The Second Ukrainian Colonisation of the Wild Field lasted from the Polish-Crimean-Turkish agreement of 1533 to the beginning of the Ukrainian Revolution in the mid-17th century.

During the first stage of the Second Ukrainian Colonisation of the Wild Field (1533–1569), the driving forces were the Ukrainian Vykhodnytsia Cossacks (both military and civilian), along with Ukrainian peasants and townspeople, primarily from Volhynia and Polissya. In the second stage (1569–1647), the impetus came from the Ukrainian sedentary Cossacks (military: courtiers, grassroots, and registered; and civilian: Cossacks-peasants, Cossacks-townspeople, Cossacks-lords), Ukrainian peasants and townspeople from across Ukraine at the time, Polish and Ukrainian feudal lords, and various foreigners (Jews, Germans, French, Italians, Dutch, Swedes, Scots, etc.).

The second colonisation was marked by a continuous military-political confrontation between the colonists and the soldiers of the Crimean Khanate. This confrontation exhibited notable differences, allowing for the distinction of several stages:

- **First stage (1533–548):** Characterised by the absence of large Tatar raids on Ukrainian settlements, the spontaneous restoration of settled economic life in Podolia and Cherkasy, and the formation of a Cossack buffer zone in the Zaporozhian floodplains

- **Second stage (1549–1574):** Marked by the resumption of destructive Tatar raids into the deeper regions of Ukraine, accompanied by a permanent armed confrontation between the Cossacks and the Budzhat and Nogai Tatars in the Middle Dnieper
- **Third stage (1575–1588):** Began with destructive raids by Tatar hordes on Podolia, Volhynia, and Galicia, coupled with Cossack intervention in Moldavian affairs, leading to the subsequent transfer of military confrontation to the territories of the lower Dnieper and the Black Sea coast
- **Fourth stage (1588–1595)**
- **Fifth stage (1596–1604)**
- **Sixth stage (1605–1622):** Characterised by systematic large-scale Tatar raids into the deeper regions of Ukraine, and land and sea campaigns by the registered and grassroots Cossacks, which escalated into the Khotyn War
- **Seventh stage (1623–1647):** Notable for the absence of destructive Tatar raids into the deeper regions of Ukraine and the colonised part of the Wild Field, with the exception of an unsuccessful raid in 1644

**Viacheslav Kushnir**

Odesa I.I. Mechnikov National University

### **Трансформація мікролокальних ідентичностей містечка Крути (кінець XIX — початок XX ст.)**

### **The transformation of microlocal identities of the town of Kruty (late nineteenth — early twentieth century)**

The article examines the dynamics of ethnic processes and the transformation of micro-local identities at the turn of the 20th century, using the town of Kruti (South-Eastern Podillia) as a case study. It analyses the structure of a multicultural settlement where carriers of different cultures coexisted, leading to the emergence of specific cultural–territorial loci and micro-local identities. These micro-locations divided the space into "self" and "other" based on language, religion, and culture. Two groups of micro-local identities are identified: territorial (geographic markers) and cultural–historical (ethnic origin and migratory history). The case of Kruti demonstrates a clear ethnocultural topography: the Jewish shtetl ("Bila Mahala"), the Polish "Shliakhta", and the Ukrainian–Moldovan segment ("Chorna Mahala").

The study reveals the multi-vector nature of transformational processes: The Jewish community maintained the highest level of isolation due to religious and linguistic factors. The Polish community showed signs of active acculturation, gradually losing its language and transitioning from an ethnic group to an ethno-social one. The Ukrainian–Moldovan segment was characterised by the early assimilation of Moldovans within a shared Orthodox environment.

The transformation was a gradual process accompanied by active communication between micro-local identities. The key factors in integration and the levelling of cultural barriers were

market-based economic interdependence and state policy. Despite the initial "us vs. them" opposition, shared life necessities stimulated the development of small-town tolerance and gradual socio-cultural unification. A single, common social space emerged, leading to the disappearance of Moldovan and Polish micro-local identities. A stereotype of unity and solidarity among town residents was formed, which strengthened during crisis situations.

The social space of the town evolved from four parallel socio-cultural segments into a single unified whole. Socio-cultural locations ceased to be relatively isolated ethnocultural complexes. The only exception in the town's structure remained the shtetl — a unique "city" within a rural space, characterised by distinct differences in life-support systems, religion, ritual practices, and language.

## Panel 17

**Hanna Ovsianiytska**

Zaporizhzhia National University

### **Межовість структур колективної пам'яті: fama/пієтет в культурному/контркультурному вимірі російсько-української війни**

### **Liminality of structures of collective memory: fama/pietas in the cultural and countercultural dimensions of the Russo-Ukrainian war**

A phenomenon of collective memory, understood as a *continuum* of self- and world-knowledge, forms the foundation of national culture, which in turn is a discourse of values and ideological systems. The Russian-Ukrainian war has brought to the forefront the need to rethink the forms and practices of memorialisation. This paper proposes an examination of the liminal and antagonistic nature of the notions of "fama" and "piety" (drawing on the conceptions of H. Uliura and A. Assmann). These notions represent collective attitudes towards subjects of memory, established through social institutions. The article aims to analyse the liminal character of these notions within the context of mainstream culture, subculture, and counterculture. Culture is understood not only as a continuum of ideological and worldview systems, knowledge, ideas, and conceptions, but also as a specific discourse of conditions that provoke particular directions within society itself (here, I rely on G. Mate's conception). By analysing "fama" and "piety" as systems of cultural meanings, I intend to explore the polarity of related notions such as authenticity/non-authenticity, mythologising/sympathy, and trauma as fragmentation of "self"/healing of the authenticity of imposed ideological constructs. Furthermore, I aim to determine how the liminal characteristics of these notions influence the processes of memorising and, consequently, the ethos of attitudes towards subjects of memory within cultural (mainstream), subcultural, and countercultural discourses.

**Nataliia Lytvynchuk**

M. Rylskiy Institute of Art Studies/ Folkloristics and Ethnology of the NAS of Ukraine

**Еволюція колективного сприйняття українсько-російського прикордоння в умовах воєнної реальності: вербально-просторові маркери**

**The evolution of the collective perception of the Ukrainian-Russian borderland under conditions of wartime reality: verbal and spatial markers**

In this study, we examine the image of the Ukrainian–Russian border and the evolution of local residents' perceptions of the borderland under wartime conditions. In particular, special attention is paid to how this area is represented through verbal and spatial markers. The chosen focus is driven by a profound shift in patterns of coexistence among communities in adjacent territories, as well as by socio-cultural transformations that have taken place against the backdrop of the full-scale armed invasion. The study draws on reports featuring eyewitness accounts of life in the borderland across different socio-historical contexts, as well as on the challenges faced by the population of one such borderland region since 24 February 2022.

The analysis of primary data indicates that, in the collective perceptions of borderland residents, the border as a territorial boundary functions as a dominant concept. The line separating countries and the local communities that once maintained friendly relations acquires new meanings in wartime. This is a logical consequence, as armed aggression by a neighbouring state has led to profound changes in the mental map of the borderland and reshaped spatial perceptions. The analysed materials demonstrate that the current image of the Ukrainian–Russian border is constructed through typical landscape characteristics and spatial markers (both natural and infrastructural, including sacred sites). These function as specific identifiers of "the self" and "the other," as well as shared and so-called neutral territories. At the same time, this area finds expression in a system of naming practices and linguistic constructions. Compared to pre-war narratives, the current image of the border and the borderland is realised through new semantic motifs that require further comprehensive study, in particular on the basis of comparative analysis.

**Halyna Vodnar**

Ivan Franko National University of Lviv

**Усні історії війни: межі репрезентації військового досвіду початку російсько-української війни (2014–2015 рр.)**

**Oral histories of war: the limits of representing military experience during the initial phase of the Russo-Ukrainian war (2014–2015)**

Oral history in Ukraine is an established research method and a well-defined branch of history. In the current context, it has largely transformed into 'war oral history', which differs from global practices in the study of crisis periods. This is because it involves documenting and interpreting the events of an ongoing war. The Russian-Ukrainian war, ongoing since 2014, presents a complex and continuous experience. Studying it requires not only a high degree of

methodological and ethical rigour at all research stages, but also an awareness of the researcher's responsibility. This responsibility includes archiving and preserving testimonies as historical sources, and ensuring their proper introduction into both academic (analytical) and public discourse. In this context, the following questions arise: how can testimonies about ongoing events be analysed, and how can wartime experiences be represented when their public articulation may pose risks to participants, the state, and its international support?

The study of wartime experiences brings into sharp focus questions concerning the boundaries of narrative — storytelling, fragmentation, self-censorship, trauma, and silence. A century ago, reflecting on the experience of the First World War, it was noted: "Was it not noticeable at the end of the war that men returned from the battlefield grown silent—not richer, but poorer in communicable experience? What ten years later was poured out in the flood of war books was anything but experience that goes from mouth to mouth. And there was nothing remarkable about that. For never has experience been contradicted more thoroughly than strategic experience by tactical warfare, economic experience by inflation, bodily experience by mechanical warfare, moral experience by those in power" (Benjamin Walter, *The Storyteller* (1936) in *The Chicago Review* 16(1) (1963): 80–101). In the contemporary context, the question arises as to whether the growing body of war-related literature, which has developed since 2014, may be displacing direct oral testimonies. At the same time, within the vast body of oral testimonies, the proportion of interviews with military personnel directly involved in repelling the aggression remains relatively small. In this regard, it is important to examine which experiences Ukrainian soldiers do or do not convey in their testimonies recorded using oral history methods, as well as to delineate the boundaries of narrating wartime experience. Particular attention should be paid to the content of the interviews: what is actually narrated, which aspects receive the greatest narrative emphasis, what remains unspoken, as well as the forms and narrative strategies through which this experience is articulated.

Methodologically, the study is based on a narrative approach to the analysis of oral testimonies, specifically employing thematic and structural analysis. The source base consists of 36 semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted in 2018 with soldiers of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and volunteers. The interviews were conducted between spring and autumn 2018; each was recorded with the respondents' prior consent and lasted between 1 and 1.5 hours. The audio recordings are supplemented by transcripts and supporting documentation (protocols, consent forms, personal data). All interviews were conducted face-to-face.

**Yevhen Rachkov**

V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University

## **Конструювання кордонів пам'яті: цифрова спадщина російсько-української війни**

### **Constructing the borders of memory: the digital heritage of the Russo-Ukrainian war**

Since 2014, Russian military aggression against Ukraine has led to significant human casualties and widespread destruction. Ukrainian cultural heritage has sustained substantial damage, the

most extensive since the Second World War. Thousands of scholarly and journalistic works, alongside hundreds of digital projects, have addressed the Russo-Ukrainian war. These digital projects actively contribute to the war's mediatisation and influence the formation of related historical narratives. They are capable of shaping memory discourse, particularly in defining the boundaries of memory for different communities, and can impact post-war reconstruction in Ukraine.

Despite their importance, a systematised list of these digital projects is currently lacking. Only isolated attempts exist to create registers of research initiatives prompted by the war, such as the Catalogue of Documentation Initiatives. In response, the CityFace research initiative team is developing an online database, "Digital Heritage in Ukraine," which aims to document various digital resources, including those focused on the Russo-Ukrainian war. The database has been built using the Omeka.net web platform, which supports the Dublin Core metadata standard. Digital resources are marked on an interactive map and a timeline according to their creation year.

Overall, the database has enabled the identification of characteristic features of digital resources, allowing for their classification by thematic principle. These themes include: documentation of war crimes and destruction, including cultural heritage; collection of testimonies from participants and eyewitnesses of war-related events; and commemoration of military and civilian victims of the war, among others. Most digital resources have been created through the initiative of military personnel, volunteers, civic activists, and researchers, often in cooperation with archives, libraries, museums, universities, and research centres. Financial support for these projects has largely come from grants provided by international (e.g., the Institute for Human Sciences) and Ukrainian (e.g., the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation) funding bodies.

The database has also highlighted general problems with the digital resources studied. They are often fragmented, utilise varying standards for digitisation, storage, and data publication, and face challenges concerning the long-term preservation of digital materials, among other issues. This underscores the clear need for appropriate digital infrastructure in Ukraine to support the long-term sustainability of digital projects dedicated to the Russo-Ukrainian war.

**Larysa Kozoriz**

Kharkiv Korolenko State Scientific Library

**Цифровий архів документів про російсько-українську війну: простір пам'яті в умовах прикордоння**

**Digital Archive of Documents on the Russo-Ukrainian War: a space of memory in conditions of the borderland**

The paper explores the Digital Archive of Documents on the Russo-Ukrainian War as a space of memory created amidst an ongoing border conflict. Initiated by the Ukrainian Library Association and coordinated by the V. H. Korolenko Kharkiv State Scientific Library named

after V. H. Korolenko, the project aims to collect, systematise, preserve, and provide open access to documents reflecting the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine that began in 2022.

Special attention is paid to the borderland dimension of memory formation. Kharkiv, a city located near the Russian border and a primary target of military aggression, represents a specific cultural and historical frontier. In this context, the digital archive functions not only as a repository of sources but also as a cultural mechanism for documenting trauma, resistance, and civic solidarity. It transforms dispersed materials — official documents, personal testimonies, photographs, and digital publications — into a structured narrative framework of collective memory.

The study considers digital archiving as a contemporary practice of cultural memory construction. It argues that, in conditions of war and physical threat to cultural institutions, digital technologies become crucial instruments for safeguarding documentary heritage and ensuring its transnational accessibility. The archive thus operates at the intersection of documentation, memorialisation, and cultural resilience.

By analysing the experience of creating and developing this archive in a border city, the paper contributes to broader discussions on the memory of border wars, digital humanities, and the role of libraries as active agents in preserving historical truth during armed conflict.

**Kateryna Bourdouvalis, Yuriy Oliynyk**

State Archives of Khmelnytskyi Region

**Репрезентація травматичного досвіду війни в архівних практиках:  
пам'ять, ідентичність та соціальна адаптація ветеранів**

**The representation of traumatic wartime experience in archival practices:  
memory, identity, and the social adaptation of veterans**

This paper examines the representation of traumatic war experience in contemporary Ukrainian archival practices, focusing on the interplay between memory, identity, and veterans' social adaptation processes. In this study, the archive is understood not only as an institution for preserving documents but also as a dynamic space for the production, interpretation, and reconfiguration of experience. Here, individual testimonies, personal narratives, and material traces of war acquire public and cultural significance, shaping broader collective understandings of war.

The research is guided by the following questions: How do archival practices influence the formation of veterans' identities after armed conflict? How is traumatic individual experience articulated, selected, and transformed within archival processes? What ethical, institutional, and interpretative boundaries shape the public representation of trauma within archival spaces?

The methodological framework is based on qualitative research approaches. It employs case studies of archival initiatives, "Code of Freedom" and "Memory of My Family," which involve veterans and families of the fallen in the creation and interpretation of materials. The study also uses semi-structured interviews with veterans, families of the fallen, and archivists, alongside

oral history methods and critical discourse analysis of archival narratives and documents. A separate analytical focus is placed on the ethical dimensions of working with traumatic testimonies, particularly issues of informed consent, privacy protection, and the mitigation of re-traumatisation risks.

As a result, the archive emerges as a liminal space where state memory policies, individual experiences of war, and societal demands for meaning-making intersect. This perspective allows the archive to be understood as an infrastructure of social memory that not only records the past but also actively participates in shaping how it is interpreted, emotionally processed, and integrated into the post-war social context, particularly in relation to veterans' reintegration.

### **Oleksandr Kolomyichuk**

M. Rylskyi Institute of Art Studies, Folkloristics and Ethnology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine

### **Лімінальність емоційних станів крізь усноісторичні свідчення про російсько-українську війну: досвід мешканців Київщини**

### **The Liminality of Emotional States through Oral History Testimonies of the Russo–Ukrainian War: The Experience of Residents of the Kyiv Region**

The phenomenon of memory constitutes a multi-layered palimpsest in which diverse mechanisms and processes overlap, all directed towards inscribing an individual's lived experience into their self-awareness. Emotional memory is a cognitive reconstruction of feelings that forms an essential and inseparable component of a witness's recollection of events. At the same time, emotional memory qualitatively differs from the memory of emotions: the former refers to the content of what an individual recalls and reproduces, expressed through feelings, whereas the latter is a functional mechanism that illuminates a corresponding recollection. To engage with the memory of emotions in oral historical testimonies of war thus means to reflect upon one's own feelings and experiences that enveloped a person at a specific moment of their life or during a particular lived event.

This study focuses on testimonies of the Russian–Ukrainian war recorded within the academic research project "Contemporary Wartime Everyday Life of the Kyiv Region Communities: Cultural and Anthropological Dimension" carried out in 2024–2025 by a team of scholars from the M. Rylskyi Institute of Art Studies, Folkloristics and Ethnology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. The project resulted in the preparation of a source volume titled "Kyiv Region is Unbroken: Eyewitness Testimonies of the Russian–Ukrainian war" (Kyiv, 2025). The interviews included in this edition present a broad palette of feelings and emotions experienced by witnesses of the temporary occupation of the Kyiv region — emotions that not only accompany but frequently set the tone of wartime recollections, retransmitting identity at the fractures of habitual everyday life.

The testimonies from this period at times reveal the mobilising resources of individuals living through war, expressed, in particular, through the dichotomous unity of semantic oppositions ("joy — sorrow," "happiness — unhappiness") or the paradoxical nature of psycho-emotional

states ("more hope during occupation than after the liberation of the territory"), among others. Such emotional states and feelings reflect a certain liminality permeating the entire space of wartime everyday life, where only a thin boundary separates one state from another, and the turbulent flow of events renders this boundary fragile and shifting. Accordingly, the memory of emotions from that period demonstrates, in some cases, a clear shift in emotional experiences and states, and in others — an ambivalence of feelings as a response to the surrounding processes and circumstances.

**Olha Honcharova**

H.S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University

### **Місто Харків як простір видимих і невидимих меж (2022–2025)**

#### **Kharkiv as a Space of Visible and Invisible Boundaries (2022–2025)**

The full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war has profoundly transformed Kharkiv's urban space, turning it into a dynamic system of multiple boundaries, both material and immaterial. This paper aims to analyse Kharkiv as a space where visible and invisible boundaries not only coexist but also mutually construct the experience of war.

Visible boundaries are understood as materially fixed spatial constraints resulting from military actions. These include destroyed districts, fortifications, checkpoints, and the conditional division of the city into "safe" and "dangerous" zones. Such boundaries directly affect the organisation of urban space and the everyday practices of its inhabitants.

Invisible boundaries are examined as psychological, social, and symbolic constructs that take shape under wartime conditions. These encompass the boundaries between fear and adaptation to danger, the transformation of perceptions of "one's own" and "other" spaces, and the reinterpretation of urban landscapes through the experience of destruction, loss, and memory. Particular attention is paid to how individual and collective perceptions of space influence behaviour, mobility patterns, and survival strategies within the city.

The paper argues that war not only creates new boundaries but also dismantles established ones, producing a hybrid space in which the material and the symbolic are closely intertwined. In this context, Kharkiv emerges as a case study of a city where boundaries become a key element in understanding the experience of war, reflecting the complex interplay of space, memory, and human resilience.

## Panel 18

Sergii Ganus

Uzhhorod National University

### **Галичина у 1914 — 1915 роках як ментально-географічний та військово-політичний «фронтір» у спогадах Миколи Галагана та архівних документах**

#### **Galicia in 1914–1915 as a Mental-Geographical and Military-Political Frontier in the Memoirs of Mykola Halahan and Archival Documents**

According to the definition proposed by the French-American geographer Jean Gottmann, Galicia may be regarded as a "tidal" region situated at the intersection of states, regions, confessional communities, and ethno-cultural formations. For this reason, applying the concept of the "frontier" constitutes a productive analytical approach, offering compelling interpretative models for understanding significant events and processes of the modern era. These include Polish and Ukrainian nation-building, the military-political projects of the Great Powers on the eve of and during the Great War of 1914–1918, the policies pursued by Russian occupation authorities in the region, and debates within Ukrainian and Polish political circles concerning the future of Galicia following the conclusion of the war.

Applying a mental-geographical perspective and a frontier-based epistemology to memoir literature and archival documentation makes it possible to construct a convincing explanatory model. This model reconstructs the motivations of political and administrative decision-makers, those responsible for implementing their decisions, and those who recorded the realities of the period in memoir narratives. Mykola Halahan (1882 — after 1955), a prominent representative of the Ukrainian national and political movement, was both a witness to and a participant in the events he describes. His memoirs constitute a valuable historical source, reflecting the situation in occupied Eastern Galicia from the perspective of an attentive and knowledgeable observer who, although well-informed, was not invariably impartial in his assessments.

The information presented in his memoirs has been verified against documents produced by various institutions of the Temporary Galician-Bukovinian Governor-Generalship and preserved in the holdings of the Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine in Kyiv. Additional source materials have been drawn from the fonds of the Przemyśl Governorate, the "Polish Circle" (Koło Polskie) in the Austrian Reichsrat, and selected personal fonds preserved in the Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine in Lviv. The subsequent publication of these materials will involve a comparative analysis with memoir texts authored by other contemporary memoirists.

The presentation will visually reconstruct the principal ways in which Eastern Galicia was imagined and perceived within contemporary mental-geographical frameworks, including the notions of the Ukrainian Piedmont, the Polish Piedmont, and Red Ruthenia. It will elucidate the specific character of Russian occupation policy and its underlying motivations, as well as the

"pendulum-like" course of military operations during 1914–1915. Furthermore, new evidence concerning the organisation of Emperor Nicholas II's visit to Galicia and to the theatre of military operations in the spring of 1915 will be presented.

**Olena Datsiuk**

National Museum of the History of Ukraine in the Second World War. Kyiv.

**Політична пропаганда в пресі Німеччини та Франції часів Першої світової війни (1914–1918 рр.). На основі газетних видань із зібрання Музею Війни**

**Political Propaganda in the Press of Germany and France during the First World War (1914–1918): Based on Newspaper Publications from the Collection of the War Museum**

This article analyses the role of the press as an instrument of wartime propaganda during the First World War (1914–1918). It draws upon the French newspaper *Excelsior* and the German illustrated weekly *Illustrierte Weltschau*, copies of which are preserved in the collection of the National Museum of the History of Ukraine in the Second World War Memorial Complex. The study examines the distinctive features of information policy formation, as well as the mechanisms of censorship and institutional control over the media in France and Germany.

Particular attention is devoted to an analysis of the content of published materials and visual representations aimed at shaping public opinion, sustaining civilian morale, and discrediting the enemy. The article demonstrates that the press performed not only an informational function but also an ideological one, being integrated into the broader system of wartime mobilisation and the conduct of war.

It is concluded that the mass media played a crucial role in constructing images of the war and influencing public attitudes and perceptions during a global conflict.

**Nataliia Mysak**

I. Krypiakievych Institute of Ukrainian Studies NAS of Ukraine/ Lviv Historical Museum

**Межі людяності: життя полонених галицьких українців у Російській імперії в роки Першої світової війни**

**The Limits of Humanity: The Lives of Galician Ukrainian Prisoners in the Russian Empire during the First World War**

The principal aim of this paper is to examine the boundaries of humanity and inhumanity in the treatment of Galician Ukrainian prisoners of war during the First World War who were deported to territories of the Russian Empire. The study is based primarily on memoirs and more than thirty letters written by Ukrainian prisoners of war to their relatives and friends. These materials were published in a number of contemporary periodicals, including *The Bulletin of the Union*

for the Liberation of Ukraine (*Visnyk Soiuzu Vyzvolennia Ukrainy*), Nova Rada, and Dilo. The majority of the letters, however, were published between 1915 and 1917 in the Ukrainian-American newspaper Svoboda (Freedom).

The paper analyses the moral and psychological condition of the prisoners, their thoughts, experiences, and, at times, despair, as they were forcibly removed from their homeland under military escort and transported into the territory of a hostile state. For many prisoners, the very word "Siberia" evoked something unknown, scarcely believable, terrifying, and fraught with danger, while simultaneously representing an unavoidable reality. The presentation will demonstrate the means by which prisoners were transported — on foot, by rail, by wagon, and by boat — and the conditions under which these journeys took place, as well as the attitudes and behaviour of their escorts towards them.

Particular attention is devoted to the specific circumstances of life and survival in places of exile, including forced labour in factories, mines, and railway construction projects; inhumane living conditions in unheated barracks; severe Siberian winters combined with a lack of warm clothing; the absence of adequate medical care; chronic hunger; and the limited opportunities for rest and recreation, if any existed at all. At the same time, the paper explores how prisoners perceived their new reality, Russian society, and Russian mentalities more broadly.

Many of the letters reveal a profound sense of homesickness, anxiety concerning the fate of relatives who remained under occupation or had become refugees, feelings of hopelessness, and, simultaneously, a persistent hope of returning home. The paper will also address the issue of escapes from captivity, which became increasingly frequent by the end of 1915. Particular attention will be paid to the routes used by escapees, the advantages and disadvantages of various escape strategies, the unusual circumstances in which fugitives often found themselves, and the improvisations to which they were compelled to resort in order to carry out their plans successfully.

### **Taras P'yatnychuk**

Chernivtsi Regional Museum

### **Mykola Hlibishchuk**

Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University

## **Добровольці на захисті кордону імперії: гуцульсько-буковинський курінь у роки Першої світової війни**

### **Volunteers in Defence of the Empire's Frontier: The Hutsul-Bukovynian Battalion during the First World War**

The First World War exposed the structural weaknesses of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Imperial and Royal Army, intended to guarantee the integrity of the Empire's borders, clearly exemplified these flaws. Its low discipline and inadequate supplies led to a series of defeats by the Russian army, resulting in a retreat and the looming threat of occupation of the Duchy of

Bukovina. Unwilling to surrender Bukovina to Russian forces, General of the Gendarmerie Eduard von Fischer, together with Reichsrat deputy Mykola von Vasylo, organised a volunteer unit composed of Bukovinian Hutsuls. During 1915–1916, this formation distinguished itself in the defence of the eastern frontiers of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, particularly in the Carpathian campaigns and on the territory of Bukovina.

The Hutsul Battalion was not the only volunteer unit within the Austro-Hungarian Empire during the First World War. It is therefore appropriate to compare its activities with those of Romanian volunteer formations, organised under the leadership of another Reichsrat deputy, Aurel von Onciul. Ultimately, in 1916, both formations were merged into the Bukovinian Legion.

The aim of this study is to examine the process of formation of this volunteer unit — later reorganised into a legion — its supply and recruitment, as well as to provide an overview of its combat record during the Great War.

**Iryna Shandra**

Kharkiv State Academy of Culture/ SGH w Warszawie

## **Гуманітарні ініціативи на сході України під час Першої світової війни**

### **Humanitarian Relief Initiatives in Eastern Ukraine during the First World War**

During the First World War, Eastern Ukraine, despite being far behind the front lines, was profoundly affected by the conflict in all aspects of social life. Periodicals published in 1914 repeatedly warned of an impending global catastrophe: “The extraordinary circumstances of the great war of nations, the like of which has never occurred — and, let us hope, never will occur again — in the history of the world” (*Gorno-zavodskoe delo* [=Mining and Industrial Affairs], Kharkiv, 1914, no. 45). Both major civic organisations and ordinary, socially engaged citizens initiated a wide range of humanitarian efforts.

An analysis of contemporary periodicals and archival sources illuminates this process, which can be illustrated through newspaper excerpts, photographs, and documentary evidence. With the outbreak of hostilities, infirmaries for wounded soldiers, nurseries, orphanages, and food-relief centres were established throughout Eastern Ukraine. Medical facilities typically included pharmacies and dental surgeries. The organisation of these institutions involved some of the most distinguished university professors and public figures of the time, such as Professor Mykola Trinkler and Dr Karl Wegner.

An innovative approach to the psychological rehabilitation of soldiers was the implementation of “agronomic trains”. Through these, demobilised servicemen attended lectures on efficient agricultural management and farming practices. Large industrial joint-stock companies operating in Eastern Ukraine provided direct assistance within their enterprises by establishing infirmaries, military hospitals, orphanages, and schemes for food and financial support. They also contributed substantial funds to humanitarian and charitable associations, including the Polish Society for the Assistance of War Victims, the Kharkiv Mutual Aid Society for Working Women, and the Society for the Assistance of the Population of the South.

Considerable financial resources were allocated to the relief of war victims. Depending on the capacities of individual organisations, annual expenditures on humanitarian purposes ranged from several thousand to several hundred thousand roubles. Separate assistance programmes were organised for refugees, families of mobilised servicemen, soldiers who had lost their capacity to work, and the families of those killed in action. Material aid sent to military units included warm clothing, footwear, other essential supplies, and foodstuffs. Mobile field hospitals and specialised medical evacuation units were also established within the armed forces. Furthermore, free public canteens were opened for the local population of Galicia.

