REVIEWS

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Matthieu Chochoy, *De Tamerlan à Gengis Khan. Construction et déconstruction de l'idée d'empire tartare en France du XVI^e siècle à la fin du XVIII^e siècle*, Leiden–Boston, 2022, Brill, 328 pp.

Published in 2022, Matthieu Chochoy's *De Tamerlan à Gengis Khan* offers an in-depth study of an often ignored segment of Orientalism. The book traces the history of French knowledge of Central Asia by exploring the inception, evolution, and deconstruction of the peculiarly European, erroneous concept of a 'Tartar Empire', which dominated the modern understanding of the region among the intellectual elites. From the fifteenth until well into the nineteenth century, European scholars have understood the Mongol Empire, its successor states, the Timurid Empire, as well as any of the so-called 'Steppe empires' of Central Asia as a single imperial unit, called the Tartar Empire. This name originated in the medieval confusion between the proper name of the people from which Chinggis Khan and his dynasty came, the Tatars, and the cultural legacy of Antiquity.[1]

Following the example of Gaston Bachelard,[2] Chochoy studies the idea of a Tartar Empire as a historical fact, tracing its origins, dissemination, and critique, as well as the material, social, and political conditions of its existence and, finally, its legacy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As a study of intellectual history, *De Tamerlan à Gengis Khan* unravels and analyses the epistemological, institutional, and practical aspects of the idea of a Tartar Empire, tracing the evolution of interpretative frameworks, courtly and scholarly interests in the concept, and the circulation of manuscripts and books about it. The author pays close attention to the process of accumulation and transmission of knowledge, considering every transmission as a transformation, a testimony to the changing of the scholarly *status quo*. These different aspects are presented chronologically since the book is structured around Thomas Kuhn's model of scientific revolutions.[3]

The author presents a clear framework for his inquiry, focusing on the idea of the Tartar Empire in France during the 'very long eighteenth century',

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[1] Stephen Pow, '*Nationes que se Tartaros appellant*. An Exploration of the Historical Problem of the Usage of the Ethnonyms Tatar and Mongol in Medieval Sources', *Golden Horde Review*, vii, 3 (2019), 545–67.

[2] Gaston Bachelard, *La formation de l'esprit scientifique* (Paris, 1993[1], 1938[2]), 17; as quoted in Chochoy, *De Tamerlan*, 1.

[3] Thomas Kuhn, *The structure of scientific revolutions* (Chicago, 1962).

from around 1650 to the 1830s.[4] All sources are helpfully listed and classified, Chochoy having divided his corpus of historical texts (excluding novels and plays) into three categories:

1. Texts produced in earlier periods and/or outside of modern Europe, like the medieval mission reports of Rubrouck or Plano Carpini or Timurid chronicles, like *Rawżat aṣ-ṣafā* of Mīrkhwānd, are considered primary sources. They are analysed insofar as they are accessed, read, translated and published by the scholars writing on the Tartar Empire.
2. Secondary sources include the translations, compilations, and historical works composed from the primary sources. Chochoy pays particular attention to the use and selection of primary sources, their editing, and the conclusions drawn from them.
3. Finally, texts composed without any access to primary sources have been classified as tertiary sources. Here, the analysis highlights the changes in the perception of the Tartar Empire.

To give an account of the circulation of ideas about the Tartar Empire, the author relied on a graphically represented network showing all direct uses of an author's writing by another (p. 26). A quantitative analysis of references is also provided for some of the most important works, such as d'Herbelot's *Bibliothèque orientale* (p. 162).

Following the introduction, which defines the object, aim, and method of the study, the main body of the book is comprised of ten chapters, divided into three parts. The first part discusses the origin and the constitution of the idea of the Tartar Empire. It corresponds to the first step in Kuhn's structure of scientific revolutions: affirming a paradigm. The first chapter presents the main primary sources, Latin and Oriental,[5] which already serve to underline two of the roots of the idea of the Tartar Empire: the legend of Prester John and the efforts to bind all the peoples of the world in a biblical genealogy.

Chapter Two recounts the knowledge about Timur in the sixteenth century when he became an object of scholarly attention and reinterpretation as one of history's great captains and conquerors. Knowledge about Timur arrived primarily through the Iberian Peninsula and Italy but also through England and Poland; the chapter concludes with an overview of the reception of the historical texts in question in France. It also highlights the key role of Timurid historiography, especially Mīrkhwānd's *Rawżat aṣ-ṣafā*, in promoting the belief among European scholars in a direct dynastic link

[4] Theorised in Pierre Briant, *Alexandre des Lumières: fragments d'histoire européenne* (Paris, 2012), 27, as quoted in Chochoy, *De Tamerlan*, 4.

[5] *Sources orientales* is to be understood as the texts studied by the orientalists, i.e. the specialists of the Islamicate world, as opposed to sinologists, who's classification as orientalists is more ambiguous.

between Chinggis Khan and Timur. The perception of an unbroken dynastic link, together with a fictitious biblical genealogy and the superimposition of the legend of Prester John on both the Mongols and Timur, brings forth the idea of a single, stable Tartar Empire.

