Marcin Bukała – Dariusz Iwaneczko – Krzysztof Kaczmarski – Mariusz Krzysztofiński (edd.), Historyk i świadek historii. Księga dedykowana Profesorowi Janowi Drausowi [Historian and Witness to History. A Book Dedicated to Professor Jan Draus]
Instytut Pamięci Narodowej. Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni Przeciwko Narodowemu Polskiemu Oddział w Rzeszowie, Rzeszów – Warszawa 2022, 736 pp.,
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Commemorative books are a unique form of historical writing. Although increasingly rare in Western historiography, they thrive in Polish literature. Their purpose is to honor an eminent scholar whose life, stance, and achievements a group of friends and students would like to highlight through a special publication. Unfortunately, it often happens that this lofty and noble goal is abused by some individuals who literally dust off their unpublished texts, which have been collecting "dust" for years, or who quickly cobble together such works, subconsciously convinced that they wouldn't be published in reputable scholarly journals because they wouldn't pass the reviewer's scrutiny. Fortunately, in the tribute most of the authors, representing various academic centers, ages, and research experience, approached the task honestly, demonstrating who Jan Draus is to them. This approach made the reviewer's task easier, even if, by virtue of his role, he occasionally requested attention to certain shortcomings.

Jan Draus (born 1952 in Kolbuszowa near Rzeszów) is one of the most recognizable historians and politicians of the older generation in Poland. He specializes in the history of science and education in the 20th century and the history of the communist opposition in Poland. In 1981, he earned a doctorate from the Jagiellonian University and a postdoctoral degree (habilitation) from the Institute of the History of Science, Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, in 1994. In 2000, he was awarded the title of professor of humanities. For many years, he was an academic teacher at the Wyższa Szkoła Pedagogiczna [the National Higher Teacher Training College], and in 2001 at the newly established University of Rzeszów. He also lectured at the Catholic University of Lublin. From 2001, he was the President of the Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Zawodowa [the State Higher Vocational College] in Przemyśl, which in 2006 became the Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Wschodnioeuropejska [the State Higher East European College]. From 1991 to 1993 he was a senator of the second term in the Polish Parliament. From 1999 to 2011 and since 2016 he was a member of the Council of the Institute of National Remembrance. A well-known opposition activist in the 1980s, he received numerous awards for his stance. His published works include *Oświata na Rzeszowszczyźnie w latach 1939–1945* [Education in the Rzeszów Region 1939–1945] (co-author: Ryszard Terlecki), Wrocław – Gdańsk 1984, *Polskie szkoły wyższe i instytucje naukowe na emigracji 1939–1945* [Polish Universities and Scientific Institutions in Emigration 1939–1945] (co-author: Ryszard Terlecki), Wrocław – Kraków 1984, *Oświata i nauka polska na Bliskim i Środkowym Wschodzie 1939–1950* [Polish Education and Science in the Near and Middle East, 1939–1950], Lublin 1993, *Uniwersytet Jana Kazimierza we Lwowie 1918–1946. Portret kresowej uczelni* [John Casimir University in Lviv 1918–1946. Portrait of a Borderland University], Kraków 2007, *Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Wschodnioeuropejska 2001–2011* [State Higher East European College 2001–2011] (co-author: Zdzisław Budzyński), Przemyśl

2011, *Fundacje naukowo-wychowawcze Adama Kozłowieckiego* [Adam Kozłowiecki's Scientific and Educational Foundations] (co-author: Ludwik Grzebień), Majdan Królewski 2014, *Before the Berlin Wall Fell. Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland Toward the Refugees from East Germany in 1989* (co-author: Maciej Szymanowski), Warsaw 2019. Of course, it is difficult to cite every example of Jan Draus's scholarly activity, but these alone demonstrate why this scholar was honored with a commemorative book on the occasion of his 70th birthday. Yet the impetus for highlighting his achievements came not only from his scientific achievements, but also from his anti-communist activism.