The examples presented here do not encompass the full range of humanitarian initiatives undertaken during the war. Nevertheless, they provide clear evidence of the high level of civic engagement, social responsibility, and solidarity demonstrated by Ukrainian society during this period.

**Petro Kostyuchok • Liliia Scherbin**

Vasyl Stefanyk Carpathian National University

## **Уявні та фактичні межі кордонів у Карпатському регіоні після Першої світової війни**

### **Imaginary and actual border lines in the Carpathian region after World War I**

The First World War concluded with the collapse of empires, redrawing the political map of the world, instigating geopolitical transformations, and establishing a new international order. The end of the Great War, the proclamation of new states, and the debates at the Paris Peace Conference aimed, based on W. Wilson's "Fourteen Points," to delineate new borders in Central and Eastern Europe and prevent future ethnic conflicts. To this end, the League of Nations was founded, intended to monitor the situation and avert future ethnic cataclysms. However, in practice, given the ethnic diversity and diffusion of the population within the collapsed Austro-Hungarian Empire, the issue of borders based on ethnic principles remained unresolved.

Consequently, the definition of interstate borders became subject to radical lobbying from the Czechoslovak, Polish, and Romanian delegations. This lobbying involved intimidating the Entente by propagating the idea of Bolshevism spreading throughout the region. The Carpathian region, home to Ukrainians, Slovaks, Hungarians, Romanians, Poles, Jews, and Germans, became a focal point of ethnic confrontation. Historically, the Carpathian region had always been a crossroads of ethnic groups, religions, and cultures. In the pre-war period, it was administered by Austrian and Hungarian authorities within the Habsburg monarchy.

The end of the First World War saw the proclamation of the Czechoslovak Republic, the Second Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and the united Romanian Kingdom. A clear example of the disregard for ethnic principles was the definition of interstate borders and their impact on Ukrainian-Polish, Ukrainian-Slovak, and Ukrainian-Romanian ethnic demarcation.

The revived Poland immediately sought to annex Eastern Galicia, denying Ukrainians the right to self-determination through appropriate political status, state creation, and self-governance.

First, the Lemko region was occupied, followed by the Boyko and Hutsul regions along the old Austro-Hungarian border during the Polish-Ukrainian war.

The newly formed Czechoslovak Republic acquired Carpathian Rus' through negotiations and pressure. However, it was dismembered within the borders of one state: the western part of the region became part of Slovakia, with a demarcation line established along the so-called administrative border, which completely ignored ethnic realities. In the central part, Subcarpathian Rus' was proclaimed with autonomous rights that were never implemented.

The unification of Romania also proceeded with a disregard for ethnic principles, resulting in the annexation of the ethnic territories of Bukovina and southern Maramureș.

### **Olga Bilobrovets**

Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University

### **Ставлення представників польських політичних таборів в Україні до визначення східних кордонів Польщі в 1917–1921 рр.**

### **The Attitudes of Representatives of Polish Political Camps in Ukraine towards the Delimitation of Poland's Eastern Borders, 1917–1921**

The Ukrainian National Revolution of 1917–1921 prompted discussions about establishing a Ukrainian state and defining its borders. Polish political factions in Ukraine generally supported Ukrainian aspirations for statehood, though they held diverse opinions regarding Ukraine's future and territorial limits. Early in 1918, widespread discontent arose among the Polish population in both Ukraine and Poland following the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, which allocated the Kholm (Chełm) region and part of Podlasie to the Ukrainian People's Republic (UPR).

During the 1919 conflict between Ukrainian national forces and the Bolsheviks, representatives of the Polish democratic camp in Ukraine supported the UPR and advocated for its independence. They also influenced the eastern policy of the newly independent Polish state between 1918 and 1919, notably Roman Knoll, who worked for the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Their perspectives were further championed by prominent democratic activists in Ukraine, including Eugeniusz Starczewski, Stanisław Stempowski, and Henryk Józewski, all of whom favoured a partnership between an independent Ukraine and Poland.

The stance of the nationalist camp in Ukraine, whose members often held leading positions within the Polish Executive Committee in Ruthenia and garnered significant conservative backing, largely aligned with that of the National Democrats. Their vision proposed incorporating Right-Bank Ukraine into Poland through the re-establishment of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth within its 1772 borders. Leaders of this camp, particularly Jan Bartoszewicz and Stanisław Grabski, contended in their speeches that the Ukrainian population and political elites were incapable of founding and maintaining an independent state.

The significance and strategic imperative of integrating these territories into Poland were debated during the Riga negotiations in 1921. The signing of the Treaty of Riga delineated the

borders between Soviet Ukraine and Poland, while simultaneously laying the groundwork for future territorial disputes and contributing to subsequent armed conflicts.

## Panel 19

**Kyrylo Mieliekiestsev**

Vasyl' Stus Donetsk National University

### **How Historical Landmarks Become Information and Conventional Warfare Battlefronts: The Cases of Bakhmut and Kostiantynivka**

The borders of what is considered "war" and "warfare" are ever elusive, and nowhere is this more self-evident than in the scope of information warfare. In 2014, without officially declaring war, the Russian Federation began its campaign of aggression against Ukraine. Given the strategies and tactics employed, this conflict was dubbed "hybrid war" in Ukraine. According to Volodymyr Horbulin, a Ukrainian researcher of strategic development, the humanitarian factor is among the most significant aspects of such warfare. Within this, the key goal is to shape a particular image of the parties to the conflict for observers. Considering that the Ukrainian information space is not completely separate from the Russian one, and the peculiarities of language development lead to a significant degree of understanding of Russian-language content by Ukrainians, this information warfare has affected almost every event, phenomenon, and process of modern Ukraine.

Ukrainian history holds a significant place in this confrontation. Individual historical elements are retrospectively presented as "reasons" for declaring the belonging of certain cities to Moscow. Such is the case of Bakhmut, declared "the historically Russian city of Artemovsk renamed by the Ukrainian Nazis," despite Bakhmut being the original name before Soviet-era apparatchiks decided to rename the town in honour of a Bolshevik functionary. Bakhmut's rich historical past became a field of information warfare even before the 2022 full-scale invasion, and was eventually destroyed in conventional warfare. Its ruins were re-renamed "Artemovsk," despite modern Moscow's critique of the Bolsheviks for ever considering the existence of a separate Ukrainian nation.

In 2023, historians from Vasyl' Stus Donetsk National University, financed by the Austrian IWM, began a project documenting historical landmarks of the Donetsk region, including cities in the Kramatorsk district such as Bakhmut and Kostiantynivka. At that time, Kostiantynivka was further from the battlefield. In comparison to Bakhmut, its historical architecture was considered eclectic and less notable, full of abandoned buildings not officially protected by law. Year by year, historical buildings were lost, until by 2026, Kostiantynivka, though still under Ukrainian control, had become a de facto ruin.

The cases of these two cities lead to two main conclusions:

1. There is a great need to document the historical architecture of Ukraine and other countries close to Moscow's expansionist plans for future relevance, as the invading forces leave little but ruins even in those towns they fail to capture.

2. The current Kremlin's position on the existence of non-Russian historical pasts in the territories it sees as its “sphere of interests” is much more radical than even the Romanovs' Russian Empire, which considered Bakhmut “one of the most ancient townholds of the Little Russian.” This is a sentiment far too Ukrainophilic for current Muscovite talking points.

**Mario Valori**

University of Pisa

## **The Moral Crumple Zone: AI Targeting and the Illegibility of State Violence**

The modern state has long sought to render its violence less legible to those it governs: through distance, delegation, and the procedural abstractions of strategic bombing doctrine, nuclear command, covert action, and drone warfare. AI-enabled targeting represents the latest and sharpest iteration of this pattern, as it severs what had once, however tenuously, been linked: leverage, visibility, and accountability. The “human-in-the-loop” (HITL) requirement, widely invoked as the safeguard for preserving meaningful human control, does not halt this severance; instead, it accelerates it. Under the actual operating conditions of such systems — where decision time is compressed to seconds, evidence is pre-filtered by the machine, and override authority, though technically present, is practically nominal — HITL functions as a moral crumple zone. It is a mechanism engineered to absorb blame at the point of execution, while leaving upstream forms of causal power comparatively insulated. What is at stake is not the failure of individual operators, but a structural reorganisation of the boundary between decisional control and moral responsibility. The appearance of human judgement is preserved, but its substance is diminished. To make this reorganisation visible, the paper develops a Fault-Allocation Test based on four criteria of moral responsibility — control, foreseeability, causal contribution, and capacity to remedy — alongside a Delegation Boundary Rule and a Minimum Meaningful Human Control standard. The purpose of such an apparatus is diagnostic, not prescriptive: it identifies the points at which the conditions for legible accountability fail. Where they fail, *jus in bello* judgement is not exercised but simulated, performed procedurally rather than substantively. Consequently, the state's capacity to act as a morally accountable agent in its resort to force is proportionally weakened.

**Sinduja Umandi Wickramasinghe Jayaratne**

Rabdan Academy

## **Propaganda Propagation: The Limitations of Countering Propaganda in Post War Sri Lanka**

The armed forces of the Sri Lankan Government successfully neutralized the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in 2009 which had been fighting for the establishment of a separate state in the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka. The terror network mobilized a broad propaganda network during the time of its establishment, catering to the local Tamil population for recruitment and mobilizing Tamil diaspora communities for fundraising. Following the LTTE’s military defeat in 2009, pro-LTTE factions operating overseas shifted their focus toward lobbying sympathetic governments, strategic litigation, influencing law making

processes and often mobilizing the international community against the Sri Lankan government. Using secondary sources including books, journal articles, statements and reports, this paper navigates the limitations imposed upon the Sri Lankan Government in their quest to confront propaganda campaigns mounted by pro LTTE fractions against the Sri Lanka state and highlights the need to understand the vitality of such campaigns in reshaping national security priorities.

**Andrzej Kozik**

University of Gdańsk

## **Blurring the Boundaries of War: Unmasking the Corporate Soldier and Limits of International Humanitarian Law Regarding the Combatant Status of Mercenaries and PMC Personnel: A Case Study of the Wagner Group in Ukraine**

Historically, the monopoly on the legitimate use of armed force has been the ultimate boundary defining state sovereignty. However, in recent decades, the privatisation of warfare has dangerously blurred the boundaries between civilian corporate entities and active military combatants, leading to an unprecedented global proliferation of Private Military Companies (PMCs) and mercenaries. The primary aim of this study is to critically analyse the boundary-defying legal status of both mercenaries and PMC personnel under International Humanitarian Law (IHL), specifically regarding their combatant status, using the Wagner Group in Ukraine as a central case study.

The study was conducted utilising a dogmatic-legal method and a case study approach. It encompasses a comprehensive analysis of international treaties, legal doctrine, scientific articles, public documentation, and the current geopolitical landscape. Results of the research reveal that existing international regulations have reached their functional limits. The current legal criteria defining a "mercenary", specifically within Article 47 of Additional Protocol I, are excessively restrictive. As demonstrated by the Wagner Group, they create a definitive legal boundary that is practically impossible to cross in a court of law, which easily allows state and corporate exploitation of the grey area at the very edges of armed conflict.

Findings show that the unchecked presence of these forces poses a severe structural challenge that crosses the traditional boundaries of global security and human rights. To conclude the research, it is evident that international law regarding this matter is obsolete. The uncontrolled proliferation of mercenaries and PMCs has breached the limits of current IHL frameworks. Therefore, the law must urgently adapt; a new convention must be established and enforced to redraw the legal boundaries of combat, explicitly clarifying the combatant status of mercenaries and PMC personnel.

**Jan Paradowski**

University of Warsaw

### **The internal and external factors behind the 1989 United States intervention in Panama**

The following paper shall examine both the internal and external factors that led to the 1989 US invasion of the Republic of Panama. The author shall first lay out the historic relations between Panama and the United States, with special attention paid to the role of the Panama Canal in them. Later, the internal political situation in the country shall be analysed, with attention paid both to the economic hardships of the 1980s and the peculiar role played by the National Guard/Panamanian Defense Forces and their leader, Manuel Antonio Noriega. The paper will also look into North American policies towards Central America in the 1980s in general and Panama specifically, to understand the rationale behind the 1989 intervention in the Isthmian Republic. Finally, the paper shall present the consequences of the 1989 invasion of Panama, highlighting how they both affect the present situation of the country and its relations with the United States. Moreover, the author shall present how the intervention in Panama in 1989 was part of a greater trend of Washington's foreign military interference, which is also a matter of present importance. The themes discussed by this paper shall also be in line with the main theme of this year's conference — the issue of broadly understood borders.

**Anna Orłowska**

University of Gdańsk

### **Restrictions on Methods of Conducting Hostilities under International Humanitarian Law — Perfidy**

As parties to an armed conflict, both sides attempt to outmaneuver one another in an attempt of the ultimate victory. While some methods, although raising ethical concerns, are considered lawful under international humanitarian law, such as intercepting and using the enemy's ciphers and signals, others are explicitly prohibited. The use of such methods is considered a breach of international law and even a war crime. The prime subject of this study is perfidy as the method prohibited under international humanitarian law. This defined boundary will be analysed in terms of its purpose and its impact on the conduct of hostilities. The implications of crossing this boundary, including legal responsibilities and consequences under international criminal law, will be examined as well. This objective will be achieved through doctrinal research, including the analysis of treaty law, academic commentary and jurisprudence. The findings of the study present perfidy as a clear violation of international humanitarian law. The prohibition of this method contributes to a more humane conduct of hostilities, as it reduces the suffering of those excluded from the active participation in combat. That is achieved through the preservation of humanitarian safeguards, such as ceasefire, humanitarian help, etc. Therefore, maintaining a strict prohibition of perfidy remains essential for limiting suffering in armed conflicts and ensuring accountability for violations. The legal consequences of engaging in

perfidious conduct — including individual criminal responsibility under international criminal law — reinforce the importance of compliance with these norms. Highlighting, the importance of preserving fundamental humanitarian values even amidst the warfare.

## **Sayan Lodh**

Presidency University, Kolkata

### **The Emergence of „New” Jews in Northeast India**

The 1930s – 1940s witnessed the division of the Chin-Kuki-Mizo ethnic tribes among three countries as a result of British India's cartographic political mapmaking — India, Burma (now Myanmar), and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). Despite being ethnically and linguistically related (sharing about 70% of their mutually intelligible vocabulary), they found themselves in Burma, the Mizos in India, and the Kukis spread across India and Pakistan. Since the 1890s, missionaries gradually Christianised these communities, who followed their indigenous animistic religions based on natural forces. The process was completed by the 1970s, when even the remote forested rural regions were dotted by churches.

Within this background, the paper studies the emergence of a 'new' Jewish community in India's north-eastern borderlands. The Bene Menashe community self-identified and organised as a Jewish community in the late 1970s with the help of the Israeli organisation Amishav, led by Rabbi Eliyahu Avichail, who named them after their ancestral godly figure, Manmasi/Manasia. Claiming descent from the Biblical Menashe Lost Tribe, they have been only the second community across the world to have been recognised by the Chief Rabbinate of Israel as 'seed of Israel' after the Beta Israel of Ethiopia. This recognition has eased the hurdles and made their migration to Israel a little bit easier; as a result, almost half of the community (about 5,000) presently resides in Israel, while the other half in India plans to migrate as soon as possible. The recent ethnic Kuki-Meitei violence in the province of Manipur has led to the Bene Menashe community being caught up in the conflagration due to their ethnic Kuki identity. This marks the first instance of Jews migrating out of India due to ethnic violence, underscoring the fragility of minority identities in conflict zones.

## **Elnur Ismayil**

Istanbul Medeniyet University

### **Militarised Borders and Escalation Risks in the Black Sea Region**

The Black Sea region has rapidly evolved into one of the most militarised and strategically contested border spaces in the contemporary international system. Since the onset of the Russia–Ukraine War, state borders in and around the maritime domain have taken on heightened military significance, transforming from lines of jurisdiction into active zones of deterrence, surveillance, and potential confrontation. This paper examines how the intensification of military deployments, naval buildups, and defence posturing along Black Sea littoral states has increased the risk of unintended escalation. Particular attention is given to the

interaction between regional actors and external powers, including the growing presence of NATO and the strategic calculations of Russia and Turkey. The analysis highlights how overlapping security doctrines contested maritime boundaries, and the limitations imposed by legal frameworks such as the Montreux Convention contribute to a fragile security environment. Incidents involving close military encounters, airspace violations, and the securitisation of critical infrastructure further underscore the volatility of the region. Beyond conventional military risks, the paper also explores hybrid dimensions of border militarisation, including the use of unmanned systems, cyber capabilities, and information warfare. It argues that these developments blur the line between war and peace, lowering the threshold for escalation while complicating crisis management mechanisms. The study concludes that, without renewed diplomatic engagement and confidence-building measures, the Black Sea risks becoming a persistent flashpoint with broader implications for European and global security.

## **Panel 20**

**Anton Shkolovyi**

National University Kyiv-Mohyla Academy

### **Borderlands between Russian and Ottoman empires in 18th century as a slaving zone**

The Black Sea region was a primary source of slaves for the Ottoman Empire from the 15th to the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, largely due to persistent Tatar raids. This dynamic shifted in the 18th century with the weakening of the Ottoman Empire and the ascendance of the Russian Empire. Consequently, the theme of slave capture in 18th-century Eastern Europe is generally overlooked by historians. However, the risk of being captured as a slave in the borderlands persisted throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

This study investigates how individuals were captured as slaves in these borderlands, how they were released, and how those captured attempted to return to their homelands. It also examines how both empires sought to manage this problem and the impact of slave raids on relations between the Russian and Ottoman Empires. Furthermore, we aim to trace the legal distinction between a captured slave and a prisoner of war in the legal systems of both empires.

This study views the borderlands between the empires through the lens of the Slaving Zone theory, with a primary focus on the territories of modern Ukraine. The main sources for our study are official documents produced by the Kyiv Hubernia Chancellery, the General Military Chancellery (the main administrative body of the Hetmanate), and documents from the Archive of Nova Sich.

**Cătălin-Alexandru Pascu**

West University of Timișoara

### **European cultural connections throughout Romanian religious folk art in Banat and Transylvania during 18th century. Case studies: Wooden Churches from Margina (Banat, Timiș county) and Bârsana (Transylvania, Maramureș County)**

Following the unsuccessful Siege of Vienna in 1683, the Ottoman Empire slowly began its retreat from Central and Southeastern Europe. Against this historical backdrop, this article aims to highlight the cases of two border territories, Banat and Transylvania, which were conquered and brought under Habsburg control during the late 17th and early 18th centuries. This paper will focus on revealing two distinct aspects of Romanian religious folk art. These aspects evolved separately yet shared some artistic elements, particularly concerning the architecture and iconography that characterised the wooden churches built by Romanian communities.

Furthermore, this study seeks to emphasise the unique features of these buildings, shaped by the religious denominations of Romanian communities (Orthodox and Greek-Catholic), their connections with Baroque influences fostered by Viennese authorities, and their enduring ties with the Romanian Principalities (Wallachia and Moldavia), evident in cultural traditions. Consequently, the European influences on folk art in Banat and Transylvania are discernible through: the types of bell towers found in these two border regions, the circulation of Romanian-language religious books from Wallachia, and the intermingling of Byzantine painting with Baroque motifs. All these aspects serve as the foundation for the following statement: Banat and Transylvania represent a space where Western and Eastern civilisations converged, creating a unique melting pot of civilisational relevance where influences collided and East met West.

**Marian Hochel**

Silesian University in Opava

### **Landscape Conservation Zone „Battlefield of Austerlitz 1805” and its Boundaries in Space and Time**

The Slavkov (Austerlitz) battlefield is protected as an associative memorial landscape, whose values are represented by buildings, places, and spatial relationships associated with the war conflict from the time of the Napoleonic Wars — the Battle of Austerlitz on December 2, 1805. The territory of the battlefield defined by the boundaries of the site of memory is still an object of commemoration and presentation in visual culture. The territory is characterized by its landscape relief, which played an important role in the “Battle of the Three Emperors,” and at the same time, considering its historical and contemporary attributes, it has the character of a composed cultural landscape. What role do boundaries play in its definition? The subject of the analysis will be the boundaries of the local landscape conservation zone, the depiction of the

battlefield in contemporary iconographic sources, and the significance of this site of memory in space and time, which is the reason for its legal protection.

### **István Tóth**

Móra Ferenc Museum

### **The Civil Guard of Szeged**

The civil guard of Szeged played an important role in the life of the city. The Imperial and Royal (K.u.K) 46th Infantry Regiment always had a garrison in Szeged Castle, but duties also fell to the civil guard. Anyone who was granted citizenship in the city was obliged to serve in the civil guard. In my presentation, I intend to demonstrate how Szeged's civil guard operated, what tasks they performed, where they trained, how they were structured, and how they contributed to the city's defence from 1759 to 1890.

### **Mihaela Vlăsceanu**

West University of Timișoara

### **Challenging the Borders between Art and Politics — a Case study of Altar Sculpture with dynastic iconography of St. Stephen in the Long Nineteenth-Century Banat**

This study examines the fluid boundaries between art, politics, and intercultural exchange in the Banat during the long nineteenth century. Focusing on altar sculpture in the Millennium Church and the Bulgarian Catholic Church in Vinga, it explores how religious artworks operated simultaneously as objects of devotion and as visual articulations of political and national narratives within a multi-ethnic imperial setting. Within their liturgical context, the altars functioned as focal points of devotion, materially grounding the Eucharistic mystery. Yet their iconographic programmes also carried a national-historical dimension, particularly through representations of Saint Stephen of Hungary, the founding monarch of the Hungarian state. Heraldic devices and royal symbols further embedded political meaning into sacred space, visually affirming Hungarian sovereignty and cultural continuity within the Habsburg imperial framework.

The twentieth century introduced new layers of interpretation and tension. Following the geopolitical reconfiguration marked by the Treaty of Trianon and later under communist rule, Hungarian national symbols — coats of arms, royal insignia, and dynastic references — were often concealed, removed, or replaced, while the liturgical structure of the altars remained intact. This selective erasure created a dual visual condition: a visible devotional image and a partially obscured mnemonic layer that silently preserved traces of historical and political transformation. These altars thus illustrate the relational character of cultural heritage. Their meanings have shifted with changing political contexts, revealing how a single monument can function simultaneously as a symbol of communal identity, contested memory, and historical reinterpretation.

**Cristina Gudin**

University of Bucharest

## **The city of Turnu Măgurele and its role in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878**

Situated on the Danube, the river separating Romania from the Ottoman Empire, Turnu Măgurele was under Turkish rule for several centuries as a district of Nicopolis. It returned to Romanian control in 1829 with the Peace of Adrianople. This communication aims to highlight the role of this border town in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878, which led to Romania gaining its state independence.

The city's strategic position was crucial to its importance in the war, with a bridge at Turnu Măgurele connecting both banks of the Danube. Furthermore, reserve troops were stationed here, ready to intervene if required, effectively securing the rear of the Romanian and Russian forces engaged on the front line.

Several aspects will be considered, including: the crossing of the Danube by soldiers and prisoners, the city's contribution to the war effort, the human and material losses sustained throughout the military operations, and the activity of the health services. Finally, the atmosphere in the city will be evoked, as well as the way in which the lives of its inhabitants were influenced by the war.

For this purpose, relevant documents relating to the War of Independence, specialised books, newspapers from that period, and testimonies of participants in the Russian-Turkish conflict were analysed.

### **Panel 21**

**Jacek Konik**

Museum of Independence in Warsaw

## **Getto jako przestrzeń wykluczenia i eksterminacji – przypadek „dzielnicz zamkniętej” w Warszawie**

### **The Ghetto as a Space of Exclusion and Extermination: The Case of the “Closed District” in Warsaw**

The Warsaw Ghetto, the largest Jewish "closed district" in German-occupied Europe, exemplifies the Nazi policies of isolation, exclusion, and the total extermination of the Jewish population.

This paper traces the origins of Nazi policy towards Jews as the root cause of the ghetto's establishment. It examines the systematic development of hatred towards supposedly "inferior races" and the stages that led Nazi authorities to decide upon the "Final Solution to the Jewish Question". Within this context, the paper outlines the development and evolution of the ghetto

system in German-occupied Poland, which significantly impacted the demographic structure of larger ghettos, particularly the Warsaw Ghetto. Using the Warsaw Ghetto as a case study, the paper describes the successive transformations of the "closed district". It discusses the introduction of physical isolation from the urban community through compulsory identification of Jews with armbands, the delineation of "residential district" boundaries, the restriction of contact with the world "beyond the wall", and the fostering of exclusion among ghetto inhabitants. This culminated in the stages of extermination, ending with deportations to extermination camps in 1942 and the 1943 uprising. The consequences of the ghetto's gradual reduction in area, combined with the influx of inhabitants from liquidated smaller ghettos and deportees from German Reich territories, are also presented.

The presentation will be supplemented by a discussion of archaeological investigation results from the former Warsaw Ghetto area between 2021 and 2025. Recovered artefacts demonstrate that areas of Warsaw incorporated into the ghetto during the Second World War had previously been an integral part of the city, and their isolation represented both a profound social shock and the disruption of a well-functioning urban fabric. The presentation aims to outline a phenomenon characteristic of many armed conflicts, where the creation of physical boundaries between communities leads to the erosion of moral boundaries and the construction of an atmosphere of tolerance for criminal acts.

**Kazimierz Przeszowski**

University of Warsaw

## **Losy członków Zarządu Miejskiego Warszawy podczas II wojny światowej**

### **The Fate of Members of the Warsaw Municipal Administration During the Second World War**

More than eighty years after the end of the Second World War, does the issue of biographies of the leadership of the local government authorities of the Polish capital between 1939 and 1945 still require further research? Has not everything in this seemingly fundamental area already been thoroughly investigated? Does the widespread knowledge concerning the almost monumental figure of Stefan Starzyński, together with the much more limited awareness of the fate of his deputy and successor, Julian Kulski, commemorated alongside him on Warsaw's Vistula boulevards, provide a sufficiently comprehensive account of this subject? This presentation is devoted to answering these questions.

In the course of this paper, the profiles of other distinguished members of the Magistrate and the Municipal Administration of the Capital City of Warsaw will also be outlined, and the current state of knowledge regarding their experiences between 1939 and 1945 will be presented.

The author intends this presentation to serve as a starting point for discussion with the other conference participants concerning the boundaries of war in their dual dimension. Firstly, the boundaries of human heroism, sacrifice on behalf of one's own community, and the morality of compromises made in conditions of dependence upon and subordination to an externally

imposed authority. Secondly, the discussion will address the limits of the instruments of repression and collective responsibility employed by the German occupation authorities against the aforementioned social group. An important element of this reflection will be the personal and institutional circumstances that influenced the individual fates of the figures discussed.

**Paweł Kostrzewski**

Institute of Higher Theological Studies in Częstochowa

### **Życie religijne na Pograniczu Generalnego Gubernatorstwa i ziem wcielonych do III Rzeszy na przykładzie diecezji częstochowskiej**

#### **Religious Life on the Borderland Between the General Government and the Territories Incorporated into the Third Reich: The Case of the Diocese of Częstochowa**

As a result of the administrative reform implemented on 26 October 1939, the Diocese of Częstochowa was divided among three separate administrative units: the General Government, the Province of Upper Silesia, and the so-called Wartheland. The newly established border cordons cut off some localities from their parish churches. A significant challenge was the organisation of religious life for the faithful in these communities. Another aspect concerned the administration of parishes located in the territories incorporated into the Reich by a bishop residing in Częstochowa. Equally important was the issue of providing charitable assistance to populations displaced from the territories incorporated into the Reich, as well as the participation of members of the clergy in the activities of the independence underground operating in the borderland areas.

**Alina Mazur**

Centre for Historical Studies in Warsaw

### **Granice posłuszeństwa redakcji legalnej prasy okupacyjnej wobec niemieckich władz Generalnego Gubernatorstwa na przykładzie dziennika „Krakiwski Wisti” (1940-1945)**

#### **The Boundaries of Obedience of the Editorial Staff of the Legal Occupation Press Towards the German Authorities of the General Government: The Case of the Daily Newspaper “Krakiwski Visti” (1940–1945)**

For almost the entire duration of the war (from 1940 to 1944), a Ukrainian daily newspaper entitled *Krakiwski Visti* (Ukr. «Краківські вісті») was published in German-occupied Kraków. It was the most important press organ of the Ukrainian population in the General Government. To date, however, it has not been subjected to in-depth analysis in Poland, while studies published abroad have focused exclusively on selected political issues.

The aim of this paper is to present, through three case studies, instances in which the editorial staff of *Krakiwski Visti* approached the limits of obedience to the directives issued by the German occupation authorities responsible for supervising the mass media. The presentation is based on an analysis of articles published in the newspaper, materials preserved in the editorial archive of the daily, held in the Provincial Archives of Alberta in Canada, and memoirs published by one of the Ukrainian supervisors of the newspaper.