The third chapter highlights the growing role of the Tartars in the European perception of the world in the second half of the sixteenth century. As the first Jesuit missions to China improved access to information on the Tartars, without increasing knowledge on them, their dominion was (quite literally) illustrated in the cosmographies of Sebastian Münster or, in France, André Thevet.

Chapter Four concludes the analysis of the origins and consolidation of the idea of a Tartar Empire by turning to the first major proponent of the idea in France, Pierre Bergeron. Chochoy highlights the link between knowledge and mercantile ambitions by stressing that Pierre Bergeron's *Traité des Tartares* and *Recueil des voyages en Tartarie*, both published in 1634, were part of an effort to further French influence and commercial access to China by routes not monopolised by the Iberian powers. Having assessed the political value of the work as well as key elements of Bergeron's cultural background, Chochoy continues by analysing Bergeron's corpus of texts, its hierarchies, and the increasing significance of the information that would prove key to the future critics of the Tartar paradigm. His study of the composition of the two works shows the first shifts in the interpretative framework, as Bergeron describes the origins of the Tartars based on classical Greek literature rather than the Bible. Bergeron also relayed knowledge contained in the earliest Latin sources, pointing towards a multiplicity of nations forming the Mongol Empire.

The book's second part describes a period of simultaneous reinforcement of the paradigm and the accumulation of contradictory data. Chapter Five presents the context in which further research into the history of the Tartar Empire was carried out in the second half of the seventeenth century. The French crown engaged in a more voluntarist policy in Asia, attempting to further contact with both Safavid Iran and China, and obtain a better knowledge of those regions. These efforts had a significant effect on the study of the Tartar Empire: in France, the King's library accumulated more and more Oriental manuscripts, while Jean-Baptiste Colbert expanded the teaching of Oriental languages at the newly founded *École des jeunes de langues*. Abroad, the crown subsidised missionary and scientific efforts of the Jesuits in China, especially at the Qing imperial court. The conquest of China by the Manchu Qing dynasty is also identified as the source of an enduring distinction in the field of Tartar studies, namely that between Western Tartars (whose presence was felt in Europe), and Eastern Tartars (those who conquered China). While this distinction derived in part from the use of the term 'Tartar' by Han Chinese as a label for most northern conquerors and partly also from the Qing's own claim to the legacy of the Mongol Empire, it was erroneous

but proved essential. It became key for later works on Tartar history, helping to explain the growing discrepancies between the Persianate and Chinese sources, but could never be fully explained and justified, not having been grounded in a precise knowledge of the actual historical conditions of the region. The next two chapters are written in parallel, describing access to new sources, as well as their translations and use among Orientalists and Jesuits, respectively.

Thus, Chapter Six presents an analysis of the substantial place taken by the study of the Tartars among the most famous French Orientalists: d'Herbelot, Antoine Galland, and Pétis de la Croix (both father and son). Their works attest to access to a growing number of Islamicate primary sources and the continuous influence of Timurid authors. D'Herbelot's fundamental *Bibliothèque orientale* has been very directly influenced by its sources, in both structure and content, to the point that Chochoy describes it as a (highly restructured) translation more than anything else. On the other hand, when François Pétis de la Croix the elder wrote the first European biography of Chinggis Khan, he used the same sources as d'Herbelot but aimed at a historical synthesis, confronting and criticising his sources. His work, although still very much the life history of a sovereign, bears all the marks of the nascent historical profession; Chochoy points out Pétis de la Croix's familiarity with the Maurists and their historical project. The work of François Pétis de la Croix the younger was meant to serve as a continuation of his father's biography of Chinggis Khan. A translation of Sharaf al-Dīn ʻAlī Yazdī's *Ẓafarnāma*, a biography of Timur, it illustrates both of the elements identified by Chochoy in his analysis of Orientalist literature:

– The social determinants of the orientalists' knowledge production, both as a valid career and as a hereditary or transferable office. At the same time, the style of the translations was primarily dictated by the literary tastes of the time, as the Orientalists were expected to adapt their material to the preferences of their audience. While Pétis de la Croix the younger managed to publish his translation, many other Orientalists did not, their extensive contributions remaining unpublished.
– The coherence of the biographical efforts of Pétis de la Croix, father and son, shows that despite a growing interest in the figure of Chinggis Khan, the Orientalists of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century still strongly adhered to the idea of the Tartar Empire and a dynastic continuity between Chinggis Khan and Timur.