The table of contents of the reviewed extensive book consists of several sections: an introductory section (*Foreword* by Karol Nawrocki, *Tabula Gratulatoria*, a list of the book's authors,[1] and a profile and bibliography of Jan Draus), *Memoirs*, *In the Circle of Galicia*, *From the History of the Catholic Church in the 20th and 21st Centuries*, *Adaptation and Resistance: The Experience of Totalitarianism*, *Around the History of Recent Centuries*, *Varia*, *Abbreviations*, *Index of Persons*, and *Illustrations*. The structure raises no objections – the texts were grouped according to their subject matter. It is therefore hardly surprising that some sections are more extensive than others. This is entirely natural for publications of this type.

The volume is opened with a one-page foreword by the then President of the Institute of National Remembrance, Karol Nawrocki – very weak in terms of content, superficial, and apparently not even undergoing a basic stylistic revision. However, Dariusz Iwaneczko's study, *Historyk i świadek historii. Szkic do portretu prof. Jana Drausa* [Historian and Witness to History, Sketch for a Portrait of Professor Jan Draus] (pp. 15–35) and a bibliographic list of the scholar's scientific works by Marcin Bukała (pp. 35–52) are a perfect introduction to understand the role of Draus in Polish science and politics.

It would seem that *the Memories* section would yield interesting texts about the celebrant by friends and colleagues. However, despite their undeniable emotional significance, the recollections of Ryszard Terlecki, Marek Kuchciński, Jerzy F. Adamski, Father Jan Pępek, and Wanda Tarnawska are brief and rather cursory. Of course, it's difficult to assess the value of someone's reminiscences, as well as what and how they remember. Nevertheless, there are traces of memory that contribute something valuable to the subject matter, while others fall far short. Despite the immense sympathy and respect for Jan Draus's achievements, which the authors convey in their texts, and the rather cursory recollections, they contribute little to the biographical account of the celebrant.

The section *In the Circle of Galicia* consists of three articles: Marek Kornat's *O wkładzie Galicji do kultury politycznej II Rzeczypospolitej raz jeszcze spostrzeżenia i refleksje* [On Galicia's Contribution to the Political Culture of the Second Polish Republic: Once Again Observations and Reflections] (pp. 79–91); Jarosław Moklak's *Szkolnictwo ukraińskie w działalności politycznej Jewhena Ołesnyćkiego. Wybrane aspekty* [Ukrainian Education in the Political Activity of Yevhen Olesnytskyi. Selected Aspects] (pp. 93–104) and Jan Pisuliński's *Wielka Brytania wobec kwestii galicyjskiej w latach 1921–1923* [Great Britain and the Galician Question in the Years 1921–1923] (pp. 105–120). All three articles deserve very high praise. Marek Kornat expands on Henryk Wereszycki's theses on Galicia's contribution to the development of parliamentary culture in interwar Poland, especially until

[1] This list, titled Authors of the Book, was placed in a very unusual place for this type of publication.

1926. He clearly emphasized that it was from the Austrian partition that the two most powerful parties in the democratic camp emerged: the socialists (PPS) and the centrist Peasants' Party, led by Wincenty Witos. As he noted, "From the Austrian partition, [Poland] drew on the culture of parliamentarism, political compromise, the practice of respecting the law, and educating society for representative government"[2] (p. 90). Jarosław Moklak discussed the parliamentary activities of journalist and social activist Yevhen Olesnytskyi in the National Diet [Sejm] in Lviv between 1900 and 1910, in terms of fighting for equal rights in the organization of Ukrainian education. Jan Pisuliński, in turn, developed several themes concerning Great Britain's policy towards Ukrainians between 1921 and 1923. He based his conclusions largely on the holdings of the National Archives in London.