Unlike the Polish-language newspapers legally published during the Second World War, the editorial staff of *Krakiwski Visti* consisted exclusively of Ukrainians. Like other so-called occupation newspapers, however, the daily was subject to strict German censorship, traces of which can be found in the surviving editorial materials. Censorial interventions in the content of articles constitute the first example of the newspaper's editors approaching the limits of obedience. The paper presents the reasons that prompted the occupiers to undertake these corrective measures. A second example of approaching these limits concerns the motives behind the dismissal, on German orders, of the first editor-in-chief of the Ukrainian newspaper. As a third example, the presentation examines the reactions of the editors to the occupiers' imposition of a series of antisemitic articles, which took place in April 1943.

The analysis of these examples makes it possible to attempt an answer to the question of whether the editorial staff of the Ukrainian daily *Krakiwski Visti* ever crossed the boundaries of obedience towards the German occupiers.

## **Wojciech Grott**

Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk

### **Granice Polski w narracji propagandy niemieckiej podczas II wojny światowej**

#### **Poland's Borders in the Narrative of German Propaganda During the Second World War**

During the Second World War, Germany conducted extensive propaganda activities, including within the Polish territories under its control. Through various communication channels, including the press, leaflets, posters, and street loudspeakers, the occupiers disseminated agitational and informational content to the inhabitants of these areas. However, this was not done uniformly. It was primarily within the General Government that the Germans established their own Polish-language mass media system. Their narrative was not limited in thematic scope and also addressed issues that were themselves difficult for the occupiers, including matters relating to the Polish question during the war. Consequently, the issue of Poland's borders also featured prominently in German propaganda media.

The Germans exploited this subject in a variety of ways, adapted to their information policy and designed to serve the interests of the Third Reich. On the one hand, they denied rumours concerning possible territorial changes, emphasising the permanence of the occupation. This was connected with efforts aimed at maintaining order within occupied Poland through the spread of defeatism. On the other hand, particularly during the final phase of the war, the Germans used the issue of Poland's borders as a means of conducting anti-Allied and anti-

communist agitation, portraying the allies of the Republic of Poland as harbouring hostile intentions towards the Polish cause. They intensively exploited the prospect of the transfer of Poland's eastern territories to the Soviet Union in order to strengthen anti-Soviet sentiments within Polish society. This amounted to conduct bordering on hypocrisy, as they simultaneously insisted that any discussions concerning the restoration of the Polish state and the determination of its borders were entirely pointless, and that Germany alone remained the sole master of the situation in occupied Poland.

## **Marcin Grad**

University of Warsaw

### **Granice światów, granice człowieczeństwa. Relacje z sowieckich łagrów Sándora Böröcza i Alfonza Nádasiego**

#### **Boundaries Between Worlds, Boundaries of Humanity: Accounts from Soviet Labour Camps by Sándor Böröcz and Alfonz Nádas**

Hungary, as an ally of the Third Reich, was defeated in the Second World War and suffered all the consequences of that defeat. Many Hungarians were sent to Soviet labour camps—some as part of post-war repressions, others as prisoners of war captured during military operations conducted in the course of the Second World War.

In this paper, I intend to analyse two Hungarian accounts from Soviet labour camps: the memoirs of Sándor Böröcz (*Kiáltás a mélyből* – “Cry from the Depths”) and the diary of Alfonz Nádas (*Hadifogolynapló* – “Prisoner-of-War Diary”). Both accounts were published in print: Böröcz’s book appeared for the first time in 1993, while Nádas’s work was first published eleven years later.

The two authors share the fact that both were clergymen: the former was a Lutheran minister, while the latter was a Catholic priest belonging to the Benedictine Order. They differ, however, in the circumstances that led to their internment in the labour camps.

The analysis presented in this paper will focus on several issues:

1. The crossing of state borders – leaving one’s homeland and entering the territory of the Soviet Union;
2. The boundary between two worlds: the free world and the camp world; life in the camp constrained by prohibitions and obligations;
3. The boundaries of humanity – the diversity of attitudes and reactions displayed by members of the camp community;
4. The boundaries of faith – whether and in what ways the Christian faith influenced the attitudes and responses of Sándor Böröcz and Alfonz Nádas, as well as those of other prisoners, during their lives in the labour camps. Did such a drastic restriction of freedom as the confinement of these Hungarian clergymen in Soviet labour camps lead to a crisis of faith?

## Panel 22

Zuzanna Białas

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

### **Granice kobiecej służby. Społeczny obraz policji kobiecej a praktyka zawodowa w Polsce dwudziestolecia międzywojennego**

#### **The Boundaries of Women's Service: The Social Image of the Women's Police and Professional Practice in Interwar Poland**

During the Second World War, Germany conducted extensive propaganda activities, including within the Polish territories under its control. Through various communication channels, including the press, leaflets, posters, and street loudspeakers, the occupiers disseminated agitational and informational content to the inhabitants of these areas. This was not done uniformly, however. It was primarily within the General Government that the Germans established their own Polish-language mass media system. Their narrative was not limited in thematic scope and also addressed issues that were themselves difficult for the occupiers, including matters relating to the Polish question during the war. Consequently, the issue of Poland's borders also featured prominently in German propaganda media.

The Germans exploited this subject in a variety of ways, adapted to their information policy and designed to serve the interests of the Third Reich. On the one hand, they denied rumours concerning possible territorial changes, emphasising the permanence of the occupation. This was connected with efforts aimed at maintaining order within occupied Poland through the spread of defeatism. On the other hand, particularly during the final phase of the war, the Germans used the issue of Poland's borders as a means of conducting anti-Allied and anti-communist agitation, portraying the allies of the Republic of Poland as harbouring hostile intentions towards the Polish cause. They intensively exploited the prospect of the transfer of Poland's eastern territories to the Soviet Union in order to strengthen anti-Soviet sentiments within Polish society. This amounted to conduct bordering on hypocrisy, as they simultaneously insisted that any discussions concerning the restoration of the Polish state and the determination of its borders were entirely pointless, and that Germany alone remained the sole master of the situation in occupied Poland.

**Magdalena Kaczmarek**

Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa

## **Umacnianie polskości na granicach – cele kolonii organizowanych przez Związek Legionistek Polskich**

### **Strengthening Polish National Identity on the Frontiers: The Objectives of Summer Camps Organised by the Association of Polish Legionnaires**

The Association of Polish Legionnaires, a women's veterans' organisation established in 1929, brought together former members of the Voluntary Women's Legion. Between 1934 and 1939, it undertook extensive activities for the children of Polish veteran families. A principal activity was the organisation of summer camps in various parts of the country, including regions of particular significance for Polish national identity such as Gdańsk, Nowy Port, Sopot, Żywiec, and Kowaniec near Nowy Targ.

This paper analyses the educational and patriotic dimensions of these camps, with particular emphasis on their role in shaping the national identity of children living in borderland regions. This initiative, directed by Lieutenant Colonel Aleksandra Zagórska, President of the Association of Polish Legionnaires and Chair of the Cultural and Educational Section of the Federation of Polish Associations of Defenders of the Fatherland, implemented an educational programme that extended far beyond concern for the physical health of its participants.

Zagórska declared that the camps aimed to cultivate a "cult of heroism, love of the Fatherland and freedom" in children, while also developing character and personal culture. The programme primarily targeted children from working-class and unemployed families in urban and industrial environments who, in the organisers' opinion, required particular moral and educational guidance. Candidates for camp counsellor positions underwent specialised preparatory courses, demonstrating the deliberate and professional approach adopted in carrying out this mission.

The undertaking was considerable in scale. In 1937 alone, camps organised by the Association of Polish Legionnaires accommodated nearly 2,285 children in nine centres located throughout Poland. An analysis of archival sources, including Aleksandra Zagórska's memoirs preserved in the State Archives in Warsaw and archival materials held in the Archive of Modern Records, allows for the reconstruction of the ideological and organisational foundations of this activity and its situating within the broader context of the nationality and educational policies of the Second Polish Republic.

**Anna Machcewicz**

Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences

**II wojna światowa na ziemiach polskich. Projekt pracy edukacyjnej wśród autochtonów i ludności napływowej na wypadek powojennej zmiany granic i próby jego realizacji po wojnie**

**The Second World War in the Polish Lands: A Project for Educational Work Among the Indigenous Population and Incoming Settlers in Anticipation of Post-War Border Changes and Attempts at Its Implementation After the War**

The war was expected to bring changes to national borders. This assumption underpinned the territorial claims advanced by the Polish government-in-exile regarding East Prussia and part of Pomerelia, at the expense of the German Reich, following the anticipated victorious conclusion of the war. This position resonated within occupied Poland, reflected, among other ways, in the establishment of a clandestine course for students studying within the framework of the Free Polish University (Wolna Wszechnica Polska). The course was organised on behalf of the Government Delegation for Poland, which represented the Polish Government-in-Exile in the occupied country.

Conducted by Helena Radlińska and her collaborators in Warsaw between 1941 and 1944, the course aimed to prepare future teachers and social workers for their roles among the indigenous population and incoming settlers in the Warmia and Masuria regions, taking into account ethnic, linguistic, and economic challenges. It offers an interesting example of expert thinking about the post-war future developed while the occupation was still ongoing. The initiative drew upon the model for training professional social and educational workers that Professor Radlińska had elaborated during the 1930s within the Social and Educational Work Study Programme of the Free Polish University in Warsaw, organised on the model of the New York School for Social Work.

After the war, no attempt was made to implement this project on a nationwide scale. Nevertheless, an echo of this way of thinking can be found in the several years of activity of the community-based Folk High School (1945–1948) established in Słupsk, Pomerania. This school was set up on the initiative of Father Jan Zieja, in cooperation with Helena Radlińska, within a social environment comprising the German inhabitants of these territories and incoming settlers.

**Marta Sikorska**

University of Lodz

## **Kobiety w drodze na emigrację. Okoliczności ucieczki z Polski w 1945 r.**

### **Women on the Road to Emigration: Circumstances of Flight from Poland in 1945**

In 1945, many Poles found themselves in Polish territory following the entry of the Red Army. They made the dramatic decision to flee the country, which had come under a new occupation. Those who harboured no illusions regarding Poland's future under Soviet control crossed the "green border" in search of escape. For many Poles who had fought in the Polish Armed Forces during the war, served as soldiers of the Home Army in German-occupied Poland, or participated in the Warsaw Uprising, emigration after the Soviet entry into Poland was their only option. Emigration often provided an opportunity to reunite families whose members were in the West. It also constituted a form of protest against the new authorities, against subjugation, and against the Yalta order. In many cases, it saved lives, offering protection from Soviet imprisonment.

Among those fleeing were also women. This presentation will examine the causes, motivations, and circumstances of departure, as well as the emotions, hardships, and anxieties experienced by women escaping from Poland in 1945. The emigration routes will be presented through the biographies of Maria Czapska, Wanda Pełczyńska, and Stanisława Kuszelewska-Rayska.

Wanda Pełczyńska (1894–1976) was an independence and social activist, politician, publicist, and Member of Parliament during the 4th term (1935–1938). She was also the wife of General Tadeusz Pełczyński. During the Second World War, she remained in Warsaw and was active within the Home Army structures: she worked in the political department of the Information and Propaganda Bureau (BIP) at the Headquarters of the Home Army, and from 1943 until the Warsaw Uprising, in the VII Department of the Home Army Headquarters. She participated in the Warsaw Uprising. From 1945, she lived in exile in the United Kingdom.

Stanisława Kuszelewska-Rayska (1894–1966) was a writer, translator, scout leader, and independence activist. In interwar Poland, she served as vice-president of the Central Association of Jordan Gardens and sat on the Programme Council of Polish Radio. She specialised in translating works of English, Irish, and American literature, including authors such as Jack London, Aldous Huxley, Doris Byrne, and Sinclair Lewis. For her translation work, she was awarded the Academic Golden Laurel. During the Second World War, she participated in the Warsaw Uprising. From 1945, she lived in exile in the United Kingdom.

Maria Czapska (1894–1981) was a literary historian, essayist, publicist, and sister of Józef Czapski. During the Second World War, she was active in Żegota. From 1945, she lived in exile in France, where she collaborated with the Paris-based journal *Kultura* and resided in Maisons-Laffitte.

**Karolina Korenda-Gojdz**

Lubusz Museum in Gorzów Wielkopolski

**Autochton wobec procedur weryfikacyjnych. Administracyjne procesy kategoryzacji narodowościowej na Ziemi Lubuskiej w latach 1945-1947**

**The Indigenous Population in the Face of Verification Procedures: Administrative Processes of National Categorisation in the Lubusz Region, 1945–1947**

The post-war shift of state borders following the Second World War presented the new Polish administration with the challenge of distinguishing between the "Polish indigenous population" and individuals of German nationality. This process, legally defined as nationality verification, became for the inhabitants of the Lubusz region a moment of radical confrontation between their multilayered borderland identities and an imposed, binary state categorisation.

The aim of this paper is to provide a sociological analysis of the verification mechanisms, in which indigenous inhabitants of the Lubusz region had to confront their biographies with an official administrative procedure. Based on an analysis of the records of verification commissions, the author examines how criteria such as language, origin, or wartime conduct were used to administratively delineate the boundaries of national belonging.

The paper focuses on the adaptive and self-presentational strategies of those subjected to verification. An analysis of interrogation protocols shows that the indigenous population, seeking to preserve their subjectivity and the right to remain in their "small homeland" (Heimat), were compelled to negotiate their own life histories within the rigid framework of official discourse. Verification is thus understood as a form of an "internal border"—a dividing line imposed by the system which ignored the specific category of the "person from here", compelling them to declare themselves on one side of the national dichotomy between Pole and German.

The presentation sheds new light on the problem of national fluidity and the consequences of bureaucratic management of identity in borderland regions.

**Krzysztof Lesiakowski**

University of Lodz

**Trudne powroty i przyjazdy do kraju dzieci polskich z obszaru okupowanych Niemiec po II wojnie światowej. Aspekty polityczne i organizacyjne**

**Difficult Returns and Arrivals of Polish Children from Occupied Germany After the Second World War: Political and Organisational Aspects**

One consequence of the Second World War in Europe was the occupation of Germany by the four victorious powers. This circumstance had to be considered in activities related to the

repatriation of former Polish forced labourers, prisoners of war, and children found within the territory of the former Third Reich. The latter group included children taken for Germanisation purposes, but it is also important to remember those born in Germany who – if they survived – were placed in German orphanages or foster families. In their case, it is more appropriate to speak of their arrival in Poland rather than their return. After the war, the Polish authorities in Warsaw estimated that as many as 200,000 children were missing. The subsequent search, identification, and repatriation of these children proved to be highly complex.

Polish efforts clashed with the procedures applied by the occupation authorities of the victorious powers. This was further complicated by the deteriorating international situation and the emerging rivalry between the former Allies. Consequently, the process from discovering a child to organising dedicated transport was protracted. In some instances, processing a single case exceeded twelve months. As a result, the effectiveness of the search for lost children was limited. In view of the above, it is necessary to examine the causes of this situation. It is also essential to present the Allied regulations applicable to children whom the Polish side sought to repatriate, as well as the practical application of these regulations.

Another important factor influencing the results of the search and repatriation efforts was the activity of the Polish side in occupied Germany, including propaganda campaigns encouraging return to the country. This aspect will require a discussion of the organisation of medical transports for children and their reception after crossing the state border (primarily the responsibility of the Polish Red Cross offices in Katowice and Koźle).

## **Panel 23**

**Agnieszka Kita**

Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum

### **Granice między historią a propagandą. „Germanie i germańskość” w propagandzie Trzeciej Rzeszy 1933–1945**

#### **Boundaries Between History and Propaganda: “The Germans and Germanness” in the Propaganda of the Third Reich, 1933–1945**

Propaganda in the Third Reich was a carefully refined instrument of mass control and a means of disseminating National Socialist ideology in an accessible form. It drew extensively on the past, reshaping it according to current political needs. History, customs, culture, and even famous figures from earlier periods were employed in the service of the new German state. Simultaneously, academic institutions supported by the Third Reich authorities received funding and research opportunities in fields aligning with the ruling elite's interests, broadly defined as *Deutschkunde*. Specialised research centres, such as Ahnenerbe, were established and staffed by scholars and researchers, with the aim of uncovering a "Germanic" past.

One of the key areas of interest was the earliest history of the lands and peoples inhabiting the territories we today refer to as Germany—the Germanic peoples. This paper aims to present how this subject was exploited in the wartime propaganda of the Third Reich and its relationship

to the actual state of historical research. It will examine the methods used in publications intended for soldiers, which combined history with propaganda to achieve specific effects, as well as the impact of the "promotion of Germanness" among Western European societies and German minorities in the East.

The paper will also attempt to demonstrate the instruments of manipulation and even distortion of the history of the ancient peoples known as the Germanic tribes (in which Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler played a leading role), as well as the (re)interpretation of sources concerning them (for example, Tacitus' *Germania*). It will further focus on answering the question of whether it is possible to draw a clear boundary between propaganda, the politics of history, and historical facts, and how these spheres influence one another.

**Tomasz Gliniecki**

Stutthof Museum in Sztutowo

**Niemiecki nazistowski obóz koncentracyjny i zagłady (1939-1945). Granica nienawiści. Wkroczenie Armii Czerwonej do Prus Wschodnich jesienią 1944 r. w informacjach sowieckiej prasy codziennej**

**A German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1939–1945)  
The Boundary of Hatred: The Entry of the Red Army into East Prussia in  
Autumn 1944 in Soviet Daily Press Reports**

The crossing of the border by the Wehrmacht in June 1941, marking the beginning of the war between National Socialist Germany and the Communist Soviet Union, was followed three years later by a reverse action. In the summer of 1944, the Red Army reached the outskirts of East Prussia, and in autumn it undertook an attempt to seize control of the easternmost region of the Third Reich. The entry into the territory of a state regarded as an aggressor and mortal enemy was widely reported and commented upon in the Soviet daily press, which at that time constituted the most widespread channel of communication between the authorities and society.

A narrative analysis has been conducted of articles sent from the front by war correspondents and published by newspaper editorial offices, official information bulletins issued by the authorities and disseminated through the mass media, as well as other texts related to these events. These were published in nationwide flagship newspapers issued in the Soviet Union for different groups of stakeholders. The paper is based primarily on the following press titles: the Party organ *Pravda*, the state newspaper *Izvestia*, and the military newspaper *Krasnaya Zvezda*.

**Piotr Arkuszewski**

Medical University of Lodz

**Granice roli, odpowiedzialności i świadomości lekarza w systemie totalitarnym – Friedrich Wegener wobec zgonów w łódzkich instytucjach penitencjarnych w świetle najnowszych ustaleń**

**Boundaries of the Role, Responsibility, and Awareness of a Physician in a Totalitarian System: Friedrich Wegener and Deaths in Łódź Penal Institutions in Light of Recent Findings**

Friedrich Wegener was a German pathologist known for describing the disease later termed "Wegener's granulomatosis". In the twenty-first century, after Wegener's death, previously unknown aspects of his links to Nazism were revealed. As a result, the name of the disease previously associated with him was changed to "granulomatosis with polyangiitis". In addition, Wegener was posthumously stripped of the "Master Clinician" award granted to him during his lifetime by the American College of Chest Physicians.

During the Second World War, Friedrich Wegener served as head of the Municipal Prosectorium in Łódź. This fact has been central to discussions following the disclosure of his discreditable past. It has been argued that it is difficult to believe that Wegener, given his position in German-occupied Łódź, was unaware of the consequences of Nazi ideology. However, it has never been established what Wegener knew about deaths occurring in Łódź during the Second World War and those resulting from the German occupation. Nor has it been proven that, in connection with his work, he possessed knowledge of the circumstances of individual Nazi crimes.

Research based on preserved archival documents has since confirmed that Friedrich Wegener was aware of specific deaths resulting from Nazi terror. It has been demonstrated that in April 1942, the Municipal Prosectorium, where Wegener was the only physician, received the bodies of sixteen prisoners who had died in Łódź penal institutions. The causes and circumstances of death indicate that these fatalities were a consequence of criminal German actions, although they were not cases of overt killings or executions. Furthermore, it has been shown that in his periodic report for the second quarter of 1942, Wegener recorded only eleven forensic autopsies as having been performed. These should have been carried out in all cases of death occurring in penal institutions. In reality, the number of forensic autopsies conducted in the entire quarter was lower than the documented number for a single month concerning prisoners who died in penal institutions and whose bodies were transferred to the Municipal Prosectorium in Łódź.

This provides evidence of "systematic concealment of the nature of deaths in official documentation", although it does not allow for the conclusion that Wegener deliberately concealed the actual causes of death.

**Dariusz Miszewski**

War Studies University

## **Granice powojennej Polski w publicystyce organizacji podziemnych w okupowanej Polsce w czasie II wojny światowej**

### **The Post-War Borders of Poland in the Journalistic Output of Underground Organisations in Occupied Poland During the Second World War**

During the Second World War in occupied Poland, there was an intensive debate in the Polish underground press concerning the causes of the September defeat in 1939. It was concluded that one of its main causes was the shape of the borders of the Second Polish Republic in relation to the occupying powers—Germany and the USSR. In the case of the eastern border, it was argued that the Treaty of Riga border could have taken a far more advantageous strategic form had the Polish delegation in 1920, during negotiations with defeated Soviet Russia, not rejected Soviet proposals concerning its delimitation, particularly in the regions of Minsk, Zhytomyr, and Podolia, where the Polish population—later subjected to extermination by the USSR in 1937–1938—lived. Likewise, with regard to Germany, it was considered that the borders established between 1918 and 1921 did not ensure Poland's security. In both cases, their revision was demanded.

With regard to the USSR, the retention of the Riga border was postulated, with possible modification for strategic reasons. Until 1943, there were also voices within parts of the Polish underground advocating either the incorporation into post-war Poland of the territories between the Riga border and the 1772 frontier, or the creation on those lands of independent states of Belarus and Ukraine associated with Poland.

With regard to Germany, demands were made for the incorporation into Poland of at least the territories up to the Oder and Lusatian Neisse rivers, the Free City of Danzig, and East Prussia, as well as the German islands of Rügen and Usedom and the Danish island of Bornholm.

**Julia Gertner-Hryniewiecka**

University of Lodz

## **Nowe granice i sytuacja obywateli polskich na obszarze Niemiec. Działalność Zdzisława Bibrowskiego w Polskiej Misji Repatriacyjnej w Berlinie**

### **New Borders and the Situation of Polish Citizens in the Territory of Germany: The Activities of Zdzisław Bibrowski in the Polish Repatriation Mission in Berlin**

After the end of the Second World War, one of the key problems faced by the new Polish authorities was the repatriation of thousands of citizens, including many children, who had been deported to the Third Reich for forced labour. Among the various offices and organisations

established to carry out this task was the Polish Military Mission in Berlin, commanded by Colonel Jakub Prawin and his deputy, Colonel Zdzisław Bibrowski, who subsequently became head of the Polish Repatriation Mission.

The aim of this presentation is to highlight Colonel Zdzisław Bibrowski's contribution to the repatriation campaign, as well as the functioning of the Polish Military Mission amid difficult post-war conditions.

Zdzisław Bibrowski, a pre-war communist of Jewish origin, spent the early years of the war in the USSR. In 1943, together with his wife Ludwika, he joined the newly formed 1st Tadeusz Kościuszko Infantry Division. As a political-educational officer, he followed the division's entire combat route from Sielce on the Oka River to Berlin. His colleagues described him as intelligent, extremely arrogant, and an effective organiser. In later years, he headed the Political and Educational Directorate of the Internal Security Corps, where he promoted the young Zygmunt Bauman, and also served as deputy head of the Polish delegation to the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission in Korea, regarded as Poland's first peace mission.

As Prawin's right-hand man, Bibrowski tested the limits of Polish diplomacy in the first months after the war. He also tested the patience of the Allies administering occupied Berlin, with whom he had conflicts concerning the accommodation and supply of the Polish mission, and ultimately, the limits of his own official position. There is much to suggest that he was removed from this post for an abuse of authority, consisting of the release of one of his comrades from prison against the wishes of his superiors. An analysis of his work during the initial months of the Polish Military Mission in Berlin will help to shed light on the realities of repatriating thousands of Poles to their homeland within the new post-war borders.

**Dominika Gałysa**

University of Szczecin

## **Granice humanitaryzmu na przykładzie traktowania Niemców w Szczecinie po II wojnie światowej**

### **Boundaries of Humanitarianism: The Treatment of Germans in Szczecin After the Second World War**

The end of the war in Szczecin was a period of destruction, depopulation, and, above all, uncertainty regarding territorial belonging. In May 1945, the city was inhabited mainly by Soviet troops, German civilians, and a small number of Polish residents. The Polish administration attempted to establish effective control over the area under conditions dictated by more powerful political actors. The evolving political situation, which led to the formal incorporation of Western Pomerania into Poland, initiated processes of Polonisation and post-war reconstruction.

From that moment onwards, the processes taking place in the region were primarily a result of systemic changes and state propaganda aimed at "strengthening" the region's affiliation. The emphasis on the Polish character of Western Pomerania took various forms, including the

replacement of German place names with Polish ones and the organisation of mass population movements. The German population that remained in these territories became a political and logistical problem. The Polish administration faced a fundamental question: "what next?" Social reactions included acts of vigilantism against Germans, and public opinion was largely unfavourable towards them. Active humanitarian organisations, although formally apolitical, were not free from prejudice. The Polish Red Cross was also involved in the process of German expulsions, providing logistical support and assistance in accordance with its organisational mission.

The aim of this paper is to examine the situation of Germans who remained in Szczecin after the end of the Second World War, in light of available sources and literature. The main research question is: "What forms of behaviour were directed towards Germans who remained in Szczecin after 1945?" This paper seeks to explore issues concerning living conditions, health status, and possible social reactions. The source base consists of the local Szczecin press and available archival materials, supplemented by relevant literature.

## **Panel 24**

**Ihar Melnikau**

Municipal Office of Łódź

### **Materialne ślady dawnej granicy polsko-sowieckiej na Białorusi**

#### **Material Traces of the Former Polish-Soviet Border in Belarus**

Between 2015 and 2020, numerous field trips were undertaken to sites in Belarus associated with the pre-war Polish-Soviet border. Locations of stations and encampments of the Border Protection Corps and Soviet border guards were visited, extending from Belarus's present-day border with Latvia to its present-day border with Ukraine. As a result of this field research, many interesting artefacts were discovered, some of which were subsequently presented in exhibitions in Belarus and Poland.

**Olga Jastrzębska**

General Tadeusz Kościuszko Military University of Land Forces in Wrocław

### **Wojna hybrydowa prowadzona przez Rosję i Białoruś jako czynnik wpływający na rekonfigurację obronnej funkcji polskich granic państwowych**

#### **Hybrid Warfare Conducted by Russia and Belarus as a Factor Influencing the Reconfiguration of the Defensive Function of the Polish State Borders**

The proposed paper addresses a variant of contemporary asymmetric conflict: hybrid warfare. This is currently being conducted by Russia and Belarus against Poland, with the aim of destabilising Poland's internal situation and minimising further assistance from the Polish

government and population to Ukraine. This specific type of warfare, in which significant elements are non-military, calls into question the effectiveness of one of the state border system's most important functions: defence. Repeated incidents in Poland of sabotage (e.g. arson attacks or provocations involving migrants at the Belarusian–Polish border) indicate that borders are ceasing to function as an effective factor in ensuring the state's internal and external security in the context of the Russian and Belarusian threat.

In addition to presenting the most important unconventional actions carried out against Poland, the paper seeks to answer whether Moscow and Minsk's increasingly effective use of various aspects of hybrid warfare has contributed to a weakening or reconfiguration of the defensive significance of Poland's borders, and if so, to what extent. Another aim of the paper is to analyse the following issues: whether a possible change in the role of borders as a result of hybrid actions may significantly affect Poland's security situation; and what measures may be undertaken to mitigate their negative effects, particularly in the context of strengthening the border system's defensive potential from a political-military and social perspective. The answer to the latter question will be combined with a brief forecast concerning the continuation of Russian-Belarusian hybrid activities.

**Andrij Kharuk**

Hetman Petro Sahaydachny National Army Academy

## **Lotnictwo Państwowej Służby Granicznej Ukrainy w czasach pokoju i podczas wojny**

### **Aviation of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine in Peacetime and Wartime**

A characteristic feature of Ukraine's defence system is its reliance not only on the Armed Forces but also on a wide range of other military structures. These, together with the Armed Forces, constitute the Defence Forces of Ukraine. Some of these structures possess their own aviation components, including the State Border Guard Service (SBGS), which is subordinate to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine.

The aviation component of the SBGS was established immediately after the dissolution of the USSR. This occurred as a result of the transfer of Soviet Border Troops units located on Ukrainian territory to Ukrainian jurisdiction, including the 24th Independent Aviation Squadron in Odesa. Shortly thereafter, two further squadrons were established in Kharkiv and Lutsk, although the latter was disbanded in 2000. The equipment of these units included Mi-8 helicopters and An-24, An-26, and An-72 aircraft.