Chapter Seven presents the context in which new information and, most importantly, different interpretations of Tartar history were introduced to French scholarship by the Jesuit missions in China. Taking into account the influence of Jesuit hierarchy and the ties between the missions and the crown, Chochoy presents the first contributions to the nascent French

sinology as both an introduction of new sources and a reassessment of the conclusions of the Parisian Orientalists. This reassessment was most visible in the dismissal by the Jesuits of Timur as a successor to Chinggis Khan, as the Central Asian conqueror was simply absent from Chinese sources. The author also traces a direct link between the Jesuits and the Orientalists since the former knew, read, and even brought to China the works of the latter. As such, most of the new knowledge about the Tartars produced by the Jesuits can be found in works that, to an extent, respond to those by the Orientalists, such as Claude de Visdelou's additions and corrections to the *Bibliothèque orientale* or Antoine Gaubil's biography of Chinggis Khan. Chochoy shows that the Jesuits used some of the oldest (even today) Chinese sources on the history of the Mongol Empire to introduce information that was contradictory to the idea of a single Tartar Empire inhabited by a single Tartar people.

Part two of *De Tamerlan à Gengis Khan* describes the second step in developing a paradigm of the Tartar Empire in light of Kuhn's model. While Orientalists who relied on Muslim sources reinforced the idea of a Tartar Empire by further emphasising the continuity between Chinggis Khan and Timur, the Jesuits who engaged with Chinese sources brought new information into the debate, undermining the intellectual consensus. Part three explores the debates of the eighteenth century and shows how new questions and interpretations of previously available data helped deconstruct the idea of a Tartar Empire, though not without provoking a reaction. In the eighth chapter, Chochoy focuses on Joseph de Guignes, a forgotten figure of modern erudition, trained as both an Orientalist and a Sinologist. His *Histoire générale des Huns, des Turcs, des Mogols et des autres Tartares occidentaux*, published in 1756, was the last great synthesis on the Tartar Empire. While the work suffered from the discrepancies inherent to the Tartar paradigm, it was also influenced by the Maurists, and became a turning point in European historical writing on Central Asia by shifting attention from the rulers onto the nation, understood as essential and eternal.

Chapter Nine examines the place of the Tartar Empire in the influential debates of the French Enlightenment. The Tartar Empire and the Tartars as a people appear in key writings of both Montesquieu and Voltaire. Their treatment of the subject seems essential to a proper understanding of the European perceptions of the states, polities, and people perceived as nomadic in Central Asia, as both bent the available information to their theories and passed on their opinions to future scholars. While Montesquieu realised that the existence of both the Tartar Empire (as an empire of nomadic people) and the *yasa* (Chinggis Khan's law) contradicted his idea of Oriental despotism, he nevertheless simplified the complex Tartar history to the extreme. Ignoring the complexities shown by the older Pétis de la Croix, he described the history of the Tartars as one of brutal conquest by sheer force, informed by

geographical and economic determinism rather than God's will. This reduction to barbarity was brought even further by Voltaire, who denied any historical role to the Tartars, relegating them to a state of animality only mitigated by their contacts with the civilising forces of the Russian and Chinese Empires, a lasting conviction that continues to weigh heavily in our present day. The last part of the chapter deals with reactions to those writings, as the next generation of Orientalists, specifically Abraham-Hyacynthe Anquetil-Duperron and Louis-Mathieu Langlès, pointed out the contradictions in the idea of Oriental despotism. In opposition to enlightened historiosophy, Orientalists underlined the necessity for an actual engagement with Oriental sources and a change in translation practices, concerned with fidelity to the source material.

Finally, in the tenth chapter, Chochoy describes the final deconstruction of the idea of the Tartar Empire and its swan song in the writings of Jan Potocki. The author shows how the abandonment of the Tartar paradigm was caused by the accumulation of information inconsistent with it, especially coming from Chinese sources and the nascent anthropological and racist literature describing the different peoples and languages of Central Asia and Siberia. As the idea of timeless nations bound by a common language triumphed and observations proved the existence of a multiplicity of languages spoken by the human groupings subsumed under the label 'Tartary', and the absence of an empire, the very idea of a Tartar Empire and nation was finally abandoned. Nevertheless, many of the assumptions and hypotheses associated with the concept of the Tartar Empire survived its fall, and structured debates and discourses in the new field of Mongol history. In his final pages, Chochoy suggests that the distinction between Eastern and Western Tartary transformed into the discussion on Altaic languages. He also points towards René Grousset's classical *L'empire des steppes. Attila, Gengis Khan, Tarmerlan*, published in 1939, as an example of the tenacity and continued influence of the idea of a Tartar Empire.

Overall, *De Tamerlan à Gengis Khan* is a very well-written and convincing study that fills one of many gaps in the history of Orientalism. As Chochoy points out, while the history of Oriental erudition and scholarship on the Arabophone parts of the Muslim World is well developed, much less has been written on Orientalists who studied Persia, India, China, or Central Asia. The book manages to strike a delicate balance between systematic thinking and erudition, uncovering persistent trends in the evolution of French studies on the Tartars while offering a close and nuanced analysis of key works and authors, as well as secondary actors. In the reviewer's opinion, the density of analysis more than makes up for the book's main flaw, which is its somewhat artificial focus on the French Orientalist milieux. One might also have hoped for a slightly longer discussion of the catastrophic impact of Enlightenment-era discussions on the Tartars on later European perceptions of non-imperial societies of the post-Mongol world; their classification as stateless, nomad,

and pastoral was and still is instrumental to imperialist claims and policies of the most powerful states of the region. Although this point is more suggested than it is explored, it is also true that the discourses of Voltaire and Montesquieu fall under the category of tertiary sources and are, therefore, not as central to the book as the much more nuanced and accurate works of actual Orientalists and Sinologists. A third and final critique is addressed to the editor. The persistent inadequacy of the copy-editing poorly serves the excellent scholarly and stylistic qualities of the writing; one would expect a more thorough proofreading of typos in such an expensive book.