The second part of the publication, *From the History of the Catholic Church in the 20th and 21st Centuries*, opens with an article by Antoni Kura, *Biskup tarnowski Leon Wałęga* [Leon Wałęga, Bishop of Tarnów] (pp. 121–140). The author largely undertook to address the legend of Wałęga as a "hammer against the Peasant Party", and emerged primarily as an apology. Without detracting from Wałęga's contributions to the Tarnów diocese, the author could have drawn on a wide selection of correspondence from Galician bishops, published over the years by Rev. Prof. Józef Wołczański.[3] The reading indicates that the ordinaries of other dioceses spoke rather negatively of their colleague, confirming that opinions about him by no means stemmed solely from political opponents. Rev. Józef Marecki highlighted the lack of awareness of Primate Stefan Wyszyński regarding the role played by Rev. Stanisław Skorodecki and Sister Maria Leona Graczyk during his imprisonment by the authorities of the People's Republic of Poland. Rev. Henryk Borcz discussed the early establishment of new parishes in the Przemyśl diocese by Bishop Ignacy Tokarczuk. This bishop was notorious for the numerous churches and chapels he built without the consent of the then-communist authorities and for establishing "illegal" parishes. Piotr Franaszek described the collaboration of Father Andrzej Klem of the Archdiocese of Kraków with the Security Service, and Zbigniew K. Wójcik described the Second Catholic Week in Rzeszów in 1986. The latter article lacks objectives, and the conclusion fails to summarize anything. Mariusz Krzysztofiński's article, *Duszpasterstwo Kombatantów Polski Walczącej 1939–1945 w Rzeszowie (1987–1989)* [The Pastoral Care of Combatants of Fighting Poland 1939–1945 in Rzeszów (1987–1989)] (pp. 227–271), corresponds very well with these arguments.

Adaptation and Resistance. The Experience of Totalitarianism is the opening section of Tomasz Bereza's article, *Stepy akermańskie ... wiek później. Deportacja do Besarabii w świetle relacji świadków* [The Akkerman Steppes… a Century Later. Deportation to Bessarabia in the Light of Witness Accounts] (pp. 273–292). This not only presents the fate of Poles deported eastward by the Soviet authorities, but also the potential latent in the specific type of sources that are witness accounts. A good complement to this text is Tadeusz Zych's article, *Maria Potocka na wojennym tułaczym jugosłowiańskim szlaku* [Maria Potocka on the Yugoslav War Trail of Exile] (pp. 293–306). It perfectly illustrates the complex

[2] Originallu in Polish: "Z zaboru pod Austrią [Polska] sięgała do kultury parlamentaryzmu, politycznego kompromisu, praktyki poszanowania prawa i wychowania społeczeństwa do rządów przedstawicielskich."

[3] It is difficult to cite all the examples of articles in which J. Wołczański cites Wałęga's letters to the Galician bishops. He devoted a significant portion of his scholarly work to the correspondence of the Galician episcopate.

fate of Poles scattered around the world as a result of the German and Soviet aggression in September 1939. Jacek Chrobaczyński in his article, *Dwaj chłopy. Piętno wojny. Piętno Zagłady. Nigdy więcej?* [Two Boys. The Stigma of War. The Stigma of the Holocaust. Never Again?] (pp. 307–326) weaves a loose narrative about youth and World War II, starting from two, almost symbolic, iconographic sources: a photo of a child being chased away after the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and the Little Insurgent Monument in Warsaw. Leaving aside the daring title (a four-parter, which is unusual), this is more of a journalistic than substantive essay, with the author's subjective impressions, than a reliable historical study. Piotr Niwiński's article, *Graficy na barykadach* [Graphic Artists on the Barricades] (pp. 327–328), is also quite controversial. The author presents five graphic artists – Vilnius conspirators of World War II. It's difficult to discern from the text what united them, beyond their titular activities, because Niwiński fails to address any research questions and fails to provide a meaningful summary of his arguments. As a minor commentary on this text, it should be noted that during the years described by the author, there was no Faculty of Humanities at the Jagiellonian University, but a Faculty of Philosophy. Tomasz Balbus published an article entitled *Zasadzki "Burego"* [The Snare of "Bury"] (pp. 339–357). The article is incomplete. It is also surprising that the activities of one of the most controversial commanders of the Polish independence underground during World War II, Romuald Rajs "Bury", are presented without the slightest commentary. Yet, though Rajs is revered by Polish nationalist circles (primarily in Podlasie) as a national hero, he is rejected and condemned by the Belarusian minority in Poland, the Polish mainstream media, and state and local government authorities. Moreover, many Polish residents of those areas and some in the historical community reject Rajs's alleged achievements, which is no secret and should be clearly emphasized in the text. The titular ambushes are based largely on Rajs's own testimony, with some supplementation here and there. With such controversial figures, it would be appropriate to thoroughly discuss the source material and draw some conclusions, rather than give voice to the author's main character.