In peacetime, the tasks of SBGS aviation included patrolling the state border and controlled border areas, the territorial sea, and the exclusive (maritime) economic zone. They also combated illegal migration, goods smuggling, and other unlawful activities, and conducted aerial reconnaissance of specially designated areas.

Between 2008 and 2012, a significant portion of outdated equipment was withdrawn from service. In 2010, modern DA42M NG Twin Star patrol aircraft were acquired, and from 2020, light H125 helicopters began to be introduced into service. Since the beginning of Russian aggression in Crimea, DA42M NG aircraft have been used to monitor the situation near the peninsula. During the anti-terrorist operation in eastern Ukraine, Mi-8 helicopters were used for the evacuation of the wounded.

Following the commencement of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation on 24 February 2022, the aviation squadrons of the SBGS have continued to carry out their assigned tasks. In December 2024, the participation of H125 helicopters in countering enemy unmanned aerial vehicles was recorded.

### **Marcin Oskierko**

The State University of Applied Sciences in Chełm

### **Sławomir Żurawski**

Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski Krakow University

## **Granica państwowa w warunkach presji hybrydowej znaczenie infrastruktury i ruchu granicznego na odcinku lubelskim granicy Unii Europejskiej**

### **The State Border Under Conditions of Hybrid Pressure: The Significance of Infrastructure and Border Traffic on the Lublin Section of the European Union Border**

The contemporary security environment means that the state border is no longer perceived solely as a delimiting line defining the scope of state sovereignty, but is increasingly analysed as a complex operational space of political, military, and hybrid interactions. Of particular importance in this context is Poland's eastern border, which simultaneously constitutes the external border of the European Union and a zone of contact with an area of geopolitical instability.

The aim of this presentation is to analyse the significance of border infrastructure and the structure of border traffic on the Lublin Voivodeship section in the context of contemporary security threats, including migratory pressure and activities of a hybrid nature. The analysis focuses on the functioning of border crossings, the diversification of forms of traffic (road, rail, and air), and their importance for ensuring the continuity of the state's communication, logistics, and economic systems under conditions of elevated security risk.

**Wiktoria Trybuł-Klein**

War Studies University in Warsaw

## **Migracje wojenne jako wyzwanie dla bezpieczeństwa demograficznego państwa. Polska polityka migracyjna po 2022 r.**

### **War-Driven Migration as a Challenge to the Demographic Security of the State: Polish Migration Policy After 2022**

The Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine in 2022 resulted in an unprecedented influx of refugees into European countries, particularly Poland. This paper aims to analyse war-driven migration as a factor influencing the demographic security of the state, encompassing both quantitative aspects (population size) and qualitative aspects (age structure, gender composition, and economic activity). The central thesis is that the influx of refugees from Ukraine presents both a challenge and a potential resource for Poland's demographic security, with the ultimate outcome dependent on the design and effectiveness of the migration policy adopted.

The analysis examines measures undertaken by the Polish state after 2022, including legal provisions (such as the special act on assistance to Ukrainian citizens), and facilitated access to the labour market, the education system, and social benefits. Methodologically, the paper draws upon statistical data, public documents, and relevant literature. Particular attention is given to the demographic structure of the incoming population and its impact on the labour market and population ageing processes.

From a broader theoretical perspective, the paper references the concept of demographic security and the literature on forced migration, highlighting their increasing significance in the context of contemporary armed conflicts. War migration is viewed not merely as a consequence of conflict but also as a factor co-shaping a state's social and economic potential. This perspective allows for a reinterpretation of the traditional approach to demographic security, which typically focuses on endogenous processes.

Additionally, the paper analyses the institutional dimension of the state's response, with particular emphasis on the relationship between short-term policy (managing the refugee crisis) and the necessity of developing long-term solutions that foster migrant integration and their lasting inclusion in social and economic structures. The conclusions suggest that a well-directed migration policy can transform war-driven migration from a destabilising factor into an element that strengthens the demographic security of the state. Conversely, the absence of a long-term integration strategy may curtail this potential, leading to social tensions and labour market segmentation.

**Halina Łach**

University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn

## **Współpraca międzynarodowa Straży Granicznej Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w zakresie zarządzania granicami zewnętrznymi strefy Schengen**

### **International Cooperation of the Border Guard of the Republic of Poland in the Field of Managing the External Borders of the Schengen Area**

Poland joined the European Union in 2004. The creation of the Schengen area stands as one of the EU's most significant achievements. Member States, including Poland, subsequently assumed primary responsibility for managing the external borders of the Schengen area, acting in their own interest and that of all other Member States. Over the past two decades, the Polish Border Guard has actively collaborated with the European Commission, Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, the European Parliament, and the border services of other EU countries to achieve integrated management of external borders. This cooperation aims to secure the borders of EU Member States.

**Liubov Korniiichuk**

National University of Ostroh Academy

## **Wschodnia flanka NATO jako przestrzeń bezpieczeństwa i granicy strategicznej: rola Polski w kontekście wojny rosyjsko-ukraińskiej**

### **The Eastern Flank of NATO as a Security Space and Strategic Border: Poland's Role in the Context of the Russo-Ukrainian War**

In the era of the Russian Federation's full-scale aggression against Ukraine, the classical concept of the "border" has regained its original military and existential dimension, becoming a key element of the new European security architecture. This presentation aims to provide a multidimensional analysis of the transformation of NATO's eastern flank, with particular emphasis on the strategic role of the Republic of Poland as a frontline state. The author advances the thesis that the contemporary Polish–Ukrainian border has ceased to function merely as a demarcation line separating two political systems, evolving instead into a critical logistical hub and a dynamic zone for the projection of security for the entire North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Within the framework of the analysis, based on research and archival work conducted during a research internship at the Juliusz Mieroszewski Centre for Dialogue, key aspects of strengthening border resilience in the face of conventional and hybrid threats are discussed. Particular attention is devoted to the process of rapid technical modernisation of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland and the adaptation of border infrastructure (including the Rzeszów hub) to NATO military mobility requirements. The author analyses how Polish

experience in securing the "buffer zone" constitutes valuable comparative and model material for the future reform of Ukraine's security and defence sector.

The presentation also addresses the theoretical problem of the "strategic border" as an interdisciplinary space combining political, military, and social dimensions. It examines the phenomenon of the blurring of the boundary between peace and war in the context of activities in the informational and cyber domains. In conclusion, findings concerning the prospects of Polish–Ukrainian strategic partnership are formulated. The author indicates that the systemic integration of the experiences of both nations in the field of border protection and deterrence of the aggressor is a necessary condition for the lasting stability of the Central and Eastern European region and for the effective countering of great-power revisionism in the future. The paper was prepared within the scholarship programme of the Juliusz Mieroszewski Centre for Dialogue.

## **Panel 25**

**Piotr Szlanta**

University of Warsaw

### **Handel, podróże, szmugiel – granice w Wojskowym Generalnym Gubernatorstwie Lubelskim 1915–1918**

#### **Trade, Travel, Smuggling – Borders in the Military General Governorate of Lublin (1915–1918)**

During the Great War, Austria-Hungary occupied and administered the southern part of the Kingdom of Poland, establishing the Military General Governorate of Lublin for this purpose. The occupation regime introduced a range of regulations governing the crossing of existing borders. These applied to borders with the Imperial-German General Governorate of Warsaw, the German Empire, and Austria-Hungary, as well as to those between the 27 districts within the Austro-Hungarian occupation zone.

The occupation authorities abolished the free circulation of most basic goods and prohibited their export across borders, reserving the right to purchase them for war purposes. Trade in grain, flour products, and potatoes—crucial for provisioning both the army and the civilian population—was placed under strict control, with preparations for harvest and potato lifting made months in advance.

Furthermore, the transport of agricultural produce or livestock between individual districts within the Austro-Hungarian occupation zone required appropriate permits. The authorities also controlled the movement of people, introducing new passport regulations and special passes for residents of border areas to facilitate crossings. The clergy were granted certain privileges in this regard. This regulation of population movement was intended, among other aims, to prevent the spread of infectious diseases among humans and livestock.

In practice, however, these regulations were not always observed. The disparity between official maximum prices and black-market prices, in particular, encouraged illegal trade and smuggling. Although the gendarmerie and fiscal guard were tasked with combating this, the scale of the phenomenon remained considerable until the end of the occupation, primarily due to understaffing.

In addition to the economic exploitation of these territories and the maintenance of order behind the front lines, the occupiers also sought, for political reasons, to win the sympathy of the local population for the Habsburg monarchy through various means.

**Tomasz Korban**

University of the National Education Commission, Krakow

### **Bezgraniczna grabież, bezgraniczna restytucja? Roszczenia państw do złota zrabowanego przez państwa Osi a decyzje Komisji Trójstronnej**

### **Boundless Plunder, Boundless Restitution? State Claims to Gold Looted by the Axis Powers and the Decisions of the Tripartite Commission**

Armed conflicts have historically presented opportunities for wartime plunder. During the Second World War, the Axis powers systematically looted gold, both from private citizens and from the monetary reserves of central banks in occupied countries. This plunder was often conducted under the guise of legality, leveraging occupation regulations and rules of warfare. The gold was used to fuel the war effort and for the personal enrichment of officials across various Axis state formations.

To facilitate the recovery of

this gold, Great Britain, the United States, and France established the Tripartite Commission for the Restitution of Monetary Gold, which operated from 1946 to 1998. The Commission's primary objective was to oversee the restitution of recovered monetary gold. Ten European states submitted claims. While the degree of oppression varied across their occupations, the mechanisms of gold appropriation were consistent. The claimant countries frequently cited various legal acts, and despite other differences, their arguments were similar.

This presentation will examine plunder within the context of the law of war, focusing on selected claims and the final decisions rendered by the Commission. The plunder of gold by an occupying power constituted a clear violation of the law. However, states submitting post-war claims often conveniently disregarded previously established restitution rules, leading to the rejection of a significant proportion of claims by the Tripartite Commission.

This paper draws upon an analysis of the archives of the Tripartite Commission and British, American, and Polish sources. It will disseminate the results of research conducted within the framework of an NCN grant (project no. 2023/49/N/HS3/02971).

**Wojciech Paduchowski**

Branch Office of the Institute of National Remembrance in Kraków

## **Granica uzależnienia – przewidywane skutki przerwania dostaw z krajów kapitalistycznych dla gospodarki PRL w I połowie lat 70.**

### **The Threshold of Dependence – Anticipated Effects of the Disruption of Supplies from Capitalist Countries on the Economy of the Polish People's Republic in the First Half of the 1970s**

The paper analyses a hypothetical scenario: a complete disruption of raw material, component, and technology supplies from capitalist countries to the Polish People's Republic in the first half of the 1970s. Particular emphasis is placed on the implications for the war economy sector and the armaments industry. Edward Gierek's rule saw an intensification of imports of licences, machinery, and semi-finished products from Western Europe, alongside growing credit exposure to financial institutions within the Paris Club. This effectively increased the Polish People's Republic economy's structural technological and material dependence on capitalist markets.

The paper aims to determine the "threshold of dependence"—the point at which a disruption of import channels would lead to systemic disturbances in the state's mobilisation capacities. The analysis considers three key areas: (1) the supply of modern machine tools, technological production lines, and industrial electronics; (2) access to high-grade alloy steels, chemical components, and precision parts; and (3) the transfer of civilian dual-use licences, subsequently adapted for military production.

**Iwona Lasek-Surowiec**

State University of Applied Sciences in Chełm

## **Dezinformacja finansowa jako element wojny hybrydowej**

### **Financial Disinformation as an Element of Hybrid Warfare**

Contemporary armed conflicts are increasingly rarely limited to kinetic operations, instead taking the form of multidimensional hybrid operations in which the informational and economic spheres play a significant role. One of the key, though still insufficiently studied, tools of influence is financial disinformation—understood as the deliberate dissemination of false or manipulative information concerning the banking system, currency stability, the solvency of financial institutions, or a state's monetary policy.

The aim of this presentation is to analyse financial disinformation as an instrument of state destabilisation, with particular emphasis on its impact on economic security and the functioning of the banking system under conflict conditions. The author attempts to answer the question of

whether, and to what extent, existing legal regulations—both at national and international level—are adequate in the face of such threats.

The paper discusses the mechanisms of financial disinformation, including the triggering of bank runs, the weakening of trust in public institutions, and the influencing of decisions made by investors and citizens. Particular attention is devoted to the experiences of states affected by armed conflicts, especially in the context of the war in Ukraine, where information operations constitute an integral element of warfare strategy.

The author points to the need to strengthen legal and institutional instruments aimed at countering financial disinformation and emphasises the importance of international cooperation and the role of central banks in building state resilience against such threats.

**Ewa Grabska-Kukulska**

Independent Researcher

### **Między swobodą wewnątrzspółnotową a barierami zewnętrznymi: reżimy wymiany towarowej na granicy Schengen i poza jej obszarem**

#### **Between Intra-Community Freedom and External Barriers: Trade Regimes at the Schengen Border and Beyond Its Area**

The subject of this paper is an analysis of the qualitative difference between the trade regime in force within the European Union (including the Schengen Area) and that operating at the Union's external border and in relations with third countries. Within the Community, there is fundamental freedom of movement of goods, characterised by the absence of customs controls, uniform technical and sanitary standards, and simplified fiscal procedures. Crossing the Schengen border does not entail any qualitative change in this respect.

However, the situation undergoes a radical transformation at the external border of the European Union (for example, the border between Poland and Belarus or Ukraine) and beyond the Schengen Area. In these spaces, trade is subject to a different regime, involving customs controls, visa procedures, tariffs, quantitative restrictions, separate technical standards, and administrative and logistical barriers.

The paper advances the thesis that the Schengen border (understood as the external border of the EU) is not a neutral line but a sharp systemic threshold, which divides the continuum of European space into two qualitatively different trade and customs regimes. The analysis is based on a comparison of trade procedures on both sides of selected eastern borders.

## Panel 26

Krystian Skotarczak

Greater Poland Social Archive in Śrem

### **Przesiedlenia Niemców Bałtyckich do Rzeszy Niemieckiej i ich asymilacja w społeczeństwie na przykładzie rodziny Philipp z Rygi**

#### **Resettlement of Baltic Germans to the German Reich and Their Assimilation into Society – The Case of the Philipp Family from Riga**

The paper analyses the fate of the Philipp family—Baltic Germans from Riga—as a case study illustrating the resettlement of German populations from the Baltic countries to the German Reich under the "Heim ins Reich" programme, as well as their subsequent social and professional assimilation in occupied Poland. In 1939, Johann and Harold Philipp, representatives of a centuries-established Baltic German community, were included in a resettlement programme aimed at relocating Volksdeutsche, in this case Baltic Germans, to territories incorporated into the Third Reich. After their arrival in Śrem, near Poznań, the Philipp family received Polish property taken over by the Haupttreuhandstelle Ost.

At the same time, the biography of the Philipp family reveals an unusual and complex path of assimilation, differing from the dominant model of Volksdeutsche. Although Johann and Harold actively participated in German institutions—above all in the reactivated Volunteer Fire Brigade in Śrem, where they held key management positions—they simultaneously maintained strong ties with the Polish population. Their activity reflects not only formal adaptation to the new social structures of the Third Reich, but also a parallel, informal continuation of pre-war values and multicultural experiences acquired in Latvia—especially Johann Philipp's participation in the Latvian War of Independence. The assistance provided to Poles, the protection of local inhabitants of Śrem, and interventions with the authorities constitute an example of selective assimilation—institutional but not ideological.

The fate of the Philipp family was ultimately decided in January 1945, when they remained in the town, driven by a sense of responsibility for the local community. Their deaths at the hands of soldiers of the Red Army conclude the history of Baltic Germans in Śrem, who—transferred from Riga to occupied Poland—found themselves in a space between the political project of "Heim ins Reich" and their own, more complex identity as Baltic Germans.

**Jan Pajor**

University of Lodz

## **Stany Zjednoczone wobec problemu Shandongu w latach 1914–1922**

### **The United States and the Shandong Problem, 1914–1922**

The outbreak of the First World War radically changed China's international position, disrupting the balance of power that had existed there for over a decade. The European powers, previously in competition with the United States and Japan, largely withdrew their interest in Far Eastern affairs. Japan exploited this situation, declaring war on Germany, violating China's neutrality, and occupying Jiaozhou—the German leasehold in Shandong—in November 1914. In subsequent years, Japan secured the consent of its European allies to retain former German possessions, including those in China, after the war. During the Paris Peace Conference, the great powers made a decision favourable to Japan, which provoked strong protests from China. Ultimately, in 1922, at the Washington Conference, Japan agreed to return the disputed territory to China.

This presentation will examine the United States' response to the Shandong problem. Their stance was particularly significant because, after the First World War, their position in the Far East strengthened considerably, enabling them to exert real influence on regional developments. Furthermore, they had consistently supported respect for China's territorial integrity, and President Woodrow Wilson aimed to establish a new international order based, among other principles, on the right of nations to self-determination.

The presentation will draw on archival materials from the Library of Congress and the National Archives, published collections of documents, and extensive secondary literature.

**Mikołaj Prokop**

University of Lodz

## **Przekraczając granice. Odyseja wojenna amerykańskiego oficera we wspomnieniach Doyle'a R. Yardleya**

### **Crossing Boundaries: The Wartime Odyssey of an American Officer in the Memoirs of Doyle R. Yardley**

Doyle R. Yardley (1913–1946), an officer of the United States Army during the Second World War, remains a completely unknown figure in historiography. This is primarily due to the brief period during which Yardley held an independent command position, ending with his capture by German forces, and his short military career, which concluded with his death in a weapons accident in 1946. However, a close analysis of available sources makes it possible to reconstruct the eventful life of this American, who repeatedly crossed geographical and symbolic boundaries during his service.

Doyle R. Yardley began his military career in 1940, soon joining a new branch of the United States Army—the airborne forces. As deputy commander of an airborne infantry battalion, Yardley departed for Great Britain in spring 1942, thereby beginning a nearly three-year odyssey across countries in Europe and North Africa. In Algeria, he participated in a combat parachute jump during the first American airborne operation in history. He was involved in fighting on the Algerian-Tunisian border and in the airborne landing at the Salerno beachhead in Italy, which ended with his capture by the enemy and internment in a prisoner-of-war camp in Polish territories incorporated into the Third Reich.

In his diaries, Yardley continuously recorded his time in captivity, his wanderings across Poland in 1945, and his long journey back to the United States, which led, among other places, through Warsaw, Odesa, Port Said, and Naples. These diaries, discovered in family holdings many years after Yardley's death, were published in 2002.

The aim of this presentation is to reconstruct the fate of Doyle Yardley based on available sources and relevant literature, and to draw attention to the research value of his officers' diaries, an important source published on the American publishing market.

**Krzysztof Siwek**

University of Wrocław

### **Stosunek USA do granic politycznych jako źródła wojny (na przykładzie kwestii Odry i Nisy Łużyckiej po 1945 r.**

#### **The United States' attitude towards political borders as a source of war (on the example of the Oder–Neisse question after 1945)**

The issue of borders is an "abstraction based on emotions" which, as Zbigniew Brzeziński noted, drove masses towards an irrational cult of the nation, territory, and the state. Although the shape of Central and Eastern Europe after the Second World War led the United States to appreciate the geopolitical significance of the Polish and German borders in the context of the Cold War, the American approach to the Oder–Neisse question through the prism of the "Iron Curtain" was simultaneously the clearest manifestation of American internationalism, which questioned the significance of political borders. Rooted in the Anglo-Saxon liberal tradition, the idea of universal peace perceived the controversial Polish–German border after 1945 as a potential source of further conflicts, allegedly resulting from nationalism and the absolutisation of territory and the nation-state, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe, where both world wars originated.

The confrontation between the United States and the communist bloc led to the internationalisation of the Oder–Neisse question and the United States' formal non-recognition of this border in connection with the German question. This simultaneously enabled the Americans to affirm a vision of a future de-politicised "European community" based on trade and economics, in which "wars over national territory will become as improbable as conflicts between feudal lords after the fall of feudalism". As a divided Germany ceased to be perceived by the United States as a threat to peace, Polish "national communism" and the historically

conditioned "national psychology" of Poles, which sacralised the inviolability of borders and territorial sovereignty and tied Poland to Soviet influence, began to emerge as an obstacle to the unification of Europe.

Paradoxically, it was precisely the international recognition of the inviolability of the Oder–Neisse border at the end of the Cold War that appeared to fulfil, at least ostensibly, the American liberal conception of a borderless Europe as a market, expressed in Francis Fukuyama's formula of the "end of history". However, the vision of abolishing borders in the name of peace risked not only the negation of the identity of the nations in this part of the continent, but also the removal of any political dimension from human and international affairs. The questioning by American liberalism of the role of territory, history, and tradition for national sovereignty in Central and Eastern Europe could thus easily transform into a state of perpetual war rather than lasting peace.

**Dariusz Wybranowski**

University of Szczecin

**Spór o przynależność polityczną Szczecina i przebieg granicy polsko-niemieckiej w jego okolicach na przestrzeni 1945 r.**

**The Dispute over the Political Affiliation of Szczecin and the Course of the Polish-German Border in Its Vicinity Throughout 1945**

The paper will be devoted to various political concepts concerning the incorporation of Szczecin, or parts of it, into the Polish state during the final period of the Second World War and throughout 1945. Another issue presented by the author concerns different proposals regarding the course of the border line, or the future western border with the Soviet occupation zone in Germany over this period. Throughout 1945, Szczecin was a city that found itself in a peculiar state of political uncertainty with regard to its state affiliation and its future political status. One of the significant sources, alongside the relevant scholarly literature, is the memoirs of Piotr Zaremba, the first Polish mayor of the city. The author will also present several centres of authority and administration in Szczecin up to the beginning of July 1945, together with the policies they pursued concerning the status, future affiliation, and subsequent fate of the city.

**Filip Chomik**

Podlaskie Museum in Białystok

## **Spory graniczne państw postjugosłowiańskich. Współczesne wyzwania w polityce międzynarodowej**

### **Border Disputes among the Post-Yugoslav States: Contemporary Challenges in International Politics**

During the 1990s, the dissolution of Yugoslavia was accompanied by a series of bloody armed conflicts. As the South Slav state disintegrated, new political entities emerged, their borders delineated in accordance with the former administrative boundaries of Yugoslavia's constituent Federal Republics. This division, which had previously functioned as an internal boundary and was not always strictly observed, became an international border between states that were often deeply antagonistic towards one another. Consequently, the dissolution of the common state and the absence of earlier, clear regulations led to territorial claims and disputes concerning border delimitation between the newly established nation-states.

This presentation will discuss selected, unresolved border disputes between the states that emerged following the breakup of the former Yugoslavia, despite the cessation of hostilities and the conclusion of peace or normalisation agreements. The paper aims to present a case study of the border disputes between Croatia and Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia, and Croatia and Montenegro, examining their origins and consequences for the foreign policies of the states involved. The analysis will address the impact of these border disputes on the European integration process of the respective states (Croatia in the case of the dispute with Slovenia, and Serbia and Montenegro in the remaining cases under consideration). While the border disputes analysed do not constitute a challenge to the security architecture of South-Eastern Europe, they may have a significant impact on bilateral relations between the states concerned, their foreign policies, and their relations with the European Union.

**Sławomir Lucjan Szczesio**

University of Lodz

### **Problem delimitacji granic w trakcie negocjacji w Dayton (listopad 1995 r.)**

#### **The Problem of Border Delimitation during the Dayton Negotiations (November 1995)**

The negotiations held in Dayton in November 1995 constituted a pivotal moment in bringing an end to the armed conflicts that followed the dissolution of Yugoslavia. The talks, conducted at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio, with the participation of the leaders of Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, under the auspices of the United States and its allies, aimed to achieve a compromise that would stabilise the situation in the Balkans, particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The purpose of this presentation is to analyse the decision-making

processes and territorial disputes surrounding the concept of the internal borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which ultimately led to the division of the state into autonomous entities: the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Serb Republic. During the Dayton negotiations, key points of contention included, among others, the status of Sarajevo and proposals for its partition, as well as the issue of a land corridor to Goražde, the only Muslim enclave in eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina that was not captured by Serb forces (unlike Srebrenica and Žepa). Another particularly interesting aspect of the negotiations was the use by the Americans of an innovative computer-based visualisation system, which moved the negotiating parties from paper maps into the realm of digital terrain simulations.

## **Panel 27**

**Perihan Karademir**

National Defence University

### **The Limits of Mongol Military Power in the Central European Campaign (1241-1242)**

After the Mongol campaign in Central Europe, Mongol influence in Europe reached its widest extent. This study aims to explain the limits of Mongol military power in Central Europe between 1241 and 1242. The campaign began in 1241 when the Mongol army divided its forces into three separate columns to expand politically and militarily across Central Europe. The first column, advancing towards Central Europe, fought its major battle at Legnica. Subsequently, the second column defeated the Kingdom of Hungary at Mohi, advancing as far as the areas around Split and Trogir. Meanwhile, the third column advanced as far as the southern Carpathians in Romania. By 1242, despite gaining military superiority in Central Europe, the Mongols failed to establish a permanent presence.

This study examines why the Mongol army, despite achieving success across vast geographical areas, was unable to establish lasting dominance in Central Europe. Their success was attributed to high mobility based on cavalry, long-range firepower, combat tactics centred on manoeuvrability, a disciplined command structure, a logistics system centred on the use of horses, and a communication network supported by a postal service. In this context, the Mongol military system's limitations, capabilities, warfare technology, and strategic elements have been analysed and assessed.

The focus has been on key factors such as the cavalry-based army's limited time and resources during sieges, its inability to sustain prolonged sieges, and its tendency to force the enemy into open-field battles. The region's defence systems, which require long-term technical equipment, also limited cavalry armies. Frequent horse use and the cavalry-centred structure further restricted the Mongol armies. Providing more than one horse per soldier resulted in greater dependence on pasture and water, creating major limitations, especially in Central Europe's geography and environment.

Furthermore, Central Europe's fragmented and wooded terrain, river-divided geography, rainy climate, and the inevitably muddy and marshy nature of the soil, coupled with the strong

ecological dependence of cavalry-based armies, have been identified as factors limiting the Mongol army's advance. The death of the Great Khan and the obligation for all members of the ruling dynasty to participate in the campaign and attend the newly convened kurultai were fundamental political factors that limited Mongol advance and dominance in Europe. All these limiting factors identified in this study indicate that military superiority on the battlefield does not necessarily translate into strategic dominance.

### **Silviu Oța**

The National History Museum of Romania

## **Changes in Funeral Practices in the Middle Danube Basin during the 12th-14th Centuries. The Case of the Mountainous Banat**

In the area of the Hungarian county of Caraș and in the west of the Banat of Severin created in 1231-1232, a series of important transformations took place in terms of funeral practices. The main causes are the retreat of the Byzantine border after the uprising of Peter and Asan (1185), but also the decrease in the influence of the Second Bulgarian Empire in part of the North-Danubian territory. Added to this is the expansion of the border of the Hungarian Kingdom and the occupation of some territories in the analyzed area, but also south of the river. If in the 12th century necropolises with a rich funerary inventory of the Balkan Byzantine tradition were especially known, after the first third of the following century, things began to change. A good part of the old cemeteries have been abandoned. Others were overlapped by other necropolises whose main characteristic for a long time was the poverty of the funerary inventory and the erection of cult monuments. In a few cases, these later necropolises were formed around the churches of monasteries, such as the one at Caransebeș-Centru. In this case, it is the church of the Franciscan monastery. The novelty, especially after the 1231, is that new objects of adornment appeared in funeral practices, some decorated with symbols specific to the nobility of the Hungarian kingdom. To these are added belts with appliques, unused until the 14th century in this mountainous area. Their analogies go to the territories of Slovakia, the north-east of present-day Hungary and, more rarely, to a large Saxon city in Transylvania (Sibiu). Their discovery in a necropolis of the local population could indicate that some of the troops were not stationed only in the fortress or in its immediate vicinity but were probably accommodated in the homes of the local population.

### **Zoltán Szolnoki**

University of Szeged

## **Montepulciano – Battles and factional struggles in a Tuscan border town (1369)**

The Tuscan city of Montepulciano fell within Siena's sphere of influence in the 14th century. Due to its location, it was considered a key settlement, as it allowed control over the routes between Siena and Perugia, as well as Siena and Orvieto. The municipalities involved,

according to their current interests, sought to have city leaders who represented their interests alternate in the leadership of Montepulciano. However, a political upheaval occurred in 1369: the lord of the city, Messer Iacopo, was lynched. In my study, I will present the parties that defined Montepulciano's internal politics, whose struggle was significantly influenced by the competition of regional powers. I will outline the characteristics of political murders and vendettas of the time, in light of which I will examine the circumstances of Messer Iacopo's death.