However, those cosmetic flaws should not overshadow the remarkable qualities of the book. What Chochoy has produced is no less than an in-depth analysis of a field of modern French erudition that considers not only its discourse and socio-political conditions, but above all, its epistemological shifts while paying a very diligent attention to the circulation of sources and texts in this field. His dense study of the history and circulation of authors, texts, and ideas has the great merit of tracing the history of a field of Orientalist knowledge on the basis of its own assumptions rather than applying an anachronistic lens of the historiography of a modern object of research. The fact that the book shows that the study of the Tartar Empire in modern France followed a broader evolution of historical writing in that period is also a significant achievement of the author, serving to highlight an often overlooked proximity between modern Orientalists and historians. *De Tamerlan à Gengis Khan. Construction et déconstruction de l'idée d'empire tartare en France du XVI^e^ siècle à la fin du XVIII^e^ siècle* is a major contribution in a number of fields. It will serve historians of the Islamic world as well as those of the Mongol, Timurid, and Qing Empires while helping any reader navigate the evolution of modern European ideas in those contexts, as well as the circulation and use of Oriental manuscripts. It also deserves a place in discussions of French and European intellectual history and is a significant and nuanced addition to studies into Orientalism. The reviewer can only hope that the book's position at the intersection of those fields will not limit its impact while patiently awaiting the author's future publications.

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Gisela Borchers, *Vom Domänenamt Schöneck zur Domäne Pogutken 1772 bis 1920. Ein Abschnitt preussischer Agrargeschichte*, Berlin, 2022, Duncker & Humblot, 192 pp.; series: Quellen und Forschungen zur Brandenburgischen und Preussischen Geschichte, 57

Research into agriculture – or, more broadly, the life of the peasantry – has a long and expansive tradition in German historiography, reaching as far back as the nineteenth century. After World War II, this branch of historical knowledge gained increased prominence in both German states, and after 1990, also in the unified Germany. Within the German Democratic Republic, historical interest was driven by the Communist regime, which might lead some to expect that the resulting publications would serve as mere conduits for a particular ideology. Yet, studies produced by East German historians between 1945 and 1990 contain several milestones of world historiography of the peasantry and peasant economy in the feudal era as well as during the capitalist transformation of the countryside – particularly in the Brandenburg state and Prussia from the seventeenth to the twentieth century. The high quality of this research is illustrated by the works of Hartmuth Harnisch, Liselotte Enders, or the journal *Jahrbuch für Geschichte des Feudalismus*. Other crucial contributions to historical research into peasant communities arrived after 1990, in unified Germany. Here, one would mention the body of work by historians associated with the Gesellschaft für Agrargeschichte [Society for the History of Agriculture], established in 1953. Historical studies on Eastern Europe, the lands of the Hohenzollerns, came from the likes of Ilona Buchsteiner, Heinrich Kaak, or representatives of the younger generation, such as Verena Lehmbrock.

In 2022, Gisela Borchers published *Vom Domänenamt Schöneck zur Domäne Pogutken 1772 bis 1920* [From the Schöneck Royal Domain Office to Domain Territory in Pogutken 1772–1920], a part of the series 'Quellen und Forschungen zur Brandenburgischen und Preussischen Geschichte' [Sources and studies into the History of Brandenburg and Prussia]. The monograph discusses a particular aspect of the history of agriculture and peasant life in Prussia – the existence of state domains in the late feudal period and the implementation of capitalist relations in agriculture during the nineteenth century. As the object of her study, the author chose the domain of Schöneck [Pol. Skarszewy] in West Prussia in 1772–1920, a period when the area was a royal property governed by the treasury of the Prussian state. Located within the lands of the first partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, in the former Royal Prussia [Ger. *Königlich-Preußen*], the area used to form the *Starosty* of Skarszewy. Since 1613, this royal domain and the accompanying castle had been gifted for the use of the voivode of Pomerania. In 1920, after 148 years, Skarszewy – as well

as Pogódki [*Pogutken*], the other city named in the title, which originally belonged to the domain and then became a separate rent lease [Ger. *Rentengut*] – were brought back into the Polish state, reestablished in 1918. For the author, this research was, in part, a sentimental journey into the past: for 93 years, the lease mentioned above had been entrusted to the Engler family to which Gisela Borchers belongs (her maiden name being Engler).