The struggles against the German and Soviet occupiers are also addressed in the studies by Grzegorz Ostasz, *Płk Kazimierz Putek "Zworny", komendant Podokręgu AK Rzeszów, w obliczu sowieckiego dyktatu (1944–1945)* [Colonel Kazimierz Putek "Zworny", commander of the Rzeszów Home Army Sub-District in the Face of Soviet Dictatorship (1944–1945)] (pp. 359–381), and Irena Kozimala, *Oddział partyzancki "Hiki-Piki" pod dowództwem Karola Urbana (1944–1945)* [The "Hiki-Piki" Guerrilla Unit Under Karol Urban's Command (1944–1945)] (pp. 383–422). These are detailed studies relating to the subject matter under investigation. Much more interesting, however, is the text by Filip Musiał, as it shows criminality among officers of the Security Office in the Kraków Voivodeship in 1945 in the light of the criminal cases brought against them. The scale of the phenomenon is surprising, considering, as the author wrote, that "prosecuting crimes committed by UB officers was not a priority for the communist repression apparatus or the so-called justice system, and the cases tried and dismissed concerned a negligible portion of the crimes committed by the officers" (p. 423).[4] The other articles in this section also

[4] Originally in Polish: "ściganie przestępstw dokonywanych przez funkcjonariuszy UB nie było priorytetem dla komunistycznego aparatu represji czy tzw. wymiaru sprawiedliwości, a sprawy osądzone i umorzone dotyczyły nikłej części popełnianych przez funkcjonariuszy przestępstw".

deserve high praise, such as Mirosław Golon's, *Na "powiatowej" drodze do stalinowskiej "Polski Ludowej". Polska Partia Robotnicza w powiecie nidzickim w latach 1945–1948* [On the 'County' Road to Stalinist 'People's Poland'. The Polish Workers' Party in Nidzica County in 1945–1948] (pp. 455–496), Grzegorz Motyka's, *Udział 7. Dywizji Piechoty w akcji "Wisła"* [The Participation of the 7th Infantry Division in Operation 'Vistula'] (pp. 497–511), and Tadeusz Wolsza's, *Marzenia o wielkim turnieju szachowym. Przygotowania do "Turnieju Słowiańskiego" w 1947 r. oraz memoriału Dawida Przepiórki w 1950 r.* [Dreams of a Great Chess Tournament. Preparations for the "Slavic Tournament" in 1947 and Dawid Przepiórka's memorial in 1950] (pp. 513–533), and Wojciech Polak and Sylwia Galij-Skarbińska's, *Dowcipy dotyczące Związku Sowieckiego opowiadane w okresie stanu wojennego i w latach następnych (1981–1989)* [Jokes about the Soviet Union told during martial law and in the following years (1981–1989)] (pp. 535–547). Written on a solid source basis, they pose interesting research questions, and provide a good complement to the topics addressed – either already present in historiography or entirely new ones.

The section on the history of recent centuries, as its name suggests, encompasses a rather broad range of studies that have been difficult to gather in the previous sections of the book. It begins with Andrzej Nowak's thought-provoking study, *Konsekwencje powstania styczniowego. Nowe spojrzenia* [The Consequences of the January Uprising. New Views] (pp. 549–565). The extent to which the text reflects the new perspectives mentioned in the title is debatable, but it is certainly a neat summary of the changes that occurred in Tsarist Russia and towards Poles after the uprising of 1863–1864. It is also difficult to identify new elements in Krzysztof Kaczmarski's article, *Roman Dmowski i Komitet Narodowy Polski a Armia Polska we Francji (1917–1919)* [Roman Dmowski and the Polish National Committee and the Polish Army in France (1917–1919)] (pp. 567–581), but this is also an example of a successful synthesis of the subject. Tomasz Gąsowski in his text, *Polska – Rosja 1919–1920. W poszukiwaniu alternatywnego scenariusza* [Poland – Russia 1919–1920. In Search of an Alternative Scenario] (pp. 583–597) is, largely, as the title suggests, an attempt to look at Polish-Russian relations from a "what if" perspective. I am not a fan of historical speculation, although this particular attempt requires intellectual effort. Tadeusz Dubicki published a comprehensive account by Major Dr. Andrzej Świtkowski from February 1943 concerning the activities of the "West" Department of the Intelligence Department of the Second Division of the General Staff of the Polish Army. Robert Witalec, in turn, presented the idea of Poland in the Labor Party's concepts during World War II. Jan Żaryn, in a short text (pp. 641–645) concisely titled *Polscy ratownicy* [Polish Rescuers], attempted to contrast Poles who saved Jews during World War II with the attitude of Poles towards Ukrainians in 2022. In my opinion, this text does not meet any scholarly criteria, it is the author's loose reflections, which should never have been included in such a publication. The list itself is utterly breakneck and meaningless. Maciej Szymanowski's article, *Polityka węgierskiego rządu i wydarzenia na Węgrzech w latach 2010–2022* [The Politics of the Hungarian Government and Events in Hungary in 2010–2022] (pp. 647–660), can also be considered as a tentative example – this text oscillates between political journalism and a political science article.