**Nelu Cristian Ploscaru**

„Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași

### **After Napoleon's Defeat: About Russia's New Political and Military Strategy in the Lower Danube Region (1815–1829)**

The paper I propose analyses an important aspect of Russian military and diplomatic strategy in the Lower Danube region, in the context of changes that occurred in Europe's international political system following the Congress of Vienna. Although the principle of monarchical legitimacy did not directly affect the Ottoman Empire's position in relation to the Great Powers of Europe, the principle of unilateral non-intervention had a significant impact on Russia's policy in the Balkans. My research examines the reconfiguration of Russian political priorities and military plans in the Lower Danube region following the new phase opened by the Congress of Vienna. During this period, unilateral intervention and new Russian territorial annexations against the Ottoman Empire could create a crisis in Russia's relations with the other Great Powers and had the potential to threaten Russia's place in the power structure of the European Concert. Active diplomacy and the instigation of uprisings among the Orthodox peoples of the Balkans would become the pillars of Russian strategy in the region and would be at the origins of the Treaty of Adrianople. In my paper, I will examine the political context and the main stages of this new Russian military strategy's promotion between 1816 and 1829.

**Mircea-Cristian Ghenghea**

„Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași

### **A game of borders: the Romanians, Russia, and the southern part of Bessarabia (1856-1878)**

Following the Treaty of Paris in 1856, which officially ended the Crimean War, the south of Bessarabia was restored to the Principality of Moldavia's control, blocking Russia's access to the Danube. The southern part of the Bessarabian region, a province historically contested between Russia and the Principality of Moldavia (from 1859, a part of the unified Romanian modern state), was demarcated by an international commission in 1856-1857, thus reflecting the new balance of power among the European Great Powers. Only two decades later, in the aftermath of the Russo-Turkish war from 1877-1878, in which Romania sided with Russia in order to gain national independence, the very same region was returned to the Russian Empire

despite Romania's protests. The new situation was formalised through the treaties of San Stefano and Berlin and allowed the reintegration of this territory into the Russian controlled Bessarabia, reshaping the regional dynamics in South-East of Europe.

Within our paper we present the significance of this issue for both Russian and Romanian sides and also highlight the impact and the consequences that appeared for the Romanian independent state. We also approach here a delicate issue for the Romanian historiography regarding the possibility of a deliberate cession of the territory as a bargaining chip for the Russian recognition of the Romanian independence.

**Petar Petrov • Mirena Legurska**

Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski”

**Christo Pirinsky**

Barry S. Miller College of Business

### **Restoring the Foundations of Citizenship: Nikola Stanev's 1894 „Textbook on Civic Education” as a Bridge Across Historical Boundaries**

This paper presents the 2023 reissue of Nikola Stanev's Textbook on Civic Education, originally published in 1894 as the first independent manual of its kind in post-Liberation Bulgaria. As an active participant in the Russo-Turkish War and a founder of the Union of Bulgarian Teachers, Stanev developed a pedagogical framework that defined the moral and legal boundaries of the "good citizen" within a newly sovereign state.

The textbook delineates the boundaries of social organization, progressing from the family unit to the local community (rodno myasto), and finally to the nation-state (otechestvo). Crucially for the theme of the current conference, Stanev addresses in his textbook the boundaries of conflict and peace; while he advocates for absolute sacrifice in defense of the fatherland's freedom, he explicitly warns against hatred of other nations, positing that the ultimate "great fatherland" is humanity itself.

By examining the transition from these late-19th-century ideals to their 21st-century republication, this study explores the boundary between historical memory and contemporary civic practice. It argues that Stanev's work is not merely a historical artifact but a strategic resource for modern education, offering a "replicable roadmap" for cultivating social solidarity and democratic participation in a society currently marked by new divisions.

## Panel 28

Grzegorz Skrukwa

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

### **W niebezpiecznym otoczeniu – Marynarka Wojenna Ukrainy na Krymie w latach 1995-2014**

Referat przedstawia okoliczności stacjonowania Marynarki Wojennej Ukrainy na Krymie jako studium przypadku wojskowości na terenie pogranicznym, poddanym oddziaływaniu polityczno-propagandowemu sąsiedniego państwa. W latach 1995-2014 główne siły morskie i lądowe Marynarki Wojennej Ukrainy (WMSU) stacjonowały na Półwyspie Krymskim, który stanowił integralną część uznawanego międzynarodowo terytorium Ukrainy, jednak bardzo silne były tam wpływy rosyjskie. Większa część Krymu tworzyła Autonomiczną Republikę Krym, a miasto Sewastopol z przyległościami miało status miasta wydzielonego. W Sewastopolu stacjonowały także elementy Marynarki Wojennej Rosji z swym aparatem propagandowym i wywiadowczym, a w krymskiej autonomii działały liczne siły prorosyjskie. W dowództwie WMSU występowały dwie postawy: część wyższych oficerów traktowała WMSU jako siły zbrojne suwerennego państwa mające bronić suwerenności i integralności Ukrainy, ale część - jako swoistą postimperialną resztówkę, pełniąc służbę w niej czysto użyteczności, lub wręcz aspirując do integracji wojskowej z Rosją. W referacie zostaną przeanalizowane ns. obszary: rosyjska presja propagandowa delegitymizująca ukraińską obecność wojskową na Krymie, manifestacje i akty przemocy wymierzone w ukraińską wojskowość, ewolucja postaw wyższego dowództwa WMSU wobec rosyjskiej presji, a także propozycje porównawcze podobnych przypadków w historii Europy XX

### **In a Challenging Security Environment: The Ukrainian Navy in Crimea, 1995–2014**

The paper presents the circumstances of the Ukrainian Navy's stationing in Crimea as a case study of military forces operating in a borderland region subject to the political and propaganda influence of a neighbouring state.

Between 1995 and 2014, the principal naval and ground forces of the Ukrainian Navy (UNF) were stationed on the Crimean Peninsula. This constituted an integral part of Ukraine's internationally recognised territory; however, Russian influence in the region was very strong. Most of Crimea formed the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, while the city of Sevastopol and its adjacent territories held the status of a city with special administrative status.

Elements of the Russian Navy were also stationed in Sevastopol, along with their propaganda and intelligence apparatus, while numerous pro-Russian forces operated within the Crimean autonomy. Within the command structure of the Ukrainian Naval Forces, two distinct attitudes were observed: some senior officers regarded the UNF as the armed forces of a sovereign state, tasked with defending Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, whereas others viewed them as a peculiar post-imperial remnant, serving within them for purely utilitarian reasons or even aspiring to military integration with Russia.

The paper will analyse the following areas: Russian propaganda pressure aimed at delegitimising the Ukrainian military presence in Crimea; demonstrations and acts of violence directed against Ukrainian military structures; the evolution of the attitudes of the UNF's senior command towards Russian pressure; as well as comparative proposals concerning similar cases in twentieth-century European history.

**Adam Kuź**

Pomeranian University of Applied Sciences in Starogard Gdański

### **Czy to już „kres” tradycyjnych rodzajów wojsk i broni? Wnioski z wojny na Ukrainie**

#### **Is This the End of Traditional Military Branches and Weapons? Lessons from the War in Ukraine**

The war in Ukraine, ongoing since 2022, has become a prime example of the evolving contemporary battlefield. This paper examines whether we are witnessing the "end" of traditional military branches and weapon systems, such as tanks, artillery, and air power. An analysis of the conflict's experiences indicates that these systems are not disappearing, but rather transforming in their employment.

Despite considerable losses, tanks remain a crucial component of offensive operations, though they require improved protection and closer cooperation with other units. Artillery has regained immense significance, particularly through its integration with modern reconnaissance capabilities and precision-guided munitions. Concurrently, drones are playing an increasingly vital role, proving to be relatively inexpensive yet highly effective. The war has also highlighted the limitations of air power in the presence of robust air-defence systems, as well as the growing importance of information and cyberspace operations.

Consequently, we are not observing the "end" of traditional military branches, but rather their adaptation to new realities where technology, cooperation, and rapid access to information have become critically important.

**Yevhenii Chaplyhin**

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

### **Krytyka granicy linearnej w myśli rosyjskiej: Idea państwa-cywilizacji jako realizacja wizji Großraum w Europie Wschodniej**

#### **The Critique of the Linear Border in Russian Thought: The Idea of the Civilisational State as the Realisation of the Großraum Vision in Eastern Europe**

The paper analyses the Russian critique of the linear (Westphalian) concept of the state border and the concept of the civilisational state (Russkiy Mir) as the realisation of Carl Schmitt's idea

of Großraum in Eastern Europe. The point of departure is the thesis that, in Russian geopolitical thought—from classical Eurasianism (including Prince Nikolai Trubetzkoy and Pyotr Savitsky), through the Soviet dissident Lev Gumilev, to contemporary theorists such as Aleksandr Dugin and Pyotr Shchedrovitsky, the author of the concept of the *Ruskiy Mir*—the border is not perceived as a rigid line of demarcation but rather as a fluid, dynamic, and hierarchically organised zone of civilisational influence.

The paper demonstrates how Schmitt's vision of the Großraum order, based upon the principle of the protection of cultural identity by a regional great power and the rejection of the universalist liberal order as the organising subject of political space, has been selectively adapted to justify Russian policy towards the “near abroad”, encompassing Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, as well as the states of the South Caucasus and Central Asia.

The principal argument of the presentation is that the idea of the civilisational state constitutes a practical implementation of the Großraum model, within which the classical distinction between domestic and foreign policy disappears, and the sovereignty of neighbouring states is recognised only insofar as it does not conflict with the interests of the Russian civilisational centre.

Consequently, the Russian critique of the linear border is not merely an abstract theoretical concept but an operational instrument legitimising policies of territorial expansion, the creation of buffer zones, military interventions under the pretext of protecting compatriots, and the systematic questioning of the sovereignty of the states of Eastern Europe.

**Olha Krasko**

Institute of Philosophy and Sociology Polish Academy of Sciences

**Родина пам'ять про вимушені міграції: як українські біженці після 2022 року осмислюють історичний досвід переселень (за матеріалами проєкту U-CORE)**

**Family Memory of Forced Migration: How Ukrainian Refugees after 2022 Interpret the Historical Experience of Displacement (Based on Materials from the U-CORE Project)**

This paper examines how Ukrainian refugees, displaced after 2022, interpret historical experiences of forced migration through the lens of family memory. The analysis draws on in-depth interviews conducted in Poland as part of the U-CORE project. A question in the second wave of interviews specifically explored respondents' knowledge of displacement experiences within their families, allowing for an examination of how individual and collective historical narratives are actualised amidst a new wave of forced mobility.

Respondents' accounts refer to various historical episodes, including Stalinist repressions, deportations, Second World War experiences, and post-war resettlements. These memories serve not merely as elements of family history but also as interpretative frameworks through which the contemporary experience of war and displacement is understood. In several instances,

respondents explicitly draw parallels between past and present, highlighting either the recurrence of traumatic scenarios or, conversely, generational differences.

Particular attention is given to how family memory shapes strategies for narrating the refugee experience, forming identity, and fostering a sense of historical continuity. The analysis also reveals variations in the level of awareness of family histories, ranging from detailed reconstructions to fragmented or absent knowledge.

The paper argues that references to historical experiences of forced migration represent a significant resource for comprehending the ongoing war, with family memory acting as a crucial mediator between the past and present experiences of Ukrainian refugees.

**Olena Syniavska**

Odesa State Academy of Civil Engineering and Architecture

### **Межі витривалості: досвід цивільного населення Півдня України у перші місяці повномасштабної війни**

#### **The Limits of Endurance: The Experience of the Civilian Population of Southern Ukraine during the First Months of the Full-Scale War**

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 transformed the southern regions of the country into a space of constant danger and uncertainty, where civilians found themselves at the limits of physical survival, psychological endurance, and moral decision-making. This paper is based on materials from a visual archive of testimonies collected from residents of Odesa, Mykolaiv, and Kherson regions within a research and documentation project aimed at recording experiences from the first months of the war. The archive combines private photographs with written testimonies by their authors, enabling a reconstruction of the war "from below" through everyday practices of survival, adaptation, and mutual support.

The paper focuses on war as an experience of crossing boundaries: between fear and resilience, private and public space, normality and emergency, safety and threat. Visual sources capture the transformation of everyday environments (shelters in basements, checkpoints, evacuation routes, and volunteer initiatives) while also revealing strategies for preserving dignity, solidarity, and social cohesion.

Methodologically, the study integrates approaches from memory studies, visual anthropology, and oral history. The visual archive is examined not only as a tool for documenting war but also as a space for the formation of communicative memory and a foundation for future cultural memory. In this way, the paper demonstrates how individual testimonies and images of wartime everyday life become vital sources for understanding violence, trauma, and human resilience.

**Agata Franaszek**

Museum of Krakow

**Natalia Wiernik**

Jan Matejko Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków

## **Ujawnianie granic. Sztuka jako medium pamięci i sprzeciwu w kontekście wojny w Ukrainie i kryzysu migracyjnego**

### **Revealing Borders: Art as a Medium of Memory and Resistance in the Context of the War in Ukraine and the Migration Crisis**

The presentation will seek to answer how artistic practices responding to migration, displacement, and war reveal the boundaries of hospitality, representation, and responsibility for the image.

The analysis will be conducted using several interconnected artistic and curatorial projects co-created by Natalia Wiernik, an artist affiliated with the Jan Matejko Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków, in collaboration with artists from countries affected by war. The following projects will be discussed: the exhibition *Refugees / Images of the Unseen – Lens on the Migrant Crisis*, the exhibition and publishing project *Welcome*, the exhibition and book *How Are You?*, and the publication *Once a Year the Stick Shoots*, published in collaboration with artists from Ukraine.

The paper aims to demonstrate that these projects do not propose a simple model of engaged art. Rather, they reveal the tensions inherent in every practice of working with the lived experiences of migration, displacement, and war. The border will be understood here as a multidimensional category: political, visual, affective, and ethical. It signifies not only a line separating territories, but also a threshold of responsibility for the image, language, invitation, question, and relationship with the Other.

**Nataliia Bulanova**

Museum of History of Kamianske City

## **Місто на межі: Трансформація Кам'янського з промислового тилу в соціокультурне прикордоння (2022-2026)**

### **A City on the Edge: The Transformation of Kamianske from an Industrial Rear Area into a Socio-Cultural Borderland (2022–2026)**

This paper analyses the transformation of Kamianske in the context of the full-scale invasion, viewed through the concepts of liminality and the existential frontier. The analysis draws on a corpus of publications from the scholarly periodical *Ethnographic Image of Contemporary Ukraine*, ensuring representative conclusions based on up-to-date field materials.

Traditionally perceived as a stable industrial centre with a Cossack past, since 2022 Kamianske has been transformed into a space of "threshold" existence. In this study, the city is considered not merely a geographical location but a condition of prolonged transition, where familiar social structures and individual survival strategies are undergoing constant reconfiguration.

The author emphasises that, for the city's inhabitants, the front line has become not only a territorial fact but also an existential boundary, dividing life into "before" and "after", "here" and "there". In this context, Kamianske emerges as a liminal space between the former security of the rear and the immediate proximity of catastrophe. This "threshold condition" blurs the boundaries between civilian everyday life and military reality, making every resident a subject of the borderland.

The paper analyses how the status of an "internal frontier" affects the community's collective identity, shaping new ethical norms and the limits of systemic resilience. Kamianske is examined as a representative case for understanding how war disrupts individual ontological security, transforming an industrial city into a complex nexus of existential challenges. The study employs an interdisciplinary combination of methods drawn from philosophical anthropology, social psychology, and contemporary history.

## **Panel 29**

**Marek Dutkiewicz**

Piotrków Academy

### **Służba zdrowia Legionów Polskich w walkach na granicy Galicji i Królestwa Węgier w 1914-1915 r.**

#### **The Medical Service of the Polish Legions in the Fighting on the Border between Galicia and the Kingdom of Hungary, 1914–1915**

This paper analyses the transformation of Kamianske in the context of the full-scale invasion, viewed through the concepts of liminality and the existential frontier. The analysis draws on a corpus of publications from the scholarly periodical *Ethnographic Image of Contemporary Ukraine*, ensuring representative conclusions based on up-to-date field materials.

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**Artur Golak**

University of Białystok

## **Służba żołnierzy mniejszości narodowych w WP na przykładzie garnizonów DOK nr III Grodno**

### **The Service of Soldiers Belonging to National Minorities in the Polish Army: The Example of the Garrisons of Corps District Command No. III Grodno**

The Second Polish Republic was a multi-ethnic state, with nearly 40 per cent of its citizens belonging to national and ethnic minorities. In the eastern regions, particularly in rural areas, these minorities constituted the majority of the population. In its pursuit of creating a nation-state with a clearly Polish ethnic identity, the authorities adopted a highly confrontational policy towards their non-Polish inhabitants. This manifested itself in various ways, including restrictions on political activity, the development of education in national minority languages, cooperative movements, and even religious life. Ultimately, this led to overt measures aimed at the cultural assimilation of the non-Polish population. The Polish Army was one of the instruments through which this policy was implemented.

Distrust towards minorities was reflected in the ethnic structure of the military. Significantly fewer young Belarusians, Ukrainians, Jews, and Germans were admitted to the army than would have been expected based on the number of non-Polish citizens subject to compulsory military service. Nevertheless, each year approximately 20 per cent of those conscripted into the Polish Army belonged to national or ethnic minorities.

Their service entailed specific consequences. Illiteracy was widespread among soldiers from the eastern regions, and many did not possess a sufficient command of the Polish language. The majority adhered to churches and religious communities other than Roman Catholicism. A considerable number of those conscripted had, prior to military service, been involved in political activities regarded as extremist.

This had implications for the training process, the organisation of work within garrisons and military sub-units. It affected military discipline and order, religious practices, and even less obvious issues such as nutrition.

There was no single assessment of the service of Polish Army soldiers from national and ethnic minorities. Their service was described in various ways, which is also reflected in the findings of scholarly research. A particularly interesting aspect of this research concerns service in

ethnically mixed regions, such as the eastern voivodeships belonging to Corps District Command No. III Grodno.

The purpose of this paper is to present the issue of the service of soldiers of non-Polish origin in the garrisons of the north-eastern regions of the Second Polish Republic. What was their military service like? Did it differ from that of their Polish comrades, and if so, in what ways? How did their presence affect the functioning of military structures? Is it possible to identify the influence of the place of service on its course? These issues, among others, will be addressed during the presentation, and it is hoped that they will stimulate a lively discussion.

**Konrad Czernielewski**

Museum of Independence Traditions in Łódź

## **„Granice” wojny podwodnej w latach 1914-1945**

### **The “Boundaries” of Submarine Warfare, 1914–1945**

In this paper, the author will present how naval commands assessed the employment of submarines in armed conflicts. In 1901, the British Admiral Arthur Wilson stated that the submarine was a deceitful weapon, violating the principles of fair play and, moreover, profoundly un-English. He believed that captured crews of enemy submarines should be treated in the same manner as pirates had been treated in the past—by hanging them. However, the course of military operations during the First World War demonstrated the anachronistic nature of such thinking.

It was generally accepted that enemy warships could be attacked without warning, whereas in the case of merchant and passenger vessels, the safety of crews and passengers was to be ensured. Unable to overcome British resistance and break the blockade, Germany initiated unrestricted submarine warfare in February 1915. Its most famous example was the sinking of the transatlantic steamship *Lusitania* on 7 May 1915. More than one hundred citizens of the United States were on board the vessel. In September 1915, the German Chancellor Henning von Holtzendorff prohibited attacks on ships regardless of the flag under which they sailed. Germany resumed unrestricted submarine warfare in January 1917.

During the interwar period, Great Britain proposed a complete prohibition on the possession of submarines, but the only agreement reached concerned the conduct of naval warfare in a manner that ensured the safety of the crews of merchant vessels.

The situation was repeated during the next world war. On 3 September 1939, the British passenger liner *Athenia*, carrying passengers from Great Britain, Canada, and the United States, was sunk. This is widely regarded as the first war crime at sea of the Second World War. Submarine warfare during the years 1939–1945 was primarily a struggle for control of the Atlantic. German submarines sank almost 15 million gross register tons (GRT) of merchant shipping while losing nearly 800 vessels. It is widely estimated that only one quarter of U-boat crews survived the war. During this conflict, Germany employed the "wolf pack" tactic; however, owing to the development of radar, aviation, and convoy systems, the Allies ultimately prevailed.

## **Granica państwa jako wartość konstytucyjna. Analiza zagadnienia z uwzględnieniem rozwiązań konstytucyjnych państw europejskich w latach 1918-1945**

Zwyczajowym elementem konstytucji państw europejskich w XX wieku było ujęcie kwestii granic w ustawie zasadniczej określonego państwa. Oczywiście, nie istniał jeden model zapisu konstytucyjnego, który by ujmował to zagadnienie. W zależności od kultury politycznej państwa, jego przeszłości, jak i politycznych dążeń, konstytucyjny zapis dot. granicy państwowej, jej trwałości oraz jej obrony był często odmienny od siebie. Ta odmienność dot. nie tylko państw, które po 1918 roku na powrót się odrodziły - jak m.in. Polska czy Czechy, jako Czechosłowacja - ale i państw powstałych, jak np. Litwa, Łotwa czy Estonia.

Celem wystąpienia - wspartego prezentacją - będzie nie tylko przeanalizowanie, w jaki sposób ustawy zasadnicze państw europejskich, podejmowały rozwiązania w celu ochrony granicy po 1918 roku - a zatem po wielkim szoku spowodowanym I wojną światową - a w jaki sposób to samo zagadnienie było podejmowane w czasie po 1945 roku, a zatem po II wojnie światowej. Ale również, odpowiedzenie na pytanie czy doświadczenia działań wojennych - z lat 1914-1918 oraz 1939-1945 - wpłynęły znacząco na podjęcie szczególnych zabezpieczeń ustrojowych wobec granicy państwowej.

### **The State Border as a Constitutional Value: An Analysis of the Issue with Reference to the Constitutional Arrangements of European States, 1918–1945**

A customary element of the constitutions of European states in the twentieth century was the inclusion of provisions concerning state borders within their fundamental law. Naturally, there was no single constitutional model for addressing this issue. Depending on a state's political culture, historical experience, and political aspirations, constitutional provisions concerning the state border, its permanence, and its defence often differed considerably. These differences concerned not only states that re-emerged after 1918, such as Poland and the Czech lands in the form of Czechoslovakia, but also newly established states, including Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia.

The aim of this presentation—supported by a visual presentation—is to analyse how the constitutions of European states adopted solutions for the protection of state borders after 1918, following the profound shock of the First World War, and how the same issue was addressed after 1945, following the Second World War. It will also seek to answer whether the experience of warfare during the periods 1914–1918 and 1939–1945 significantly influenced the adoption of specific constitutional safeguards concerning the state border.

**Maciej Franz**

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

### **Na granicy między okupacją a wyzwoleniem. Mieszkańcy Wilna w 1939 r.**

#### **On the Boundary between Occupation and Liberation: The Inhabitants of Vilnius in 1939**

Between September and December 1939, the inhabitants of Vilnius experienced not only the outbreak of war, the sudden "approach" of the wartime border and, consequently, of the Eastern Front, the entry of Soviet troops, and occupation, but also the sense that this was not the end, nor the boundary, of the changes taking place. Soviet occupation and repression did not constitute the limit of wartime events. As a result of Soviet–Lithuanian agreements, Vilnius was subsequently "liberated" by the Lithuanian army.

Where, however, was the boundary of the narratives concerning those days, and for whom was this truly a liberation, especially when some felt liberated while others felt occupied, and no end, boundary, or conclusion to this nightmare was in sight? Furthermore, the sense of the temporary nature of Lithuanian rule was so strong that no one even pretended it represented any kind of boundary or conclusion to wartime events.

This sense of peripherality, borderland existence, and the temporary character of events and decisions constituted a unique experience for the inhabitants of Vilnius. Examining the fate of the residents of a city that suddenly found itself on the borderland between freedom and occupation, between Lithuania and the Soviets, while being inhabited predominantly by Poles, appears to be an interesting attempt to demonstrate precisely this borderland character of human experience in the face of war.

**Wiesław Bolesław Łach**

University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn

### **Przejęcie i organizacja ochrony granicy Polski w latach 1945–1946 w biuletynach sprawozdawczych Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza**

#### **The Assumption and Organisation of the Protection of Poland's Borders in 1945–1946 in the Reporting Bulletins of the Border Protection Troops**

Following the end of the Second World War, responsibility for protecting Poland's borders was initially entrusted to line units of the Polish Army. This was, however, only a temporary measure, as such tasks could be effectively carried out only by a formation properly equipped and trained for border service. Given the overall political and operational situation in the borderlands, the decision to assign state border protection to the Border Protection Troops (Wojska Ochrony Pogranicza, WOP) was primarily driven by the scale of tasks this formation was expected to perform.

These tasks specifically included the direct protection of the border, combating continuously increasing cross-border crime, and establishing strict control over border traffic. The Border Protection Troops were established by an organisational order of the Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Army on 13 September 1945. The urgent deployment of forces along the state border was critical, as the absence of WOP sub-units risked non-compliance with established border arrangements, the looting of border regions, and a lack of security for the Polish administration and civilian population.

For the new border formation, the period encompassing late 1945 and the year 1946 proved difficult. Given the complexity of the political, administrative, economic, and, above all, personnel situation, the organisation of WOP units encountered numerous obstacles.

To illustrate the scale of problems faced by the formation during this period, the WOP Department issued monthly classified reporting bulletins. These were intended for the commanders of military districts, their subordinate border service departments, and the newly established border units. These reporting bulletins have been preserved in the Archives of the Border Guard in Szczecin and constitute an excellent source of previously unpublished information concerning, among other matters, the scale of cross-border crime, the state of border protection in particular sectors, shortages of material resources and personnel, combat training, as well as abuses and offences committed in the course of service during these first post-war years.

## **Andrzej Wojcieszak**

University of Lodz

## **Zadania operacyjne, organizacja, potencjał bojowy Węgierskiej Armii Ludowej**

### **Operational Tasks, Organisation, and Combat Potential of the Hungarian People's Army**

The presentation constitutes a concise overview of the history of the *Magyar Néphadsereg* (Hungarian People's Army – HPA), with particular emphasis on its operational tasks, structure, and planned employment during the Cold War. The Hungarian People's Republic was a member of the Warsaw Pact; consequently, its operational tasks were formulated in Moscow, and the planned deployment of the country's armed forces was determined by the operational directions assigned within the South-Western sector of the European Theatre of Military Operations of the Soviet Union.

The presentation discusses wartime preparations and the tasks of the Hungarian People's Army both before and after the Revolution of 1956. In the period following 1956, particular attention is devoted to the role of the Hungarian People's Army in Soviet military planning and its cooperation with the Southern Group of Forces in operational and organisational matters, as well as in the introduction of new weapons systems.

## Panel 30

**Krzysztof Herbasz**

Independent Researcher

### **Bezpieczeństwo jako narzędzie kontroli. Listy obozowe ks. Rabczewskiego w systemie cenzury i zarządzania komunikacją w czasie wojny**

#### **Security as an Instrument of Control: Fr Rabczewski's Camp Letters within the System of Censorship and Communication Management during Wartime**

The system of concentration camps during the Second World War constituted not only an instrument of physical isolation and extermination but also a space of strict control over the flow of information. Prisoners' correspondence formed part of this system; it was subject to censorship and fitted within the broader logic of security management employed by the totalitarian state. The subject of this presentation is an analysis of the camp letters of Fr Rabczewski as an example of communication functioning under conditions of institutional control and restriction.

The aim of the paper is to demonstrate the ways in which security mechanisms influenced the form and content of private correspondence. These letters are not merely personal communications but also products of a surveillance system in which the boundaries of communication were strictly defined. The analysis focuses on strategies of adaptation to these restrictions, such as the selection of content, the use of neutral language, and the avoidance of topics that might potentially have been regarded as dangerous.

From this perspective, security appears not as a means of protecting the individual but as an instrument of control and the stabilisation of a system of violence. The censorship of correspondence fulfilled a preventive function; it limited the possibility of transmitting information about the reality of camp life and thereby reduced the risk of destabilising the order imposed by the authorities.

From a theological and humanistic perspective, Fr Rabczewski's letters may be interpreted as testimony to the functioning of an individual within a space defined by imposed boundaries of security, in which communication becomes an act of balancing the need for contact against the necessity of survival. Of particular significance in this context are responsibility for the written word and an awareness of its potential consequences.

The paper contributes to reflection on the boundaries of security during wartime, demonstrating that systems of information control constitute an important, though often overlooked, dimension of the functioning of structures of violence. This analysis makes it possible to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between security, communication, and individual experience under extreme conditions.