In her study, Borchers attempts to depict the transformation in the management and exploitation of landed domains belonging to the monarchy (state), the shift from an economy of general leases to one in which particular components of extensive state properties were rented out (as *Rentengut* estates). The reviewed publication expands on the author's research for her doctoral dissertation on peasant hereditary leases in West Prussia during the Frederician era, defended in 2013 at the University of Oldenburg and published in 2014.[1] This current study comprises an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, and appendices. The latter include a list of sources, abbreviations, definitions and explications of terms from agriculture as well as measurements (a commendable effort), printed sources and secondary literature, along with maps, plans, and tables that help make visible the fundamental object of the monograph.

The primary sources for the monograph are the archival materials collected at the Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz Berlin-Dahlem and the State Archives in Gdańsk. The author used a grand total of thirty-six archival units (volumes of acts) from the collections of the General Directory – West Prussia and Noteć Valley District (II. HA General Directorium – Abt. 9 Westpreussen und Netzedistrikt), the Ministry of Agriculture (I. HA Rep. 87 Landwirtschaftsministerium), as well as the Gdańsk Registry [Regierung Danzig]. A part of the latter is currently housed in Berlin (XIV. HA Westpreussen Rep. 180 Regierung Danzig) and in the archives of Gdańsk (10/9 Rejencja w Gdańsku). The author undoubtedly engaged in a broad exploration of records pertaining directly to the domain of Skarszewy contained in the collections mentioned above, but her use of archival sources concerning the management of domains more generally is rather limited.

Furthermore, the monograph in question also uses secondary sources in a somewhat problematic fashion. Sadly, the author follows the precept of Heinrich von Treitschke: *Polonica non leguntur*. One might surmise that Borchers might simply be unfamiliar with the Polish language. However, her dependence on works by German historians at the expense of studies written not just in Polish but in any other language (e.g. English) is paired with a disregard for works by non-Germans that did see print in German. This is

[1] Gisele Borschers, *Grundbesitz in Bauernhand. Die Erbpacht in Westpreußen im Rahmen der preußischen Domänengeschichte des 18. Jahrhunderts, dargestellt am Domänenamt Schöneck. Ein Beitrag zur Agrargeschichte Friedrichs des Großen* (Münster, 2014), 37.

disappointing given the substantial contributions of Polish historiography to the study of the peasantry as well as state domains in nineteenth-century Prussia, including broadly understood Pomerania. One would mention here the works of Bogdan Wachowiak, Zygmunt Szultka, and Włodzimierz Stępiński, even just in reference to the multi-volume study *Historia Pomorza* [History of Pomerania; vols 3 and 4], but also those by Janusz Jasiński, Szczepan Wierzchosławski, Józef Borzyszkowski, and others. Furthermore, the author does not even cite her own article on hereditary leases in the West-Prussian countryside, which treats the Skarszewy domain and saw publication in Poland in the journal *Acta Cassubiana*. In this regard, the monograph sadly subscribes to a trend of denying a say to historiographies of Poland and other states of Central and Eastern Europe, dating back to pre-unification West Germany, one that enjoyed widespread popularity in the 1950s and 1960s, particularly in the milieu of Walter Hubatsch.

The monograph could be considered as a case study. The author begins by outlining in fairly broad terms the agricultural policies and tendencies in the management of state properties in the Hohenzollern monarchy during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and then turns to an analysis of the Skarszewy domain in 1772–1920. The book presents the moment when the *Starosty* was taken over by Prussian officials after Royal Prussia, formerly a region in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, became incorporated into the Hohenzollern state by Frederick II as West Prussia [*Westpreussen*]. Then, the focus turns toward the history of the property under subsequent lessees across the long nineteenth century up until World War I and Pomerania's transfer into the Polish state in 1920 as a result of the Treaty of Versailles of 28 June 1919. The study highlights the changes brought on by the peasantry's emancipation, culminating in the events of 1850 – the disintegration of general leases into separate charters comprised of sections thereof. This process resulted in the formation of rent leases, like the domain of Pogódki, an independent lease owned by the Prussian state until 1920 and then claimed by the Polish treasury.

In her narrative, the author pays particular attention to the stages of development and organisation of the domain of Pogódki, transformations of its economy, drainage works, the expansion of agricultural infrastructure in the property, including the introduction of electrical equipment to the farm starting in the late nineteenth century or of artificial fertilisers in the fields, but also to non-agricultural activities – the excavation and sale of peat as fuel. She also analyses the problem of profitability of the property in subsequent periods of a lease in relation to the quantity of rent paid to the state treasury and investments in the property (drainage works, acquisition of tools, construction of new farm buildings and dwellings).

To sum up, the monograph under review constitutes a valuable source of analytical knowledge on the domain of Skarszewy and Pogódki, both

regarding its subsequent lessees, the arable lands they included, husbandry, buildings, etc. It should be stressed that the author of the book graduated as a chemical engineer before taking up the study of history in 2002, producing the aforementioned dissertation in 2008–2014, and turning to new research questions. At the same time, the book does not offer any comparison to other similar properties, even within the same province. Such an addition would allow the reader to draw conclusions concerning the degree to which the property of Skarszewy/Pogódki progressed or whether its condition remained in line with other domains within the Prussian monarchy. Another missing component is any consideration of the peasant society in the domain – to what degree Kashubians were employed there and whether they received land grants upon emancipation, or whether the property was colonised during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, leading to a dominance of the German language among the population of the country.