The last section, *Varia*, also raises my doubts. It includes only two texts. Andrzej Chwalba published an essay, *Wisła. "Wielka Rzeka"* [The Vistula. "The Great Water"] (pp. 663–671), which not only fails to meet the criteria for scholarly texts but also became

a cursory abridgement of his book *Wisła. Biografia rzeki* [The Vistula. Biography of a River] (Kraków 2023). Kazimierz Wolny-Zmorzyński's text, *Śladami Adama Mickiewicza po Litwie i Białorusi. Szkic o reportażach Barbary Wachowicz* [In the Footsteps of Adam Mickiewicz in Lithuania and Belarus. A Sketch on Barbara Wachowicz's Reportages] (pp. 673–678), also raises my doubts. But the author at least clearly states that it is an essay with elements of a review of the author's work, not an attempt at a comprehensive look at the issue, and thus defends himself in his arguments.

Commemorative books rank very low in the Polish system of evaluating scientific achievements. Yet, they remain one of the most important forms of recognizing the contribution of individual scholars to the development of science – a kind of memento of the extent to which each individual contributed to the development of the discipline. Naturally, many distinguished researchers never received such books (regardless of their title[5]), while others received awards disproportionate to their achievements. However, there is still a group of scholars who strive to duly honor the achievements of their mentors and predecessors. As a co-editor of three such volumes[6] and a reviewer of several others, I see all the tendencies characteristic of this type of publication in the book under review. Many authors tried to approach the invitation honestly, to honor the person and scientific achievements of Jan Draus – but there were also those who underestimated the task. Whether the volume's reviewers (Janusz Wrona and Piotr Kardela), and above all the editors, had any further say in the final form of the publication is another matter. The prevailing view among scholars is that commemorative books should be, above all, comprehensive, often at the expense of the quality of the studies they contain.

Finally, I would like to emphasize that the book honoring Jan Draus has been produced in excellent condition, which is a testament to the publishing house of the Institute of National Remembrance. Furthermore, the individual sections clearly reflect the celebrant's main research interests, and many authors directly referenced his work, writing about being inspired by his writings. This is not only a kind gesture toward the scholar but also demonstrates the research potential of the topics he addresses. Therefore, I have no doubt that the reader has received a valuable publication, especially in the field of the history of southeastern Poland, which is largely distinguished by the high quality of most of the texts and, at the same time, is an attempt to gather together Jan Draus's scholarly achievements.

Tomasz Pudłocki
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[5] In the Polish system, the term "commemorative book" is often omitted, and instead referred to as donated, consecrated, or dedicated studies. In this way, authors attempt to classify such collective monographs as a different type of publication, so that they receive higher ratings in the parameterization assessment.

[6] Tomasz Pudłocki – Krzysztof Stopka (edd.), *Amico, socio et viro docto. Księga ku czci profesora Andrzeja Kazimierza Banacha*, Kraków 2015; Łukasz Chrobak – Tomasz Pudłocki (edd.), *Magno nomine ac excellens lumen. Studia poświęcone profesorowi Andrzejowi Chwalbie,* Rocznik Przemyski Historia 58/4 (28), 2022; Tomasz Pudłocki (ed.), *Fideliter et constanter. Studia dedykowane ks. prof. dr. hab. Józefowi Wołczańskiemu z okazji 65. rocznicy urodzin*, Kraków – Przemyśl 2025.