**Michał Wolf**

University of Lodz

**Granica między realizmem a propagandą. Obraz miasta jako wojennego trofeum w twórczości Erika Dahlbergha, na przykładzie widoku Torunia z kroniki Samuela Pufendorfa**

**The Boundary between Realism and Propaganda: The Image of the City as a Trophy of War in the Work of Erik Dahlbergh, with Particular Reference to the View of Toruń from Samuel Pufendorf's Chronicle**

In 1696, *De rebus a Carolo Gustavo Sveciae Rege gestis commentariorum libri septem*, a chronicle of the reign of King Charles X Gustav of Sweden, was published in Nuremberg. The author was the renowned historian Samuel Pufendorf, and the work was richly illustrated with engravings based on drawings by Erik Dahlbergh.

Erik Jönsson Dahlbergh was a Swedish officer, military engineer, cartographer, draughtsman, and chronicler. He participated in King Charles Gustav's campaigns, including the Polish campaign. Dahlbergh documented these historical events in an autobiographical Diary and commemorated them through sketches that later served as the basis for engravings. In his drawings, he depicted, among other subjects, panoramas of Polish towns, cities, and castles besieged and captured by the Swedish army.

One such panorama is the view of Toruń, occupied by invading forces on 5 December 1655. In this illustration, the city is reduced to a backdrop for the foreground scene of urban patricians paying homage to the Swedish monarch. Toruń is presented as a spoil of war at the feet of a great conqueror. To achieve this effect, Dahlbergh used a perspective plan to depict the city.

Despite the graphic work's evidently propagandistic function, the image of Toruń itself appears surprisingly accurate. Dahlbergh's distinctive characteristic as an artist was his ability to skilfully employ aesthetic conventions and construct a propagandistic narrative while faithfully reproducing the actual appearance of the depicted objects.

In my presentation, I shall seek to answer the question of the extent to which Dahlbergh faithfully represented the appearance and spatial layout of seventeenth-century Toruń, and to what extent the realism of the depiction was subordinated to the graphic work's overriding purpose: to demonstrate the glory and power of King Charles Gustav.

**Michał Hankus**

Museum of Krakow – Hipolit House

**Granica obrazu – współczesne artystki z Krakowa wobec wojny**

**The Boundary of the Image: Contemporary Women Artists from Kraków in the Face of War**

The outbreak of war in Ukraine and the tragedy of the migration crisis on the Polish–Belarusian border coincided with preparations for the exhibition *Strong Women (Siłaczki)* at the Museum

of Krakow. An exhibition devoted to strong and independent women associated with the city necessitated explicit references to the difficult realities of the contemporary world.

The artists invited to participate—women artists from Kraków, as well as Mariia Lemperk from Odesa, who found refuge and a place to develop her artistic practice in Kraków—presented a vision of threat, resistance, and smouldering hope. Their work raised the question of the image's boundary, as powerful emotions escape traditionally understood modes of representation and move into both the individual and collective sphere of sensitivity to suffering.

**Aurelia Sz wajkowska**

University of Rzeszów

**„Jeno wyjmij mi z tych oczu szkło bolesne – obraz dni” poetyka katastrofy.  
Liryzm jako medium doświadczenia granicznego**

**“Only Take the Painful Glass from My Eyes — An Image of Days”: The Poetics of Catastrophe. Lyric Poetry as a Medium of Limit Experience**

Lyric poetry produced during the Second World War can be regarded as a medium for articulating limit experience, situated at the intersection of life and death, privacy and history, and individual experience and collective catastrophe. The subject of reflection is the work of poets from the wartime generation, particularly Krzysztof Kamil Baczyński, Tadeusz Gajcy, and Zdzisław Stroiński, whose lyric poetry reveals the tension between traditionally understood lyricism and the radical nature of wartime experience.

The point of departure is the category of the 'border', which organises both wartime reality and its literary representations. The 'border' emerges as a point of transgression of existence, language, and aesthetics. War destabilises established forms of description and compels poets to seek new linguistic strategies.

An important element of the poetics of catastrophe analysed is the topos of Eros and Thanatos, which constitutes one of the fundamental axes of wartime experience. Eros—associated with love and the desire for continuity—functions as a force opposing destruction, yet remains in constant tension with it. Thanatos, in turn, designates the ultimate boundary of existence, present in images of death and violence.

From this perspective, lyricism does not constitute an escape from war, but becomes a tool for problematising it and a mode of articulating an experience located at the very threshold of communicability.

**Dominika Stańkowska**

University of Warsaw

**„I niech świat ten nareszcie usłyszy tamtą skargę, co wciąż w naszych sercach [...] Przyjacielu z obcej planety!”. Granice getta/ obozu w literaturze czasu Zagłady**

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In this perspective, lyricism does not constitute an escape from war, but becomes a tool for problematising it and a mode of articulating an experience located at the very limit of communicability.

**Alicja Adamus-Kowalik**

Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa/ State Archive in Częstochowa

**Granice wolności – ucieczka z obozu jenieckiego we wspomnieniach Lucjana Wagnera**

**Boundaries of Freedom: Escape from a Prisoner-of-War Camp in the Memoirs of Lucjan Wagner**

Freedom holds a particularly significant place in the Polish identity, symbolising years of struggle and sacrifice by their ancestors. This freedom was repeatedly and brutally denied to the Polish nation through numerous conflicts, partitions, and wars, making it a paramount value for Polish society. Despite their resistance, many heroes of September 1939 were captured and

imprisoned in prisoner-of-war camps, at which point a clear distinction emerged between desired freedom and enslavement by the enemy.

Enslavement, helplessness, and doubt also afflicted Lucjan Wagner, the main subject of this paper. As a soldier in the September 1939 campaign, he was captured by the Germans. After overcoming many difficulties, he managed to escape, thus crossing the aforementioned "boundary" between captivity and freedom.

This paper draws upon Captain Wagner's post-war memoirs, which now serve as valuable primary source material for research into the Second World War. His family preserves the memory of his courage, honour, and heroism, holding archival materials related to his life.

The aim of this presentation is to introduce Captain Lucjan Wagner and to present his memoirs, focusing on the first days of September 1939, his captivity in German prisoner-of-war camps, and his escape attempts.

**Dawid Szombierski**

University of Silesia in Katowice

## **Problem wojny i granic w myśli Poppera oraz Schopenhauera**

### **The Problem of War and Borders in the Thought of Popper and Schopenhauer**

The aim of this paper is to present the problem of war within the context of the philosophical understanding of borders in Karl R. Popper's critical rationalism. Popper became renowned for his book *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, which served as an intellectual defence of humanism against the backdrop of the Second World War and the threats of totalitarianism and communism.

Of particular importance to his reflections was "piecemeal engineering," a method of social reform characteristic of open societies. He argued that, in striving for social transformation, one should avoid utopian projects that demand long-term commitment and the sacrifice of many human lives. The piecemeal approach suggests that urgent and current problems should be resolved through a process of trial and error. The notion of constructing an ideal state is dangerous; instead, the aim should be to minimise suffering in the world, in accordance with the idea of mercy.

This theoretical outline of the foundations of the open society concept is subject to various interpretations. Most interpretations overlook Popper's remarks concerning the failures of the League of Nations, which are linked to the postulate of a moral duty to wage wars for peace.

In light of these considerations, the following thesis will be justified: for the concept of the open society, the fundamental idea is mercy, which, in Popper's interpretation, justifies the view that defensive wars for peace fall within the bounds of moral responsibility.

In this context, a hypothesis concerning the influence of Arthur Schopenhauer's ideas on Popper will also be considered. There is a structural similarity between the views of these two thinkers, and Schopenhauer was one of the most important philosophers for Popper. From a methodological perspective, the considerations will be grounded in the philosophical tradition relating to the thought of Immanuel Kant, who developed a mature reflection on the problem

of boundaries in the context of metaphysical issues. Furthermore, both Schopenhauer and Popper directly referred to the ideas of the Königsberg philosopher.

The analysis will be conducted using a comparative method, a historical-philosophical approach, and textual interpretation of primary sources. The philosophical problem of boundaries will be examined in a multi-faceted manner.

The research was funded by the National Science Centre (project number: 2024/53/N/HS1/00223).

## **Panel 31**

**Mateusz Ochecki**

University of Lodz

### **Firewall jako współczesny limes – granice konfliktu w cyberprzestrzeni**

#### **Firewall as a Contemporary Limes: Boundaries of Conflict in Cyberspace**

The presentation proposes a reinterpretation of the concept of the border in the context of contemporary armed conflicts, with particular emphasis on cyberspace. The analysis draws on an analogy between the ancient *limes*, understood as a structure for controlling the flow of people, goods, and information, and contemporary information and communication security mechanisms, in particular network firewalls.

The paper demonstrates that borders in cyberspace are functional, dynamic, and multilayered, and that their delineation takes place through tools for controlling network traffic. A firewall performs the function of a contemporary "limes", regulating access and trust within the information infrastructure of both civilian and state actors. The fluidity of these boundaries necessitates a redefinition of the traditional understanding of the space of conflict.

An evolution of the concept of the border is presented—from its geopolitical dimension to a logical and informational one. The paper discusses selected examples of offensive operations in cyberspace conducted by state-supported or state-funded actors.

The presentation also addresses the tension between the expansion of control systems and the illusory sense of security within the global network.

The paper is interdisciplinary in nature, combining historical, technological, and analytical perspectives, and contributing to the debate on the transformation of contemporary conflicts and modes of boundary-making.

**Grzegorz Otocki**

War Studies University in Warsaw

## **Działania nieregularne w realiach współczesnych konfliktów zbrojnych**

### **Irregular Operations in Contemporary Armed Conflicts**

The article examines irregular operations within contemporary armed conflicts, tracing their historical context and their position within the theory of warfare, through to their practical implications for security. Irregular operations, a form of combat activity, have historically been characterised by diverse methods of engagement.

The author underscores the unique nature of contemporary irregular operations, which combine established methods such as reconnaissance, sabotage, diversion, blockade, elimination and guerrilla tactics with readily available digital technologies. This includes the use of low-cost tools like commercial drones, social media for disinformation and recruitment, and cyberattacks.

The primary objective of irregular operations is to diminish an adversary's potential by disrupting their command, support and logistical capabilities. These operations typically involve the militarily weaker side avoiding direct armed confrontation with a stronger opponent. Instead, they rely on surprise, mobility, psychological and information operations, and leverage the civilian environment, with actions primarily aimed at society.

The conflict shifts from a struggle for territory to a battle for the "hearts and minds" of society. In modern contexts, the main battlefield is increasingly the informational space and public consciousness, rather than solely physical territory. Conventional warfare is replaced by dispersed attacks in urban areas, information manipulation and the internal paralysis of state structures.

Particular focus is given to the phenomenon of hybridity, which involves the intertwining of purely military actions with migratory and economic pressure, disinformation and cyberattacks. During such operations, the lines between war and peace blur, distinguishing between combatant and civilian becomes more challenging, and non-state actors such as private military companies, drug cartels and radical religious groups assume an increasingly prominent role.

**Monika Banach-Kokoszka**

WSB University in Dąbrowa Górnicza

## **Granice kulturowe jako narzędzie wojny niemilitarnej. W stronę koncepcji bezpieczeństwa narracyjnego i ochrony dziedzictwa**

### **Cultural borders as a tool of non-military warfare: towards the concept of narrative security and heritage protection**

Contemporary armed conflicts are increasingly preceded by non-military activities aimed at weakening the cohesion of a political community without the direct use of force. In this context, cultural borders acquire particular significance. These are understood as linguistic, historical, symbolic, and material constructs that define the scope of belonging and delineate an identity-based community. This paper aims to analyse cultural borders as an instrument of non-military warfare and to introduce the concept of narrative security as an element of contemporary state security.

The paper advances the thesis that the violation of cultural borders may constitute a stage of identity destabilisation, preceding or accompanying military escalation. The instrumentalisation of language, the reinterpretation of the past, the manipulation of symbols, and activities in the information sphere all lead to the erosion of a community's narrative cohesion. Narrative security is understood as the capacity of the state to maintain a legitimising and socially accepted account of its own identity under conditions of external pressure.

A particular focus of the analysis is the protection of cultural heritage as the material manifestation of an identity narrative. The destruction of heritage sites represents not only a material loss but also a violation of the continuity of collective memory and the symbolic legitimisation of the community. The paper is theoretical and analytical in character, employing a constructivist perspective in which identity, narrative, and memory are treated as co-constitutive factors of security.

**Mateusz Ptaszek**

Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw

## **Granica między wojną a pokojem: Ewolucja strategii adaptacyjnych NATO i UE wobec zagrożeń hybrydowych Federacji Rosyjskiej**

### **The boundary between war and peace: the evolution of NATO and EU adaptive strategies towards the hybrid threats posed by the Russian Federation**

The contemporary European security architecture is undergoing an unprecedented test, in which the concept of "border" extends beyond geographical frameworks to become a strategic, technological, and psychological category. This presentation focuses on an analysis of the adaptive processes undertaken by NATO and the European Union in response to the escalation of threats posed by the Russian Federation. The main aim of the discussion is to identify the limits of the effectiveness of existing security systems and to attempt to answer the question of the extent to which Russian aggression has forced a redefinition of the deterrence paradigm on the continent.

Within the analysis, the issue of the "grey zone" will be addressed—an area in which the boundaries between peace and armed conflict become blurred, and where hybrid activities, disinformation, and energy pressure are dominant. The author examines the evolution of NATO's eastern flank, investigating whether the current military transformation constitutes a

sufficient barrier to the Kremlin's neo-imperial ambitions. In parallel, the process of building the European Union's strategic autonomy will be analysed, understood as an attempt to redefine the boundaries of defence independence for the entire continent.

From a methodological perspective, the presentation is based on decision-making analysis and a comparative study of strategic documents from both organisations spanning the period 2014–2025. Particular attention is devoted to the dilemma of the "limits of compromise" within the alliance, and to how deeply member states are able to integrate their resources in the face of an existential threat.

The presentation argues that the Russian invasion of Ukraine has permanently shifted the boundaries of acceptable risk in international politics, forcing Western structures to move from reactive crisis management to proactive shaping of the security environment. The findings derived from the study of adaptive processes allow for the formulation of forecasts regarding the durability of Europe's new defence architecture and the resilience of democratic societies to long-term geopolitical challenges.

**Dominika Pantopulos**

Jagiellonian University

### **Granice współpracy międzynarodowej przy opracowywaniu broni pancernej. Amerykańsko-niemiecki zatarg o testy czołgów XM1 i Leopard 2AV**

#### **The limits of international cooperation in the development of armoured vehicles: the American-German dispute over XM1 and Leopard 2AV tank trials.**

Since 1971, following the failure of the German–American MBT-70 main battle tank project, the US Army urgently sought a new design to replace its rapidly ageing M60 tanks. In 1973, during the competition between Chrysler and the Detroit Diesel Allison Division to select a prototype for a new tank designated XM1, the Germans also submitted their proposal. They offered the Leopard 2 tank, which they were developing in parallel with its American counterparts. During the tests of all three vehicles conducted in 1976, a misunderstanding arose between the American and German sides. The Germans claimed their design had won the competition by receiving the highest number of points and therefore expected the Leopard 2 to be purchased by the Americans. They also maintained that the evaluation commission during the vehicle testing had been biased and unfavourable towards them. The Americans, in turn, maintained that the final choice of the vehicle remained within their remit (and that this did not constitute a breach of the agreement concluded between the countries). They also claimed that no bias had occurred. As a result of this misunderstanding, relations between the two countries deteriorated significantly, particularly regarding their willingness to procure armaments from one another.

In my work, based on declassified sources made available by the US Army and Congress, I present why the Americans decided to forgo the purchase of the German prototype. To achieve

this objective, it is necessary to outline the history of American–German cooperation aimed at creating a joint tank in the 1960s, as well as the differing design philosophies of armoured vehicles. I also demonstrate how the conflict related to this tender influenced the further development of the XM1 prototypes and how it complicated the modernisation work on the production model introduced by Chrysler. An important theme of my paper is also the issue of the Germans withdrawing from purchasing military equipment from the United States as a result of the Americans' rejection of their offer.

## **Oksana Koshulko**

Interdisciplinary Laboratory for Research on Wars and Disasters

### **Obrona integralności terytorialnej Ukrainy w warunkach wojny rosyjsko-ukraińskiej jako wyzwanie dla ładu międzynarodowego i solidarności świata demokratycznego**

#### **The defence of Ukraine's territorial integrity in the context of the Russian–Ukrainian war as a challenge to the international order and the solidarity of the democratic world**

The paper is devoted to an analysis of Ukraine's struggle to preserve its territorial integrity in the context of the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war and its significance for the contemporary international order. The aim of the presentation is to demonstrate that the issue of state borders in this conflict extends beyond a purely military dimension and concerns the fundamental principles governing the functioning of the international community.

The paper will reflect on how pressure for possible territorial concessions may be interpreted as part of a broader debate on the limits of political compromise in situations of aggression. It will analyse the tension between the pursuit of ending the conflict and the necessity of protecting state sovereignty and respecting the established international order.

Particular attention will be devoted to the social dimension of the defence of borders as an expression of the political will of Ukrainian society, which for several years has been mobilising around the ideas of independence, agency, and the right to self-determination. The defence of territory will be presented as an element in the construction of collective identity and as a factor consolidating society under conditions of prolonged war.

The paper is situated within the broader debate concerning the impossibility of legitimising border changes as a result of war, and the role of states and international organisations in counteracting territorial revisionism in contemporary Europe.

**Katarzyna Derlatka**

University of Lodz

## **Wojna a granice retoryki politycznej**

### **War and the boundaries of political rhetoric**

Why do wars break out? Two main causes can be identified. The first is a surprise attack and the subsequent reaction in the form of retaliation or defence. The second is unnecessarily uttered words, a lack of understanding, inadequate communication between parties, and the escalation of an already existing conflict. Throughout history, most wars have erupted due to a breakdown in communication between parties. In many cases, wars have been triggered by propaganda, as well as harsh and unnecessary statements directed at nations, ethnic groups, neighbours, or even allies. Historical political statements have often functioned as a direct spark for armed conflict, building tension, dehumanising opponents, or issuing ultimatums that could not be fulfilled. Political discourse frequently involves aggressive rhetoric, threats, the questioning of alliances, or narratives of inevitable confrontation.

The subject of this presentation is an analysis of examples of statements made by leaders and accompanying propaganda messages that contributed to the outbreak of wars. Crossing the boundary of language can be dangerous; therefore, rhetorical responsibility and caution are necessary. It is not without reason that diplomacy is of such importance for the preservation of peace.

**Nataliia Shevchenko**

National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine

## **Дезінформація як інструмент розмивання кордонів: польський вимір**

### **Disinformation as a tool for blurring borders: the Polish dimension**

In the context of contemporary hybrid warfare, disinformation has emerged as a systemic instrument that reshapes not only the information environment but also perceptions of state borders, their stability, and legitimacy. The full-scale aggression of Russia against Ukraine has intensified the need to examine information practices aimed at destabilizing the region and undermining Polish–Ukrainian cooperation. Within this framework, disinformation is conceptualized as a mechanism of the symbolic “blurring” of borders across political, communicative, and socio-cultural dimensions.

The theoretical foundation of the study draws on the concept of discursive power and knowledge production (Michel Foucault), the notion of “liquid modernity” (Zygmunt Bauman), and approaches to hybrid warfare and strategic narratives (Frank Hoffman). The conceptual framework includes key categories such as disinformation, information warfare, symbolic borders, and narrative strategies.

The aim of the study is to identify the mechanisms through which disinformation influences the perception of borders and to analyze its role in shaping conflict-generating narratives within the Polish–Ukrainian space. Particular attention is paid to cases related to migration, border security, and economic tensions, especially in the agricultural sector.

Methodologically, the research employs a combination of discourse analysis, content analysis, and elements of critical media studies. The findings are expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of disinformation as a tool of hybrid influence and to outline approaches for strengthening the informational resilience of Ukrainian and Polish societies.

## **Panel 32**

**Robert Walaszczyk**

University of Wrocław

### **System ochrony granic II RP – ewolucja formacji granicznych**

#### **The border protection system of the Second Polish Republic – the evolution of border formations**

The services responsible for the border protection system of the Second Polish Republic underwent significant structural transformations between 1918 and 1928. This was a consequence of attempts to adapt to the prevailing political, military, and social conditions of the period. In the early years of statehood, formations primarily focused on supply and customs played a key role, often characterised by limited competencies and a heterogeneous organisational structure. As the state stabilised, professional formations began to emerge, with clearly defined tasks and competencies. In this context, the Border Protection Corps (*Korpus Ochrony Pogranicza*) was established, with the aim of securing the eastern border, which was regarded as particularly vulnerable. Following the May Coup, efforts were made to unify the border protection system. These efforts did not yield the expected results due to opposition from neighbouring states and the country's social and economic situation. This process culminated in the reorganisation of the Customs Guard (*Straż Celna*), which was transformed into the Border Guard (*Straż Graniczna*). As a result, a dual structure of the border protection system was maintained until September 1939. The activities of these bodies contributed to the introduction of standardised procedures and modern methods of border control. The evolution of the border services of the Second Polish Republic illustrates a complex process of professionalisation and adaptation to changing political and economic threats. Analysing these transformations allows for a better understanding of the mechanisms that shaped the border protection system in the interwar period and its significance for both internal and economic state security.

**Dawid Golik**

Jagiellonian University/ Branch Office of the Institute of National Remembrance in Kraków

## ***Zollgrenzschutz* i *Grenzpolizei*. O wzajemnych relacjach niemieckich formacji granicznych w okupowanej Polsce**

### ***Zollgrenzschutz* and *Grenzpolizei*: on the mutual relations of German border formations in occupied Poland**

The *Zollgrenzschutz* was a militarised German customs and border guard subordinated to the Reich Ministry of Finance. It was responsible for border protection and, in this regard, carried out assigned fiscal, customs, and military-related tasks. In contrast, the *Grenzpolizei* was a border police force forming a specialised branch of the German Security Police (*Sipo*), which—alongside its primary policing functions, consisting of combating political opponents and ensuring order in the occupied territories—also paid particular attention to the border zone. In this respect, it partially duplicated the tasks of the *Zollgrenzschutz* and, in certain cases, acted as a formation with broader competencies, including matters related to preventing infiltration of the border by enemies of the regime, political couriers, or resistance cells.

Both services played a significant role in the occupation of Poland, both in the territories incorporated into the Reich and in the General Government. Although each of them had different competencies and was subordinated to different structures of the Nazi state, they are often confused with one another—including in academic discourse. It is therefore worthwhile to compare and characterise them, demonstrating both the differences and similarities between them.

A separate and particularly interesting issue was the continuous attempts to subordinate the *Zollgrenzschutz* to the German police, undertaken even before the outbreak of the war and repeated during its course. Their aim was the absorption of the customs and border guard by the *Grenzpolizei*. This was only achieved in the second half of 1944, and these changes also partially affected members of the customs and border guard serving in occupied Poland. The re-subordination of the customs and border guard to the Reich Ministry of Finance took place in May 1945—already in the face of Germany's final defeat.

**Wojciech Samól**

Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk, University of Gdańsk

**Łukasz Drzensła**

AGH University of Science and Technology in Kraków

## **Ostatni punkt oporu? Polskie koszary obronne w pasach przygranicznych II RP**

### **The last line of resistance? Polish defensive barracks in the border zones of the Second Polish Republic**

In the defence strategy of the Second Polish Republic, barracks ceased to be merely social and logistical facilities, becoming at a certain point and in selected areas an integral element of the planned front line. In the years 1933–1939, in the face of increasing threats, the Polish Army developed a unique concept of so-called defensive barracks as both a habitation base and a forward position for special units operating within fortified border zones. These structures, located on key sections of the frontier—from the industrialised Upper Silesia to the marshy Polesie region—constituted an architectural response to the potential for isolated combat. A notable example of this type of architecture was also implemented at Westerplatte in the Free City of Gdańsk.

The authors advance the thesis that these barracks functioned as a multidimensional form of protection for both personnel and their immediate surroundings:

- In the military dimension, the facilities combined barracks functions with combat resilience, serving as command centres and potential points of resistance capable of independent defence.
- In the doctrinal dimension, the constructed buildings represented a material manifestation of the evolution of Polish military engineering thought, balancing domestic specificity with borrowings from German and French systems.
- In the landscape dimension, they permanently transformed the borderland space, becoming symbolic “last points of resistance” in frontier regions.

The analysis of surviving examples allows not only for the reconstruction of the relationship between the state’s financial capabilities and military doctrine, but also for demonstrating the role of these structures as the final link in the security system of pre-war Poland. The aim of the paper is to reconstruct the design assumptions of these defensive buildings and to critically assess them against the backdrop of European trends in military architecture of the 1930s.

**Renata Chrzan**

European University in Warsaw

## **Granice wytrzymałości ludzkiej w hitlerowskich więzieniach na przykładach warszawskiego Pawiaka i Alei Szucha, Montelupich w Krakowie, Zamku w Lublinie i Fortu VII w Poznaniu**

### **Limits of human endurance in Nazi prisons, based on the examples of Pawiak and Aleja Szucha in Warsaw, Montelupich in Kraków, the Castle in Lublin, and Fort VII in Poznań**

Nazi prisons in occupied Poland constituted a systemic instrument of extermination and terror. Their purpose was to break the resistance of Polish patriots through inhumane interrogations, torture, and starvation. This system of terror was designed to crush the spirit of resistance and physically eliminate primarily the Polish intelligentsia and members of any form of resistance movement.

The limits of prisoners' endurance were tested in places that became symbols of national martyrdom.

Main Centres of Terror:

- **Pawiak Prison in Warsaw:** The largest German political prison in the General Government. Approximately 100,000 people passed through it; 37,000 were murdered on site, and 60,000 were deported to concentration camps.
- **Aleja Szucha in Warsaw:** The headquarters of the Gestapo, where the most brutal interrogations were carried out. Physical and psychological torture was used to extract information about the structures and members of the underground resistance.
- **Fort VII in Poznań:** The first concentration camp and prison on Polish territory, where the Germans first used gas to kill civilians (the T4 programme) and where members of the intellectual elite of Greater Poland were detained.
- **Montelupich Prison in Kraków:** One of the harshest Gestapo prisons in southern Poland, known for the extreme cruelty of its guards and mass executions.
- **The Castle in Lublin:** A site of imprisonment for thousands of members of the resistance movement, from which transports were sent directly to the extermination camp at Majdanek.

Methods of Breaking Resistance:

The German penitentiary system employed multi-level repression:

- **Physical torture:** Brutal interrogations involving beating, kicking, burning, suffocation, drowning, suspension by the arms ("strappado"), and electric shocks.
- **Psychological pressure:** Detention in dark and isolation cells, uncertainty about the future, blackmail concerning the fate of families, and staged or retaliatory executions.

- **Living conditions:** Extreme overcrowding of cells, lack of hygiene leading to the spread of infectious diseases, and starvation-level food rations intended to cause gradual physical destruction.

### **Mechanisms of Resistance and Solidarity**

- **Underground life:** Despite strict conditions, prisoners engaged in mutual aid activities, organised their time in cells, and exchanged written (secret notes) or oral messages.
- **Auxiliary personnel:** An important role was played by Polish doctors, medical workers, and prison staff who attempted to protect the sick from deportations and to assist in transmitting information to and from organisations and families.

These activities constituted a form of psychological struggle for the preservation of human dignity.

The Nazi penitentiary system was aimed at total dehumanisation, in which the "limits of endurance" were deliberately and systematically exceeded as part of a policy of murder.

### **Stefan Marcinkiewicz**

University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn

## **Stalag 331 in Fischborn-Turosel. Historia i pamięć nazistowskiego obozu na granicy**

### **Stalag 331 in Fischborn-Turosel: history and memory of a Nazi camp on the border**

*Russenlager* was the German term for a camp intended for Soviet prisoners of war. During Operation "Barbarossa" in June 1941, the Germans established a parallel camp system specifically for Red Army soldiers. In the initial period of the war, thousands of Soviet soldiers were taken prisoner. Along the border with East Prussia and the General Government, a series of camps was established where captured prisoners were held in inhumane conditions.

In all these camps, people suffered from hunger, cold, and disease. They camped on bare ground or in pits they had dug themselves, and later in earth shelters. They died in large numbers as a result of epidemics, particularly typhus. They were also subjected to selection and executions.

One such camp was Frontstalag 331 in the village of Fischborn (formerly Dłottowen, today the non-existent village of Dłutowo, Pisz County), which was located on the former Polish–German border (later the Soviet–German border). On the other side of the Wincenta River was the Polish village of Wincenta, where the Germans established a camp cemetery and execution site. The camp in Dłutowo existed until approximately 1943, changing its names (Stalag 331, later Oflag 63) and its function. Polish and Russian civilians were also briefly held there in transit groups. It also had subcamps in Turośl and Łyse. It was subordinated first to the camp in Bogusze (Stalag I E), and later to the camp in Suwałki (Stalag I F).