Despite these reservations, the monograph deserves scholarly interest, not merely from those invested in the history of agriculture or social economy, but perhaps especially from historians of East Pomerania and Gdańsk Pomerania, which in the period in question, 1772–1920, comprised a single province within the Prussian state: West Prussia.

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Hanna Kozińska-Witt, *Politycy czy klakierzy? Żydzi w krakowskiej radzie miejskiej w XIX wieku* [Politicians or Claquers? Jews in the Cracow City Council in the Nineteenth Century], Cracow, 2019, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 245 pp., ills, index; series: Studia nad Cywilizacją Żydowską w Polsce, 3

The book by Hanna Kozińska-Witt analyses various aspects of the involvement of Jews in municipal governments in autonomous Galicia under the Habsburg rule, mainly in Cracow. It is a collection of studies on such diverse issues as changes in legal acts regulating the functioning of Jewish communities in Galician towns and cities, the activity of municipal councillors in Cracow, government subsidies for Jewish institutions, changes in the form and boundaries of the Jewish district in Cracow, as well as an account of a court case against a Jewish family. Parts of the text had been published earlier in the journal *Scripta Judaica Cracoviensia* and as chapters in collective volumes. This lends the book the character of an assortment of texts, but there is coherence in the subjects, narration, and concern with crucial questions regarding the urban and social history of Cracow and Galicia.

The first chapter provides some perspective on the legal tussles over the regulation of the life of Jewish communities. Of significance here is the fact that self-governing political bodies such as the commune [*gmina*] needed a complementary body based on religious adherence. The chapter discusses the progress of the debate on how religious communities should be regulated, including such important events as the parliamentary speech by Galician politician and journalist, and a staunch critic of Zionism, Teofil Merunowicz, the granting of the Jewish statute in Cracow, proposals by Orthodox rabbi Szymon Schreiber, and the state bill on the legal status of Jewish communities in the monarchy. Participants in the debate discussed matters such as whether Jews had received undue legal privileges in the monarchy in comparison to the Christians, or whether the self-rule exercised by their communities should be more democratic or if the Jewish intellectual elite could be given precedence in elections. These political struggles also revealed tensions between Orthodox and progressive Jewish political actors.

The second chapter focuses on the activity of those Jews who were active in the municipal council of Cracow after the implementation of the provisional statute of the city of Cracow in 1866. Here, the central and most significant issues of the book are addressed. There were about ten Jewish councillors at any given time in Cracow, elected mainly in the first and third electoral curiae, and the author provides a list of their names with dates of birth and death, as well as professions. Kozińska-Witt stresses the positive impact of state legislation (the constitution of 1868), which banned discriminatory practices against non-Christians. Then, the author discusses the cooperation and competition between the milieus of Orthodox and progressive Jews in the context of elections to the municipal council and its subsequent operation. Irrespective of that division, the sheer fact that many Jews were politically conscious and actively fighting for their rights in municipalities – in the council and the religious community – was a real surprise for many Christian politicians. As elsewhere, charges of unfair Jewish domination in certain curiae were used in political debates in the city. The main part of the chapter discusses the activities of Jews in the council. They took part in improving urban development, hygiene, and education. Although Jewish councillors did not act as a unified bloc, neither did many Christian councillors. Thus, the question of Jewish ethnicity only occupied the council on some occasions, testifying to its situational character, as the author argues (p. 83). Meanwhile, Jewish involvement in the council increased the public visibility of the religious group and – to some extent – its acceptance.

The third chapter discusses the municipal policy towards the urban poor and the relief programs of the time. As was customary back then, relief schemes for the poor were underdeveloped and treated as the least of the council's priorities. Communes only accepted responsibility for helping people in need if they were locals, expelling the poor born outside the city gates rather than

helping them. Nevertheless, the fact that secular bodies were increasingly engaged in the issue, hitherto the sole province of religious institutions, was significant. The chapter shows how the relief remained divided along religious lines and how Jewish institutions, managed and supported by the Jewish community of Cracow, also received backing from the council. In this context, the author analyses the debates over the distribution of subsidies to these institutions. Kozińska-Witt traces the sources of these funds, from private sponsors to the revenues from fees and fines paid by Jews to the municipal coffers, and argues that the relief was at least partially moved from funds allocated to the activities of the religious community to the secular (municipal) sphere and that the rise of subsidies correlated with the increased activity of Jewish councillors.