To this day, the existence of the camp is commemorated by a monument at the site of the former camp (Dłutowo) as well as a monument and cemetery in the village of Wincenta. In the wooded former camp area, traces of earth shelters and other camp structures are still visible.

**Yuliya Shelep**

I. Krypiakewych Institute of Ukrainian Studies NASciences of Ukraine

## **Człowiek na granicy państw: mikrohistoria przekraczania i osvajania granic w narracjach wojennych Galicjan (na podstawie relacji mówionych o II wojnie światowej)**

### **Man on the border of states: a microhistory of crossing and domesticating borders in wartime narratives of Galicians (based on oral accounts of the Second World War)**

In conditions of radical political transformation, borders cease to function solely as geopolitical lines and become a lived everyday reality that determines practices of survival, mobility, and identity. The focus of this study is the individual experience of living through state borders during the Second World War, reconstructed on the basis of oral accounts of inhabitants of towns and villages in Galicia.

The research is based on interviews recorded between 2013 and 2019 within the “Local History” project, as well as materials made available on the “Living History” portal (<https://livehistory.org.ua>). This allows for the tracing of how perceptions of borders changed in response to shifts in political regimes—from Polish rule, through German occupation, to the establishment of Soviet control. Oral history serves here not only as a factual source but also as a tool for analysing how the border became part of everyday experience.

A microhistorical analysis reveals significant differences in the experience of the border:

- **Rural context:** The border is perceived as a “zone of danger”; crossing it was associated with escape, deportations, or illegal passages. In these accounts, the border acquires a material dimension—as a physical obstacle that disrupted social ties, economic practices, and established patterns of life
- **Urban context:** A different interpretation dominates, in which the border is primarily a change of ideological and cultural landscape. A change of *власти* meant a transformation of public space, language policy, and symbolic order, generating a sense of an “other state.”

Particular attention is given to the phenomenon of the “moving border,” when a change of state jurisdiction occurred without the physical relocation of individuals. In the accounts, this is described through changes in administrative language, symbolism, or monetary systems. Under such conditions, the domestication of the border was associated with strategies of adaptation and reinterpretation of the new reality, leading to a redefinition of personal identity.

The study combines methods of oral history, historical anthropology, and memory studies, focusing not only on the experience of crossing borders but also on its narrative construction. The border thus appears not only as a political line but as an existential experience shaping local

understandings of war, the state, and one's place in history. Oral testimonies show that for the inhabitants of Galicia, the border was not a line on a map, but a profound biographical experience combining trauma and adaptive strategies. The digitisation of these testimonies makes it possible to present the "face of war" through thousands of individual experiences of crossing state borders, integrated within a contemporary digital archive.

**Robert Philipp**

Justus-Liebig-University Giessen

### **Rozpoznawanie pola bitwy: pamięć, język i rozumowanie w opisie kampanii wrześniowej 1939 r. w oparciu o duży model językowy (LLM)**

### **Battlefield recognition: memory, language, and reasoning in the description of the 1939 September Campaign based on a large language model (LLM)**

Few military campaigns have been mythologized to the same extent as Poland's defensive war of 1939. Accounts of cavalry charges against tanks, of a war that was decided before it even began, have various origins: propaganda, ideologically biased analyses, and limited access to sources due to language barriers. The training of large language models encompasses the corpus of historical knowledge and thus includes layers that have already been revised by modern research. When someone turns to these LLMs today to acquire knowledge, which layer do the models retrieve? This paper examines this question in two stages. First: How does a LLM represent the campaign in three languages (English, German, Polish), and to what extent are national perspectives reflected? Does the LLM answer questions differently in German than in Polish? Does it even reproduce old propaganda? Second: How does the model reason when placed in the role of a divisional commander in 1939? The core of the second stage is a comparison. The same operational scenario is presented in two versions: one including the unit, date, and location; the other anonymized, while maintaining the parameters for terrain and force disposition. The difference between the two responses distinguishes the model's memory (retrieval of data) from its reasoning ability. Since complete anonymization cannot be guaranteed for characteristic scenarios, the model is then asked whether it can match the anonymized scenario to a historical event. Recognition, non-recognition, and uncertainty are documented as control variables. The study initially uses Anthropic's Claude to establish the methodology. The lecture explores the boundaries between languages, historical accuracy and myth reproduction, as well as human and AI decision-making. From a historical perspective, this study is intended as a contribution to AI safety research and excludes military applications.

## Panel 33

**Franciszek Dąbrowski**

War Studies University in Warsaw

### **Osadnictwo, bariery terytorialne i władztwo. Wybrane przykłady**

#### **Settlement, territorial barriers and lordship: selected examples**

In the case of early Piast Poland, one can speak rather of the extent of the ecumene and of an anecumene separating centres of authority than of a linear border. The *przesieka* recorded in Polish sources from the 13th century was a border barrier (probably multi-layered and largely adapted to natural conditions rather than constituting a linear boundary), intended to hinder passage through the frontier anecumene for hostile forces, and likely to facilitate control over routes leading beyond the monarchy (through the construction of guarded passages – *brony*).

The dynamically developing process of settlement expansion led, on the one hand, to the erosion of this barrier (as mentioned, among others, in the Book of Henryków, as well as in documentation of the dispute between Henry the Probus and the Bishopric of Wrocław concerning villages founded beyond the *przesieka* in the Otmuchów castellany). At the same time, the 13th century reveals attempts by dukes to extend the reach of their authority by supporting settlement in the frontier anecumene— in several cases through permissions to occupy frontier woodland for new settlement by ecclesiastical institutions (which is particularly visible in donation charters and settlement privileges granted to Cistercians, Templars, and Hospitallers on both sides of the borderlands of Greater Poland and Pomerania).

The ecumene boundary shifted in this way defined the extent of lordship. The support for settlement in the frontier zone can be interpreted as a form of defensive planning, insofar as institutions capable of defence were founded in the borderlands. However, it also meant rather the disruption (and certainly the opening-up, or even partial elimination) of the former anecumenical zone and the relocation of controlled settlement closer to neighbouring territories, thereby in some sense facilitating potential incursions.

**Vitaliy Nagirnyy**

Jagiellonian University

### **Niespokojne pogranicze: najazd książąt ruskich i Czarnych Kłobuków na Połowców w 1193 r.**

#### **Restless borderlands: the raid of Rus' princes and the Black Klobuks against the Cumans in 1193**

The final decades of the twelfth century were a period of frequent conflicts between the Rus' principalities and the Cumans inhabiting the steppe regions north of the Black Sea. In both scholarly literature and popular perception, there is a relatively firmly established belief that

the initiators of these clashes were the Cumans, who conducted intensive raiding expeditions into Rus' territories. However, the historical reality was more complex. It was often the Rus' princes themselves, or their allies the Black Klobuks, who acted as initiators of conflict, organising diversionary or predatory raids against Cuman nomadic encampments. A good example of such activity is the raid carried out by the Rurikids and the Black Klobuks against the Cumans in December 1193.

The narrative of the *Kievan Chronicle* clearly indicates that the military action undertaken by the Rus' princes and the Black Klobuks was planned as a swift raiding expedition. It involved young members of the Rurikid dynasty whose possessions lay in the Rus'–Cuman frontier zone: Prince Rostislav Rurikovich of Torchesk and Prince Mstislav Mstislavovich of Tropol, as well as Turkic tribes in Rus' service known as the Black Klobuks. The coalition set out into the steppes at the turn of the second and third decades of December 1193. They quickly reached the Inhulets River (Iwła), where they plundered Cuman encampments, freeing numerous Rus' prisoners and seizing substantial booty. A number of Cuman captives were also taken, some of whom were distributed as *sajgat* (gifts of tribute or war booty) to other Rurikid princes.

Despite its considerable military success, the raid also had significant broader consequences. It generated the threat of Cuman retaliatory action, which forced Prince Rurik Rostislavich of Kiev to abandon his expedition against Lithuania, return to the Kievan land, and concentrate on its defence against the nomads.

## **Kacper Burzyński**

University of Lodz

### **Walka między książętami czy utarczka graniczna – bitwa pod Funkenhagen**

#### **A struggle between princes or a border skirmish? The Battle of Funkenhagen**

This presentation concerns the Battle of Funkenhagen, also known as the Battle of Gąski, which took place in the late thirteenth century in the Pomeranian region. The event, its causes and consequences will first be presented based on Thomas Kantzow's account in his sixteenth-century Pomeranian chronicle, *Pomerania*. The author will focus on the location, date, course, and participants of these events, and will attempt to assess the reliability of Kantzow's account. Kantzow's narrative in *Pomerania* will be compared with earlier sources and the current state of research to reconstruct as accurately as possible the probable course of events in this coastal region.

Thomas Kantzow presented this skirmish as a result of the activities of Duke Bogislaw IV of the House of Griffins, connected to his claims to the lands of the deceased Mestwin II. According to this interpretation, his expansion met resistance from Poland, leading to the aforementioned clash. Kantzow depicts the Pomeranian duke's opponents as subjects of the Polish ruler—either Władysław the Elbow-high or Wenceslaus II. During the presentation, the author will verify the participation of these rulers on the Polish side and highlight significant details omitted by the eminent Pomeranian chronicler.

The presentation will conclude with final observations concerning the Battle of Funkenhagen and its possible actual origins, course, and consequences.

**Tomasz Stolarczyk**

Library of the University of Lodz

### **Napływowa szlachta wieluńska w czasie wojen w XIV-XVI w.**

#### **Immigrant nobility of the Wieluń land during wars in the 14th–16th centuries**

Since the fourteenth century, the Wieluń region was situated on the frontier between the Kingdom of Poland and Silesia, as well as between the internal divisions of Wielkopolska, Małopolska, and Sieradz. As is typical for such territories, it became a melting pot of migrants from neighbouring regions—immigrant gentry and nobility for whom it became a new place of settlement and life. Some of its representatives held high regional and even senatorial offices, fighting in the ranks of Władysław of Opole's forces, and later in the Polish armies. This presentation is devoted to them.

**Marcin Ochman**

War Studies University in Warsaw

### **Przemarsz Wojsk Polskich z Krakowa do Saksonii w 1813 r.**

Autor przedstawia uwarunkowania, wyprowadzenia oddziałów polskich pod wodzą ks. Józefa

#### **The march of Polish forces from Kraków to Saxony in 1813**

The author presents the circumstances surrounding the withdrawal of Polish units under the command of Prince Józef Poniatowski from the borders of the Duchy of Warsaw in the spring of 1813, with the aim of joining Napoleon's forces operating in Saxony. On the one hand, this decision was facilitated by the advancing Russian army and attempts to persuade Polish troops to join the Allied forces opposing the Duchy. On the other hand, it was discouraged by the lack of clear declarations regarding the fate of the country, assurances from Napoleon, and to some extent the absence of any possibility of an honourable withdrawal.

The presentation also discusses the complexity of the strategic situation, which threatened the encirclement and destruction of the newly reconstituted army, despite the successes of the Grande Armée's offensive. Furthermore, it explores plans to overcome the unfavourable situation posed by the risk of being cut off from the main forces by Austria, which was preparing to join the anti-Napoleonic coalition. The route and organisation of the march itself are then presented.

**Krzysztof Latawiec**

Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin

## **Przemiany struktur rosyjskiej straży granicznej w Królestwie Polskim w latach 1851-1914**

### **Transformations of the structures of the Russian border guard in the Kingdom of Poland in the years 1851–1914**

At the beginning of 1851, units of the Russian border guard were stationed in the Kingdom of Poland. Over more than six decades, their organisational structures underwent transformations owing to various factors. These included changes in general and special administration, the policy of the Ministry of Finance, the intensity of smuggling, and the military plans of the Ministry of War. The process of change, initiated in the second half of the 1880s, was completed shortly before the outbreak of the First World War.

#### **Panel 34**

**Jiri Unger**

University of Pardubice

## **Shifting Boundaries: Dynamics of Contact and Conflict Between the Lusatian and Knovíz Cultures in Late Bronze Age Bohemia**

The boundary between the Lusatian and Knovíz cultural spheres in Bohemia during the Late Bronze Age has traditionally been perceived as relatively stable, reflecting the long-term coexistence of two closely related cultural units. However, recent archaeological evidence suggests a more dynamic and complex reality.

Within the broader framework of the Urnfield world, this boundary can be interpreted as a contact zone between two larger cultural spheres, namely the north-eastern Lusatian tradition and the Upper Danubian cultural circle.

This paper presents new data from eastern Bohemia, including recent discoveries from rescue excavations and field surveys. Particular attention is given to settlement contexts associated with the Lusatian culture that have yielded atypical evidence, including non-ritual human burials in settlement pits and concentrations of weapon-related finds, especially large quantities of bronze arrowheads documented at multiple sites.

When viewed diachronically, these data suggest that the boundary between the two cultural groups was not a fixed line, but rather a shifting and permeable zone of interaction. Over a period of approximately three centuries, this boundary appears to have undergone gradual spatial transformation, reflecting changing patterns of contact, coexistence and, at times, localized conflict.

The paper argues that the Lusatian–Knoř boundary should be understood as a dynamic frontier shaped by both cultural interaction and episodic violence, rather than as a stable cultural divide.

**Simona Regep**

West University of Timișoara

### **The Role of Border Cities in the Defense of the Province of Dacia. Case Study: Tibiscum and Apulum**

The border cities of the Roman province of Dacia represented essential components of the imperial defensive system, combining military, administrative, economic, and cultural functions. Following the conquest of Dacia by Emperor Trajan, the Roman Empire developed a complex defensive system – the *limes Dacicus* – designed to ensure territorial control and the security of the northern Danubian frontier.

These cities, located in close proximity to or within the strategic interior of the province, evolved from military settlements (*castra* and *canabae*) into urban centers with the status of *municipium* or *colonia*. They functioned as military command hubs, provincial administrative centers, and points of economic and cultural integration.

The case study of the cities Tibiscum and Apulum highlights this dual functionality. Tibiscum, located in a western frontier position, controlled access through the Timiș–Cerna corridors and served as a logistical and military hub. Apulum, on the other hand, became the most important urban center of Dacia, hosting the XIII Gemina Legion and concentrating provincial administration.

In comparison, the two cities illustrate the complementarity of the Roman urban system in Dacia: Tibiscum ensured peripheral control and military mobility, while Apulum coordinated the internal administrative and strategic structure of the province.

Thus, border cities were essential instruments of Roman imperial control, contributing both to military stability and to the process of Romanization and integration of Dacia into the structures of the empire.

**Nicolae Hurduzeu**

West University of Timișoara

### **Propaganda and the manipulation of Vlad the Impaler's image in Romanian history**

Vlad the Impaler, the ruler of Wallachia, is a fascinating case of how 15th-century propaganda can shape the perception of a leader for hundreds of years. His image was strategically constructed by his opponents, but also patriotically reinterpreted by Romanians, oscillating between a bloody tyrant and a defender of Christianity. The article analyzes how the historical figure of Vlad the Impaler was reinterpreted, distorted, and instrumentalized in propaganda

contexts, especially in periods of military conflict and political tension. The study starts from early visual representations created in the German space in the 15th century, where the image of the ruler was deliberately demonized through engravings, illustrated pamphlets, and visual narratives intended to mobilize the population, emphasizing cruelty and Eastern European exoticism. The analysis continues with the way in which Western art has perpetuated visual stereotypes associated with Țepeș, transforming him into a symbol of barbarity to serve the political goals of the era. In parallel, the article explores modern and contemporary reinterpretations of the image of Vlad Țepeș, from his use in the Romanian nationalist discourse of the 19th–20th centuries to the instrumentalization of the Dracula myth in popular visual culture. Thus, the work highlights the constant multiperspectivity of artistic representations: on the one hand, the image of a bloody tyrant propagated in the West; on the other hand, the figure of the righteous hero and defender of Christianity promoted in the East or vampire in the 19th century. The study demonstrates that, regardless of the historical context, art has been an essential tool in reshaping collective perceptions, and the image of Vlad Țepeș has remained a paradigmatic example of visual manipulation used in the service of propaganda.

**Oksana Tepla • Olesia Morenko**

National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine

### **Remembering the Fallen Defenders of the Russian-Ukrainian War: A Linguistic Perspective**

This study examines the linguistic image of fallen defenders in journalistic discourse, drawing on official statements, online publications, interviews, and social media. Through a conceptual and figurative analysis of illustrative material, the following components of the linguistic image of the fallen defenders of the Russian-Ukrainian war have been identified: a symbol of the nation, self-sacrifice, courage, and humanity; and a descendant of historical fighters—the Cossacks, UPA soldiers, and Maidan participants. It was found that the texts actively employ vocabulary with positive connotations (for example, courageous, devoted, unbreakable). These adjectives not only highlight the defender's personal qualities but also foster an emotional connection with the reader, leading them to view him as a hero. The analyzed sources contain metaphors to reinforce the image of the defender (for example, “became a shield for his city,” “his heart beat to the rhythm of freedom”). Such imagery lends the text poeticism and depth, allowing the reader to immerse themselves in the described events emotionally. Authors of these texts often include personal details from the defenders' lives, allowing the reader to see the hero not only as a warrior but also as an ordinary person with dreams and passions, which makes the loss even more palpable.

Journalistic discourse shapes the linguistic image of the fallen defender through a combination of heroization, emotional vocabulary, metaphor, and personification. Such linguistic devices help create a deep emotional connection between the reader and the hero, thereby strengthening national identity.

**Monica Dejan**

National Museum of Bucovina Suceava

### **War and commerce at the Polish-Moldavian border in the 15<sup>th</sup> century**

The foundation of Moldavian state, in the second half of 14<sup>th</sup> century, was closely linked with the Polish kingdom. Soon, the Polish-Moldavian border was established and became an important place where the two neighbours solved their problems, both military and civil. The first two documents linked with Polish-Moldavian relationship were the oaths of fealty made by Peter I, the prince of Moldavia, and his noblemen (boyars) in 1387. The oaths were made in Liov (the Moldavian name for the city of Lwów-Lviv) in front of the king Wladislaw and his wife, Iadwiga. It was a solemn moment made in a historical place. The city of Lwov played an important role in political and commercial relations between these two states. Because of the status of the city, Moldavian rulers have tried to develop a good relationship with local merchants during the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Series of commercial privileges were issued by the Moldavians and these documents were a valuable proof of the quantity and variety of the mercandise which came from the North. The commercial relationships were closely linked with the political ones, but there is no prove of the cessation of commercial exchanges even during the bad times. It is a classical saying that on the same road, the army, the merchants and the artists will come. In the same time, on the same road, from Suceava to Lwów and beyond, the noblemen have tried to escape from the prince's wrath with or without a guilt. For all these small or big events, there was a witness: a border between two states.

**Denys Toichkin**

Institute of History of Ukraine NASU

### **The Development of Saber Forms in Central and Eastern Europe from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the Early 18<sup>th</sup> century as a Reflection of Advances in Military Technology in the Context of Eastern Military-Cultural Influences**

The author analyzes the emergence and development of sabers in Central and Eastern Europe (Hungary and the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth), which took shape during the course of Ottoman expansion into Europe and under the influence of successive waves of “cultural orientalization” brought by the Ottomans, as well as the campaigns of the Crimean Tatars against the Ukrainian lands of the Commonwealth. Ottoman blades accumulated the weapons-making achievements of numerous subjugated peoples and neighboring regions. A high degree of division of labor, the large number of guilds closely associated with diverse ethnic communities, fostered the creation of an international imperial culture, whose material manifestations—particularly richly decorated weapons—readily penetrated European markets through centers of Ottoman influence in Europe controlled by the Porte.

### **Border changes affecting the Republic of Venice in Marino Sanudo's Diarii**

Marino Sanudo's *Diarii* provide an exceptionally detailed, near-contemporary account of the political, diplomatic, and military developments that shaped the Republic of Venice during the late 15th and early 16th centuries. Among the most significant themes documented in these chronicles are the territorial changes that affected Venice, particularly in the context of the Italian Wars and conflicts with major powers such as the Ottoman Empire, the Papacy, and the Holy Roman Empire.

Sanudo meticulously records how Venice's borders were in constant flux, reflecting both its ambitions and vulnerabilities as a maritime and territorial power. The expansion into mainland Italy (*Terraferma*) is portrayed as a strategic necessity, aimed at securing trade routes and providing a buffer against rival states. However, these gains were frequently contested, especially during the War of the League of Cambrai (1508–1516), when a coalition of European powers sought to curb Venetian influence. Sanudo's entries reveal the dramatic losses Venice suffered during the early stages of the war, followed by a gradual recovery through diplomacy and military resilience.

Equally important are the eastern frontiers, where Venice faced ongoing pressure from the Ottoman Empire. Sanudo documents the loss of key overseas territories, including ports and islands crucial to Venetian commerce. These territorial contractions underscore the limits of Venetian naval supremacy in the face of a rising Ottoman power.

Throughout the *Diari*, border changes are not merely geographic adjustments but indicators of broader political dynamics. Sanudo highlights the role of treaties, alliances, and shifting loyalties in redefining Venice's position in Europe and the Mediterranean. His work thus offers invaluable insight into how territorial change was experienced, negotiated, and recorded by contemporaries, illustrating the fragile balance between expansion and survival that defined the Republic of Venice during this turbulent period.

### **Pablo de la Fuente de Pablo**

### **Defending France's border. The Marquis de la Mina and the fortress of San Fernando de Figueras: strategic analysis and operational planning**

The aim of this paper is to analyse the role of Jaime Miguel de Guzmán-Dávalos y Spínola, 2nd Marquis of La Mina, the best Spanish general of the 18th century, in the strategic planning process that culminated in the construction of the fortress of San Fernando de Figueras in 1753, which was intended to close the main route of penetration of the border with France through the Pyrenees.

There are three essential aspects on which the Marquis of La Mina based his strategic analysis:

1. Mina's previous experience in the Spanish army's Italian campaigns during the previous two decades: the War of the Polish Succession (1733-1738) and, especially, the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748). Above all, operations in a mountainous setting provided a valuable lesson.
2. The precedents studied by the Marquis of La Mina on similar fortification projects in the second half of the 17th century. This aspect is important, as the Marquis of La Mina ultimately opted for a location that had already been proposed in the previous century. However, he significantly reinterpreted the strategic concept.
3. The role of the Marquis of La Mina's closest collaborators, especially the engineers Juan Martín Zermeño and Pedro de Lucuze.

## **Panel 35**

**Michał Kumorek**

John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin

### **Wojna jako doświadczenie graniczne**

#### **War as a boundary experience**

The philosophical category of boundary experience, proposed by Karl Jaspers, encompasses numerous situations inevitably inscribed into human life. Moments of death, suffering, struggle, and guilt constitute the boundaries of human existence, confronting the individual with the truth about themselves. In this presentation, I aim to demonstrate that death, suffering, struggle, and guilt—understood by Jaspers as emblematic boundary experiences—can be related to the experience of war. Not only do they accompany it, but in the context of armed conflict, they represent the culmination of boundary experience, confronting the individual with solitude and appearing as a form of defeat.

Particular attention will be devoted to the boundary experience of struggle as the experience closest to war, and to its aporetic structure in Jaspers' thought. On the one hand, struggle constitutes a form of necessity linked to other boundary experiences. We struggle against what threatens our life; we struggle to free ourselves from guilt and suffering. On the other hand, through Jaspers' deconstruction of the concept and the shift of emphasis from a "struggle against" to a "struggle for", it opens the possibility for the constitution of more peaceful relations. The struggle against death becomes a struggle for life; the struggle against guilt becomes a struggle for forgiveness. Building on Jaspers' conception, the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur, referring to examples of long-standing conflicts, proposes the use of the category of "struggle for" both in the politics of memory and in shaping citizens' collective consciousness.

In the presentation, I will attempt to show how such an understanding of struggle can serve as a factor limiting various forms of negativity, understood in terms of violence, manipulation, propaganda, discrimination, or indifference. I will argue that this form of struggle is connected

with an appreciation of a positive form of anger (*thumos*). It enriches struggle with the virtue of courage and frees it from entanglement in the cycle of revenge.

### **Olga Morozowa**

University of Warsaw/ Bohdan Khmelnytsky National University of Cherkasy

### **Między historią a współczesnością: doświadczenie traumy dzieci wojny**

#### **Between history and the present: the experience of trauma among war children**

The distinguished Polish educator Janusz Korczak stated that “when a child laughs, the whole world laughs.” But what happens when children cry? We often repeat that history is the teacher of life. We evoke images of children from cities destroyed by bombardments, recall the dramas of the youngest victims of the Second World War, and declare: “Never again.” Yet the question remains whether, as a society, we have truly drawn lessons from the experiences of the past. Is the trauma of war children a warning for us, or merely a moving but distant memory?

This presentation addresses the tragic fate of Polish war children during the Second World War, as well as the tragedy of Ukrainian children as victims of Russia’s contemporary aggression against Ukraine.

### **Tetiana Mosijchuk**

Private Gymnasium „Kryla” in Ivano-Frankivsk

### **„Wojny wygrywają nauczyciele...”: kwestia pedagogów Ukraińców w Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej**

#### **“Wars are won by teachers...”: the issue of Ukrainian educators in the Second Polish Republic**

Teachers have always borne responsibility not only for the level of knowledge of the younger generation, but also for shaping the social consciousness of citizens. In the interwar period, both the authorities of the Second Polish Republic and teachers themselves were aware of the importance of education in the context of a newly regained independence.

Ukrainians constituted the largest national minority in the Second Polish Republic. State authorities expected the educational system to be capable of raising citizens from among national minorities who would be loyal to the Polish state. Ukrainians, on the other hand, sought to ensure that schools, in addition to providing children with education, would also shape national consciousness and culture.

Individuals employed in the education system of the Second Polish Republic were classified as state officials and referred to as “ambassadors of Polishness”. Their role was to raise children

in a spirit of loyalty to the state. Ukrainian educators, in contrast, largely adopted the opposite stance. Teachers were aware of their importance in awakening Ukrainian national consciousness. For this reason, despite fulfilling their professional duties, they also engaged in political and social activities.

Teachers' activities were regulated by a range of legal provisions. The most significant for Ukrainian educators was the Act of 1 July 1926 on the employment relations of teachers. Under Article 58c of this act, teachers could be transferred to another school "to an equivalent position in another locality, if required by the good of the school". Personnel policy in education involved transferring Ukrainian teachers to ethnically Polish localities and replacing their posts with Polish teachers.

### **Nataliia Kolb**

Instytut Ukrainoznawstwa im. I. Krypjakewycza NAN Ukrainy

### **Problematyka wojny sprawiedliwej i pokoju sprawiedliwego w ukraińskim dyskursie publicznym w kontekście wojny rosyjsko-ukraińskiej: poszukiwanie granic sprawiedliwości**

#### **The issue of just war and just peace in Ukrainian public discourse in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war: searching for the limits of justice**

The war launched by the Russian Federation against Ukraine in 2022 has brought issues of just war and just peace to the centre of Ukrainian public discourse. For society, understanding these concepts has become a means of finding moral support and guidance in confrontation with the aggressor, and simultaneously a way of justifying the legitimacy of its struggle on the international stage.

It is also worth noting that Russia's aggression against Ukraine has served as an impetus for European societies to reassess the boundaries of justice as a guiding principle in the struggle of nations for the right to existence and democratic development.

### **Ignacy Klajbor**

University of Gdańsk

### **Sztuka na granicy prawa: kiedy ekspresja staje się bezprawną propagandą wojenną?**

#### **Art on the boundary of law: when does expression become unlawful war propaganda?**

Throughout the history of armed conflicts, the boundaries of permissible artistic expression have been repeatedly redefined—from the centralised propaganda of the World Wars to contemporary decentralised information warfare. Currently, particular importance is attached

to the tension between creative freedom and wartime censorship as a mechanism for delineating the limits of public discourse. This issue is embedded in a broader reflection on the boundaries of law, sovereignty, and communication, demonstrating that the line between art and propaganda is not fixed but is dynamically constructed under conditions of conflict.

The aim of this presentation is to analyse the legal boundaries of creative activity in times of armed conflict and to identify the threshold at which artistic expression loses legal protection and becomes an instrument of prohibited war propaganda. The study applies a doctrinal legal method involving the analysis of norms of international humanitarian law (Geneva Conventions), international human rights law (Articles 19 and 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights), and the provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. This is complemented by case law analysis and case studies, allowing for an examination of the practical functioning of the boundaries between art and propaganda in various historical and technological contexts.

The study indicates that international law does not so much establish rigid boundaries for propaganda as it defines its normative framework through prohibitions of incitement to violence, hatred, and genocide. Consequently, art operates within a 'border zone', where its legal qualification depends on context, intent, and the effects of the message. This is particularly evident in hybrid operations, where the boundaries between artistic communication, information, and manipulation become blurred.

The findings suggest that contemporary boundaries of creative freedom are fluid and relational, and that existing legal regulations fail to keep pace with their transformation within the digital communication space. Wartime censorship functions as a mechanism for defining the limits of expression, simultaneously protecting and restricting creative freedom. In light of this analysis, these boundaries require redefinition in order to maintain a balance between the protection of individuals and the prevention of the instrumentalisation of art in the service of war propaganda.