The fourth chapter recounts changes in the Jewish quarter in Cracow, Kazimierz. It discusses how the district, whose inhabitants were perceived as foreign and a broadly-conceived threat to Christian city dwellers, gradually became an indispensable part of the city. What helped was – to be sure – the participation of the Jews in urban self-government, their formal emancipation in 1868 (which allowed them to move to other districts), and the integration of Kazimierz to the rest of Cracow by the filling in of the Old Vistula, a branch of Vistula that had hitherto separated the district from the Old Town. The author discusses how Jews slowly stopped to be associated only with one district, their municipal activity paving the way for them to be seen as a part of the same population (which had already been acknowledged by President of the City Józef Dietl back in the 1860s, p. 147). The chapter also follows the changes in the physical shape of Kazimierz (dilapidated housing and lack of hygiene at the beginning of the autonomy and later improvement), the rising fire security, and the threat from impure water and lack of hygienic sewers. The last issue was solved by the aforementioned filling in of the narrow branch of the Vistula river, which posed a serious threat to public health, and which would serve as a symbol of integration of Kazimierz with the neighbouring districts, because the watercourse in question was replaced by an elegant Paris-style boulevard named after Józef Dietl. New public edifices located in Kazimierz further added to this process. Lastly, the chapter also mentions developments in technical infrastructure, which played a part in the process of providing the city with a modern face. The chapter concludes that, while the actions undertaken to modernise and physically integrate the district with central Cracow can be traced and represented, social integration is much harder to grasp through sources, and such integration among people was not a unidirectional process.

The final chapter turns to a more gruesome aspect of the Christian-Jewish urban co-existence. It discusses the trial of the Ritter family (1880s), inhabitants of a Galician village accused of a ritual murder who narrowly avoided a death sentence, in detail: from the inquiry in the village

in question to the first trial in Rzeszów and an annulment in Vienna, to a second trial in Cracow and a second annulment, and then to a third trial in Cracow and another annulment. The author argues that the trials were a symptom of the precarious existence of rural Jews in Galicia, and that such cases proved uncomfortable for the Jewish proponents of assimilation and integration.

To conclude, the book offers a collection of case studies (mainly from Cracow) of various aspects of the functioning of multi-religious and multi--ethnic communities in towns and cities of Central Europe. As mentioned above, it is not fully coherent – this impression is reinforced by the fact that each chapter is a separate case study with its own appendices, the likely reason why the author opted not to complete the deliberations with separate concluding remarks. Nevertheless, the distinct chapters are instructive and significantly broaden the perspective on the (famous) Galician self-government phenomenon. They convey the idea of municipal activism as a natural political strategy for many Jews, which, if it did not ultimately affect the 'Jewish question' in Galicia to a significant degree, did make Galicia (and Cracow) a better place to live for both communities, Christians and Jews, no matter how internally divided by their own cultural distinctions. It explains how and why Galicia became the region where the process of social integration across religious borders was perhaps the most advanced and unmatched in modern Jewish history in what we call Polish territories.

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Gabriella Safran, *Recording Russia: Trying to Listen in the Nineteenth Century*, Ithaca–London, 2022, Cornell University Press, 300 pp., notes, index

Gabriella Safran's newest book presents interest to scholars in Russian studies and literary studies, folklorists, and cultural anthropologists. Its central topic is one of the most important themes for Russian writers of the nineteenth century, namely – how to understand and convey the voice of common people who share the nationality with the authors and speak more or less the same language but who, in fact, are 'Others', incomprehensible and orientalised. This issue, as Safran admits in the conclusion of her book, has been frequently studied in the past, from nineteenth-century journalists and critics to the present day, with works such as Cathy Frierson's book *Peasant Icons: Representations of Rural People in Late Nineteenth-Century Russia* (New York, 1993), or, more recently, Alexander Ogden's and Aleksei Vdovin's journal

papers.[1] Yet Safran's approach adds a new twist to these studies due to her primary interest in listening and recording, both as social and technological practices. This lets her notice similarities between Russian literature and culture and that of the West, seeing Russian writers and ethnographers as members of a global media generation, constituted by new ways of using cheaper paper and other changing communication technologies, which have made it possible to note down more frequently and accurately (stenography), and to communicate remotely (telegraph), giving rise to folklorists' collections of songs and stories. Thus, Safran tries to avoid repeating clichéd assertions about Russia's unique path, but she places it in the global context, examining how it was adjusted to local conditions.

Moreover, while researchers mentioned above discussed the representation of peasants, Safran is interested more in the process of listening and recording, and therefore calls her research "metapragmatic" and "an ethnography of these ethnographers" (p. 5). She turns to the main media used by folklorists and folklore collectors, and investigates how various types of listening 'across social lines', recording its results, as well as people's convictions about qualities and appropriateness of both listening and recording – all influenced nineteenth-century Russian literary works, and especially representations of common people from other social groups. Yet Safran's study does not focus on changes in literature and Russian literary language caused by the introduction of the speech of ordinary people, but instead on the issue of evaluation of one's own and others' communicative practices. She ponders the question of the multilanguagedness[2] of the society that seems to be monolingual, demonstrates how different social groups may find it difficult to communicate with each other, depicts their 'listening rivalry', and shows how many motivations there are for listening. Thus, one of the book's main concepts is that of 'attentive listening', defined as a performance and a contest between writers.