**Jacek Izydorczyk**

University of Lodz

## **Podstęp wojenny i jego granice w prawie międzynarodowym**

### **Wartime ruses and their limits in international law**

Wartime ruses (so-called *stratagems of war*) have been ethically accepted for centuries. International law in the nineteenth to twenty-first centuries likewise recognises their permissibility, while at the same time establishing boundaries—beyond which their use constitutes a violation of the law and thus amounts to an internationally wrongful act, i.e. a war crime.

**Julian Maciejewski**

University of Warsaw

## **Sąd wyjątkowy – na pograniczu wymiaru sprawiedliwości**

### **Exceptional court — at the frontier of the administration of justice**

Article 175(2) of the Polish Constitution limits the establishment of exceptional courts and summary procedures to times of war. However, the concept of an exceptional court is not defined in the Constitution. A linguistic analysis allows the conclusion that it belongs to the constitutional and institutional sphere rather than the procedural one, since the constitutional legislator distinguished between an exceptional court and summary proceedings. Historical interpretation does not provide clear guidance. The March and April Constitutions referred to exceptional courts, but at that time the term was understood as referring to summary courts, i.e. courts operating in expedited proceedings.

In the German constitutional tradition, which served as a model for Polish constitutionalism, the *Ausnahmegesicht* denotes an ad hoc court; however, Polish legal doctrine explicitly opposes the creation of such courts, even in wartime. Constitutional limitations on the admissibility of establishing exceptional courts have so far been specified in the literature with reference to the Disciplinary Chamber of the Supreme Court and the so-called “Frank loans chamber” of the Regional Court in Warsaw. Such interpretations, however, detach the notion of an exceptional court from its explicitly wartime context.

The paper advances the thesis that the concept of an exceptional court remains without a clear and convincing definition, although a model of it can be distinguished, namely the field court. Such a court serves primarily to ensure military discipline and order in the zone of direct hostilities, rather than to administer justice in the classical sense. Organisationally, it is embedded within the structure of the armed forces temporarily exercising authority over a given territory. It replaces ordinary courts, which have ceased to operate in that area, thereby constituting one of the forms of transferring public authority within the zone of active warfare to military organs.

It thus stands at a boundary position, ensuring a minimum standard of law and order in the chaos and lawlessness of war, while simultaneously forming a point of contact between criminal justice and military administration. The constitutional restriction limiting the establishment of exceptional courts to wartime serves, on the one hand, to guarantee the stability of the judiciary in peacetime, and on the other, to allow the continued existence of courts in circumstances where ordinary justice cannot function, as well as to ensure the flexibility of their structures in a rapidly changing environment.

**Monika Tomkiewicz**

Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw

## **Powojenne postępowania karne wobec sprawców zbrodni wojennych na Pomorzu Gdańskim**

### **Post-war criminal proceedings against perpetrators of war crimes in Gdańsk Pomerania**

From the beginning of 1940, issues related to the future punishment of those responsible for crimes committed during the ongoing war began to be raised on the international forum. Under the legal provisions in force at the time, the principle of territoriality applied, the main assumption of which was that war criminals apprehended on the territory of a given state should be extradited to the country in which they had committed their offences and tried there.

The main perpetrators—both those in leadership positions and those directly responsible for execution—of war crimes and crimes against humanity were tried under different legal systems. These ranged from international law and proceedings conducted before the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg, through the Polish judiciary (the Supreme National Tribunal in Gdańsk, Special Criminal Courts, and ordinary courts), to trials before national courts in the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany.

Despite the fact that criminal proceedings against perpetrators of crimes from the period of the Second World War were conducted by various institutions in Poland and around the world for many years after its end, they did not lead to a comprehensive reckoning with these crimes.

### **Panel 36**

**Nitza Davidovitch • Aleksandra Gerkerova**

Ariel University

### **Painting History in Real Time: Murals as Reflections of Wartime Context**

The relationship between art and war has long been examined through questions of representation, memory, and political expression. In recent years, however, the presence of murals and street art during ongoing conflicts has drawn attention to how war is registered in public space while it is still unfolding. As Vjieran Pavlaković notes, “the muralization of war has increasingly been used for creating sites of memory for past conflicts or generating support for ongoing armed struggles.” This places murals within a shift from traditional monuments toward more immediate forms of visual engagement with conflict. Unlike monuments, which are produced with temporal distance and institutional mediation, murals appear rapidly, are embedded in everyday environments, and respond directly to unfolding events.

This study examines wartime murals created in support of Ukraine and Israel as visual representations of ongoing historical context. The central research question concerns how these

murals convey their message through visual means and how this message is made accessible to the viewer. The aim is to identify the visual strategies through which historical events are communicated in public space.

The study applies a qualitative visual analysis of fifteen murals selected from publicly available sources. Each mural is examined in terms of subject, symbolism, color, and composition, as well as the clarity and accessibility of its message. The analysis also considers the relationship between the mural and its physical context.

The presentation argues that wartime murals function as a form of real-time engagement with historical events, presenting structured visual interpretations rather than neutral records. Comparison across the corpus reveals both shared strategies and context-specific differences in how war is communicated visually.

**Elonora Hodaj**

University of Vlora „Ismail Qemali“

### **The Body as Border Zone: Gender, State Violence, and Maternal Trauma in Cynthia Ozick's „The Shawl“**

Borders in wartime are rarely only lines on a map. This paper argues that Cynthia Ozick's text “The Shawl” offers a uniquely literary anatomy of how state violence operates not only through territory and law, but through the intimate physical space of the gendered, maternal body; a literary staging of the body as a contested border zone, a site upon which Nazi sovereign power inscribes its most intimate violence. The female maternal body in “The Shawl” functions simultaneously as a political boundary, a site of gendered subjugation, and a space of traumatic experience that defies conventional narrative representation. The paper draws on four complementary critical frameworks: Trauma Theory, to understand why Ozick's prose speaks through silence and compression rather than direct narration; Memory and Postmemory Studies, to explore how the story transmits historical experience across the border between the living and the dead; Feminist and Gender Theory, to examine how the female body becomes a contested political site in conditions of war; and Deconstruction, to show how the shawl itself, at once life-giving and fatal, resists any single fixed meaning. The methodology combines close literary reading of Ozick's formally precise language with historical and political contextualisation of Jewish statelessness under occupation. The paper's contribution is to reposition “The Shawl”, a text already canonical in Holocaust literary studies, within the broader, interdisciplinary conversation about borders, bodies, and the gendered experience of armed conflict. In doing so, it proposes that literature offers something legal and historical analysis alone cannot: an intimate, embodied account of what it means when a state decides that certain bodies do not matter.

**Yuliia Kurylova**

Zaporizhzhia National University

### **At the Limits of Loss: War, Motherhood, and the Poetics of Extreme Experience in the Work of Svitlana Povaliayeva**

This paper explores Svitlana Povaliayeva's poetry through the lens of boundary experience, focusing on the intersection of war, motherhood, and irreparable loss. Situated within the broader context of contemporary Ukrainian war literature, Povaliayeva's writing emerges as a form of testimony that challenges language's limits in representing trauma. The analysis draws on trauma studies and memory theory to examine how personal loss—marked by the death of her sons in the ongoing war—reshapes poetic expression, transforming it into an act of witnessing that oscillates between silence and articulation.

The paper argues that Povaliayeva's poetics is structured around multiple forms of "limits": the boundary between life and death, the threshold of expressibility, and the fragile line between private grief and collective memory. Her texts resist conventional narrative coherence, instead employing fragmentation, repetition, and affective intensity as strategies for approaching what remains fundamentally inexpressible.

By situating maternal experience at the centre of war writing, the paper also addresses the gendered dimensions of trauma and memory, highlighting how Povaliayeva's work expands the ethical and aesthetic frameworks through which war is remembered and narrated. Ultimately, the study positions her poetry as a critical site where individual loss is transformed into a broader cultural and mnemonic practice.

**Madhurima Sen**

University of Oxford

### **At the Borders of Empathy: Imagining the 'Enemy' in Bangladesh War Literature**

The 1971 war between East and West Pakistan, which led to the formation of Bangladesh, was marked by cataclysmic violence. With the West Pakistani army's targeted killing of civilians and rampant use of sexual violence as a military tool, it is unsurprising to find persistent reminders of their atrocities in Bangladeshi war discourse. The construction of the figure of the 'enemy' soldier illuminates the psychological dynamics inherent in a nascent nation-state, while marking the moral and affective borders that separate 'us' from 'them'. Therefore, mainstream Bangladeshi war fiction is characterised by a clear delineation of Pakistani 'villainy' and Bengali 'victimhood'. Contrary to such representations where the 'enemy' is portrayed as a homogenous group without any individual features—without, in Levinasian terms, a "face"—this paper highlights counter-discourses in literature that serve as a recognition of the common humanity of the 'enemy'.

This paper asks: Do the borders between ‘us’ and ‘them’ blur in literature? Nationalist war fiction frequently operates within and cultivates a culture of selectively extended empathy—for unarmed civilians, survivors of sexual violence, and martyrs’ mothers—where the borders of compassion are carefully policed. But can an individual ‘enemy’ soldier find admission into the spectrum of public empathy? This paper presents two examples from Bangladeshi war fiction where young Pakistani soldiers’ pitiable deaths, depicted in harrowing detail as they cling tenaciously to life, momentarily collapse these borders by recognising their vulnerability. Drawing on Judith Butler’s concept of precarious lives and Emmanuel Levinas’ philosophy of face-to-face encounters to illuminate the complexities of literary portrayals, I argue that the realm of the literary is the realm of the humane, where the borders of empathy are stretched. In a macabre chronicling of vigilante violence, when readers encounter a Pakistani soldier mutilated by a bloodthirsty mob, can the text fully foreclose the ethical demand issued by the suffering face? This paper argues that, by confronting the ‘enemy’ as a precarious life, these texts compel the reader to revisit the borders between ‘us’ and ‘them’, as the encounter with the suffering face unsettles the limits of empathy through which nations define inclusion and exclusion.

**Seweryn Górecki**

Jagiellonian University

### **Distinguishing Pre-Emptive And Preventive War in the Catholic Doctrine of Just War**

The presentation aims to develop a deepened understanding of the criteria distinguishing the concepts of pre-emptive and preventive war in the Catholic tradition of philosophical reflection on just war. By the concept of pre-emptive war we designate a war that is started as a response to an immediate, grave, and certain danger of being attacked in an offensive war by another party, therefore arguing for a defensive character of a pre-emptive war. When fulfilling other necessary criteria, such a war may be considered a “just war” within the bounds of the current doctrine. However, a question arises when compared to a war that is waged in response to a danger whose immediacy and gravity is disputed, which we understand as a preventive war. Loosening the criteria of distinction may lead to a broader consideration of licitness of war.

This debate has lasting consequences especially in the modern times, where the polemics over understanding the grounds for just war may lead to an acceptance of a wider variety of military interventions abroad. The disputes between “catholic neoconservatives”, notorious for arguing in favor of modern American interventionism in the Middle East, and the opposing view represented by episcopal and papal pronouncements, and their evolution towards excluding (almost?) all possibilities of waging a just war in the contemporary world, will be further analysed to provide a practical point of reference. An important point to be taken into account in this regard is the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and other innovations in warfare technology. Finally, an analogous debate in the field of secular ethics of war will be compared to the existing rift within the bounds of Catholic just war tradition.

**Natalia Serebriannikova**

Communication Technologies Centre „Argentum”

## **Borders between Empire and Nation: Choreopolitics of Ukrainian Ballet in the Context of War**

When Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, old questions about where empires end, and nations begin—especially in ballet—turned more distinct than ever. Ballet isn’t just about elegant motion. It’s always been a tool for soft power and cultural influence. Throughout the twentieth century and into the present, Russia has used ballet not just for art’s sake, but also to tell the world a story of Russian greatness. Programs like the “Russian Seasons” tour didn’t just showcase talented dancers—they spread Russian aesthetic standards and tried to sell them as “universal,” convincing audiences everywhere that Russian ballet set the rules.

So, dance becomes political. Sometimes you barely notice it, sometimes it’s loud and defiant. But the way ballet gets staged, especially now, is tangled with power, identity, and conflict.

This paper examines how Russian imperial ballet differs from what we might call Ukrainian national ballet, especially during wartime. The real split isn’t just about dance moves or costumes. It’s about politics—about who controls the space, which symbols matter, and how traditions are handled. Drawing on the idea of choreopolitics, the analysis treats ballet as a space where bodies are shaped, ideas circulate, and symbols take on meaning—all with the weight of power and resistance.

The study examines three levels of analysis. The first, the macro-level, concerns state strategies in which ballet is employed as an instrument of cultural diplomacy. The second, the meso-level, focuses on educational programmes, repertoire policies, and international competitions. The third, the micro-level, involves the analysis of pedagogy, linguistic practices in communication and teaching, as well as embodied techniques — how the dancer’s body is trained, shaped, and regulated, and how norms of professional communication are established.

The study demonstrates a significant distinction between the concepts of “Ukrainian ballet” and “ballet in Ukraine.” This distinction is articulated through three key dimensions: repertoire, education, and language.

**Alexandru Babusceac**

National Museum of Art Timișoara

## **Between Waters and Mountains: A Donation Illustrating the Cultural and Natural Landscape of the Danube Gorge Region**

The Danube Gorge (Clisura Dunării) is one of the most striking and myth-laden regions of Romania. With a millennia-old history, this borderland has long represented a point of contact where multiple empires and cultures have intersected—from the Dacians and Romans to the Ottomans and the Habsburgs. For centuries, the Fortress of Orșova functioned as a strategic

gateway between the Balkan world and Central Europe, shaping the political and cultural dynamics of the region.

Equally emblematic is the enigmatic island of Ada Kaleh, a fascinating Turkish enclave embedded within the mountainous Banat. Until its disappearance beneath the waters of the Danube following the construction of the Iron Gates hydroelectric dam, Ada Kaleh served as a vibrant tourist and cultural attraction. The dam, one of the most renowned infrastructural projects of the Ceaușescu regime, also led to the submergence of the old town of Orșova, profoundly transforming the historical landscape.

Culturally, the region has been marked by exceptional diversity since antiquity. The Latinized population preserved a strong and enduring presence, later joined by Hungarian, Serbian, and Turkish communities, whose coexistence shaped a distinctive multicultural identity. This complex heritage is reflected in a remarkable series of engravings and military and geographical maps produced between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. Acquired by the museum in 2024, these works offer a valuable visual and documentary exploration of the Danube Gorge, capturing its strategic significance, cultural plurality, and evolving territorial imagination.

### **Kostiantyn Tkachuk**

NGO „Culture for the Future”

### **Humanitarianism and State Borders: Ukraine after WWI (insights from the JDC Archives)**

This study is devoted to humanitarian missions in Europe after WWI, taking into account those restrictions on access to the needy that arose as a result of political factors. The Bolsheviks limited the possibilities of American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee to provide relief supplies to Russian and Ukrainian Jews.

The workers of the JDC overseas Unit №1 Poland were only able to secure the signing of agreements with the Bolshevik government in July of 1920. Before that, the Jews, in particular in Ukraine occupied by the Bolsheviks remained helpless in the face of the humanitarian catastrophes (famine, typhus epidemics) and consequences of pogroms.

The relief supplies distribution on the local level all around the Ukrainian People's Republic, which was in a state of war, was possible thanks to the loyalty of the Polish government, which allowed the JDC staff to enter Ukraine from the Polish side.

Based on the JDC Archives, the author identified the “borders of opportunity” and conditions for the distribution of relief supplies. The first focus of the research is a trip to deliver relief supplies of the JDC workers the Captain Elkan Voorsanger and Dr. Charles Spivak in Kyiv in spring of 1920. The second focus is the activities of JDC in Galicia, Podillia (Bernard Cantor, a rabbi of the Free Synagogue in Flushing and JDC volunteer assigned to Eastern Galicia in 1920). The third focus is an attempt to establish communication with various authorities to curb the scale of the pogroms (Israel Friedlander – a world famous scholar, member of the JDC Board, and head of the JDC Committee on Russia (including Ukraine)).

Friedlander and Cantor were the first JDC representatives murdered in the performance of official duties under still unclear circumstances on July 5th 1920 In Ukraine. Their murder was the first time when JDC representatives as well as representatives of an international humanitarian mission were murdered in Europe in the 20th century.

### **Panel 37**

**Lilia Pytilovana**

Ukrainian Catholic University

#### **Тема кордонів у політичній карикатурі періоду російсько-української війни (2014–2026)**

#### **The theme of borders in political caricature during the Russian-Ukrainian war (2014–2026)**

The theme of borders in political cartoons published during the Russian-Ukrainian war (since 2014 and especially following the full-scale invasion of 2022) is a central one, serving as a tool for informational and psychological influence as well as artistic reflection. It highlights Russia's aggressive encroachments on Ukraine's territorial integrity, attempts to redraw the map of Europe, and the Ukrainians' struggle to defend their borders. The main themes represented by artists in their cartoons concern aggression and the redrawing of internationally recognized borders, the issue of preserving Ukraine's territorial integrity; the international community's reaction to Russia's actions; the border as a line of conflict between opposing sides or between good and evil; "border defense" as an element of propaganda rhetoric and imperial discourse in Russia, and so on.

Of particular interest for this study is the image of the border as a metaphorical "wall" and its evolution between 2014 and 2026; the image of Ukraine as a human shield protecting Western civilization, and in this context, NATO's role in ensuring international security; the phenomenon of the "border post" as a central object in the depiction of aggression; the visualization of the "internal border" in the Russian Federation and Ukraine (mental, cultural, civilizational); the cartography of Russian aggression through the image of "shifting borders" and the personal role of Russian President Vladimir Putin in this.

Of particular interest is the study of the differences in the perspectives of Ukrainian and foreign political cartoons, the objects or threats on which they focus, as well as a comparison of the set of symbols, metaphors, allusions, and artistic techniques they employ.

**Yuliia Artymyshyn**

I. Krypiakevych Institute of Ukrainian Studies NAS of Ukraine

#### **„Ніколи знову”: депортації українських цивільних мешканців під час російсько-української збройної агресії 2014-2026**

## **“Never again”: Deportations of Ukrainian Civilians During the Russian-Ukrainian Armed Aggression of 2014–2026**

The practice of forced displacement and deportation of Ukrainian civilians has been carried out since 2014, in violation of the norms of international humanitarian law. Accordingly, the forced deportations of the Ukrainian civilian population carried out by the Russian Federation in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war (2014–2025) constitute a systemic and multi-layered process that effectively reflects the implementation of state policy by the Russian Federation.

An analysis of the provisions of international humanitarian law, in particular the Geneva Conventions on the protection of civilians in wartime, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and others, demonstrates that the forced displacement carried out by the Russian Federation can be classified as war crimes and crimes against humanity. Although the Russian Federation uses the term “evacuation” to describe its actions, the process in fact violates key norms and rules governing the movement of persons.

Since 2022, in the course of implementing the forced resettlements of Ukrainian civilians from temporarily occupied territories, the Russian Federation has institutionalized the practice of “filtration. The filtration procedures exhibit features of systematic human rights violations, thereby permitting these unlawful practices to be collectively qualified as constitutive elements of crimes against humanity.

The issue of the deportation of Ukrainian children draws particular attention and raises serious concern, as it is part of a deliberate policy of assimilation and indoctrination carried out by the Russian Federation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine. The illegal transfer and, in effect, deportation, the implementation of unlawful adoption practices, the resulting change of citizenship, and the involvement of Ukrainian children in ideological and militarized programs demonstrate a systematic policy by Russia aimed at eroding national identity.

The international community, through a number of international institutions and non-governmental organizations, supports Ukraine at various levels. As of 2024, four inter-state cases of Ukraine v. Russia are pending before the European Court of Human Rights, covering allegations ranging from human rights violations in occupied territories to specific incidents. The International Court of Justice has recognized Russia as a violator of international law, further reinforcing its responsibility under international law.

**Alla Petrenko-Lysak**

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

## **Зруйновані межі дому: домоцид, війна і трансформація близького простору**

### **Destroyed boundaries of home: domocide, war, and the transformation of intimate space**

This paper/report examines the transformation of home as a socio-cultural construct whose fundamental boundaries are profoundly disrupted by war. From a sociological and socio-

anthropological perspective, home is understood as a structured space organized through key oppositions: private/public, safe/threatening, and interior/exterior. Armed conflict destabilizes these distinctions, leading to their erosion or complete collapse.

The central analytical concept is domicide, defined as the destruction of inhabited spaces together with their social, symbolic, and everyday functions. This process exceeds the physical damage to buildings; it entails the disintegration of home as a site of rootedness, where stable social relations, routines, and a sense of belonging are formed. As a result, home loses its capacity to function as a secure and predictable environment.

Particular attention is paid to the phenomenon of return to destroyed or radically altered homes. Return does not imply restoration of pre-war normality; rather, it involves confronting a space in which foundational boundaries have been irreversibly violated. Damaged housing structures, demographic shifts, and ruptured social ties produce conditions in which home ceases to be an ""interior"" space and instead becomes open, unstable, and often unsafe.

An additional dimension of the analysis addresses artistic practices that represent the destroyed home. Visual art, photography, and documentary forms frequently depict exposed interiors, ruined walls, and personal belongings rendered visible, thereby illustrating a radical breach of privacy. In this sense, artistic representations not only document the consequences of war but also critically reveal the transformation of home into a publicly exposed space.

The paper/report argues that, in the context of war, home should be conceptualized as a fragile and dynamic construct whose boundaries are not only destroyed but also redefined through experiences of loss, return, and cultural representation.

**Ivan Posokhov**

V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University

## **Історичні реконструкції як інструмент осмислення війни і кордонів**

### **Historical re-enactments as a tool for understanding war and borders**

Historical re-enactments today are a complex phenomenon at the intersection of tourism, museum work, public history and memory politics. They can combine scientifically based reproduction of events, objects and practices with spectacular theatricalization aimed at a wide audience. In this context, it is important to distinguish between re-enactment, aimed at recreating specific historical events, and living history, which models the broader cultural space of the past. At the same time, in tourism practice, these formats are often mixed, which leads to the replacement of authenticity with stylization or even props.

However, historical re-enactments perform not only an entertaining, but also an educational and memorial function, forming an idea of the past for a much wider audience than traditional academic texts. This is especially noticeable in the reproduction of military history, where battles, the defense of cities, the functioning of fortresses and border areas are reconstructed. In this case, the border appears not as a geographical line, but as a space of conflict, control and transformation of identities.

At the same time, historical re-enactments can act as an instrument of memory politics, setting certain interpretations of the past and influencing the collective perception of war and historical heritage. This opens up opportunities for the popularization of historical knowledge, but at the same time creates risks of simplification, commercialization and manipulation, when the line between historical authenticity and spectacular interpretation becomes blurred. That is why such practices require interdisciplinary understanding and a responsible approach to their organization and use.

**Natalia Petrova**

Odesa I.I. Mechnikov National University

## **Графіті як візуальне джерело в усній історії війни: методи збору, аналізу та інтерпретації**

### **Graffiti as a visual source in the oral history of war: methods of collection, analysis, and interpretation**

Graffiti from the Russian-Ukrainian war serves as a form of visual testimony that captures collective emotions, narratives of resistance, and local experiences that often do not appear in traditional oral history sources. Integrating graffiti into oral history requires expanding the concept of “testimony”—from individual narrative to a visually encoded message functioning in public space. A key methodological challenge is the ephemeral nature of graffiti, which necessitates systematic photographic documentation, mapping, and the creation of digital archives.

The analysis of graffiti must be multi-layered and include visual, discursive, and contextual approaches, as well as integration with interviews as a means of reconstructing meanings.

The anonymity of authorship complicates interpretation, but at the same time allows graffiti to be viewed as a form of the community’s “collective voice” in wartime conditions.

Research on war graffiti presents ethical challenges, particularly regarding the safety of the artists, the representation of traumatic experiences, and the risk of political exploitation.

An interdisciplinary approach (oral history, visual studies, memory studies) opens up new possibilities for interpreting graffiti as a source of historical memory.

Graffiti from the Russian-Ukrainian war is not merely images or inscriptions. It is a way for the experience of war to be present in urban space. It is emotions that were not always spoken aloud but were left behind—publicly, openly, and sometimes riskily.

For the researcher, this is both an opportunity and a challenge. An opportunity—to see what is not articulated in interviews. And a challenge—because these testimonies are fragmentary, ephemeral, and require careful interpretation. That is precisely why working with graffiti requires not a single method, but a combination of approaches: documentation, analysis, contextualization, and—most importantly—dialogue with oral testimonies. The presentation will analyze and showcase graffiti and murals from the contemporary war since 2014.

**Oksana Pukhonska**

University of Warsaw/ The National University of Ostroh Academy

**Мова війни в есеїстиці Артема Чеха та Артема Чапая: деконструкція ідентичнісних меж**

**The language of war in the essays of Artem Chekh and Artem Chapai: deconstruction of identity boundaries**

The proposed research addresses a broad socio-cultural problem as reflected in contemporary Ukrainian literature. Particular attention is paid to the deconstruction of humanistic values and the boundaries of identity among individuals shaped by war. The works of the selected authors reveal the most profound consequences of war trauma in the contemporary world.

The study analyzes the crisis of language as emphasized by Ukrainian writers in the aftermath of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. This crisis pertains to the existential dimension of language, wherein its existing resources lose the capacity to adequately verbalize both individual and collective trauma experienced under conditions of affective shock.

Artem Chekh and Artem Chapai, writers with firsthand frontline experience, seek to examine this phenomenon in their diary-like essay collections. Through reflections on their personal emotions and wartime experiences, the authors demonstrate how a static crisis of language gradually transforms into a dynamic process of generating new linguistic resources capable of articulating the essential meanings of this war.

**Mykhajlo Krasikov**

Krasikov National Technical University „Kharkiv Polytechnic Institute”

**Обереги українських воїнів часів російсько-української війни: між традицією та сучасністю**

**Protective amulets of Ukrainian soldiers during the Russian–Ukrainian war: between tradition and modernity**

The report examines narratives of Ukrainian military personnel and their wives concerning soldiers' protective amulets, recorded by the author and his students between 2022 and 2026. It delineates the boundary between established traditional beliefs—such as carrying a piece of paper bearing a religious text, a cross, or other consecrated objects, as well as observing taboos on certain actions (for instance, refraining from shaving or otherwise altering one's appearance prior to a combat mission)—and newly emergent beliefs and omens that arise spontaneously within individual combat units.

**Olha Rudenko**

Lviv Historical Museum

## **Василь Сліпак. Портрет воїна і співака**

### **Vasyl Slipak: A Portrait of a Warrior and a Singer**

Vasyl Slipak (20 December 1974 – 29 June 2016) was a native of Lviv, a graduate of the “Dudaryk” Choral Chapel, a soloist of the Paris National Opera, a participant in the Revolution of Dignity, a volunteer, a member of the Volunteer Ukrainian Corps “Right Sector”, a Hero of Ukraine (posthumously), and a recipient of the Order of the Golden Star.

The exceptional talent and charismatic personality of Vasyl Slipak have attracted, and will continue to attract, considerable interest among a broad audience of admirers of vocal and musical art. This exhibition project has been created with the aim of exploring and comprehensively studying the singer’s remarkable talent, creative practice, and life journey.

A significant part of Vasyl Slipak’s legacy, owing to the efforts of his brother Orest, is preserved in the collections of the Lviv Historical Museum. The total number of artefacts amounts to several hundred items. This is the largest collection of memorial objects documenting the life of a single individual, from birth to the final moments of life and the subsequent commemoration of his memory.

The collection includes theatrical costumes and accessories, the singer’s personal belongings, items of military equipment, as well as musical scores, theatre programmes, posters, awards, business and private correspondence, personal documents, photographs, and related materials.

From childhood, Vasyl was passionate about music, although he was raised in a family whose parents were employed in technical professions. He gained his first professional experience by singing in the Lviv children’s choir “Dudaryk”.

In 1997, Vasyl Slipak became a soloist of the Paris National Opera. He possessed a wide vocal range and was able to perform both as a countertenor and as a baritone. He achieved considerable success in his profession: Vasyl undertook several successful solo tours across Europe and received the award for Best Performer at the Armel Opera Competition and at the festival in Szeged (Hungary) for his performance of the “Toreador Song” from the opera *Carmen*.

With the beginning of the Revolution of Dignity in 2013, Vasyl led a volunteer movement in France, organised various initiatives in support of Maidan activists and their children, and also raised funds and sent humanitarian aid.

In 2014, Vasyl returned to Ukraine and took part in the Anti-Terrorist Operation in eastern Ukraine. He fought in dangerous combat zones, including Pisky, Donetsk Airport, and Avdiivka. His military call sign was “Myth”, a reference to his favourite aria of Mephistopheles from the opera *Faust*.