Another reason for the innovativeness of Safran's approach is her use of various tools borrowed not only from literary studies, but from sound and media studies, as well as from linguistic anthropology, together with elements of postcolonial theory and cultural criticism. She combines them with vivid and particular observations of an anthropologist, ethnographer and folklorist, making the book engaging. But in the heart of the scholar's rather eclectic methodology is the concept of modes of listening, similar

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[1] Alexander Ogden, 'The Impossible Peasant Voice in Russian Culture: Stylization and Mimicry', *Slavic Review*, lxiii, 3 (2005), 517–37; Алексей Вдовин, '"Неведомый мир": русская и европейская эстетика и проблема репрезентации крестьян в литературе середины XIX века', *Новое литературное обозрение*, 141 (2016), 287–315.

[2] Mikhail Bakhtin, 'Discourse in the Novel', in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin, 1981), 259–422.

to speech genres. Based on four listening modes proposed by Michel Chion, the French film theorist and composer, Safran introduces thirteen ways of listening, paying attention to its various circumstances and goals, as well as associated difficulties and problems.

Safran's book consists of an introduction, a conclusion and eight chapters entitled using gerunds that represent the primary activity related to listening. The chapters are arranged chronologically, but Safran does not aim to present the complete 'history of listening' or the evolution of methods of recording peasant culture. The structure of her book and each chapter is rather associative, digressive, and mosaic-like, as the writer combines diverse topics and sometimes makes unexpected parallels. Depending on reader's expectations and taste, this may be considered both a merit or a shortcoming, but it definitely makes Safran's book an appealing read for a varied audience. In this regard, the authorial style is also very engaging, as Safran is fond of metaphors and poetic images, and she abundantly records curiosities and anecdotes in her text.

Every chapter has its own main protagonist and usually a few secondary ones, and in her study, Safran juxtaposes well-known fiction and non-fiction texts, such as *Notes of a Hunter* by Ivan Turgenev or Marquis de Custine's *La Russie en 1839*, with texts by second-rate authors. The method of connecting them is based mainly on the similarity of their listening or, conversely, on their polemic approach. This way of combining previously scattered elements allows for new observations and new interpretations of well-known concepts and ideas, such as "the penitent nobleman" as a person "trying hard but nonetheless listening *inadequately* to 'the people'" (p. 6).

After introducing her concepts and presenting an outlook of Russian nineteenth-century cross-class listening, Safran begins her book with two chapters devoted to foreign travellers to Russia – namely, Marquis Astolphe de Custine and baron August von Haxthausen – who both pointed to the silence as a characteristic trait of Russian soundscape, but gave it opposing interpretations. In Chapter One, Safran dwells on de Custine's famous memoirs of his trip to Russia, focusing on his impressions about Russian silence, which he found constraining, connected with fear to speak, and ubiquitous eavesdropping (which Safran calls "the state's suspicious mode of listening", p. 21). She notices that de Custine's way of presenting himself as an evolving listener, who moves from a naïve acceptance of everything he hears to an attentive examination of the hidden meanings, organises the text of his memoirs. At the end of the book, the author portrayed himself as being able to hear what others could not, despite his poor command of Russian language; that ability demonstrated the listener's virtues and nearly prophetic skills.

Referring to de Custine's observations about Russia's silence as connected with the country's cold climate, Safran dwells upon the idea of frozen words

as presented in various texts, beginning with Mikhail Kheraskov's *Rossiiada*, through *The Travels and Surprising Adventures of Baron Munchhausen* and Gustave Doré's *History of Holy Russia*. In the last paragraph of this chapter, Safran jumps to one more topic related to Russia's silence: the sound of the bell. She describes it both literally, as an old-fashioned way of communication and a percussive listening mode, and metaphorically, in terms suggested by Alexander Herzen, who compared Petr Chaadaev's *Philosophical Letters*, the latter's open declaration of political views, to a sound of a bell or a summoning trumpet, clearly heard in the fearful Russian silence. Safran analyses the bell motif in Russian and Western culture of the nineteenth century, underlining parallels in its understanding as a sound which inspired radical rhetoric. In conclusion, she draws attention to the fact that in the nineteenth century, this mode of listening was quite common not only in Russia but also in other parts of the world, where the idea of the bell-like power of written words was also present.

In Chapter Two, Safran turns to another Western traveller, Baron August von Haxthausen, who befriended Russian Slavophiles and followed Alexei Khomyakov's idea about the communal spirit of the Russian nation. Both Khomyakov and Haxthausen argued with de Custine's views on Russia; Safran notes that they did it by reappropriating de Custine's opinion about Russian silence and giving it a completely different interpretation. They juxtaposed it with the Western yelling and connected it with the deep tranquillity and Christian humility of the Russian soul, linking these concepts with the idea of '*sobornost'* and choral listening. Safran points out the similar opposition mentioned approximately at the same time in the American South, where slave owners emphasised the peacefulness and quietness of their plantations in contrast with loud Northern cities. She also underlines the following paradox: while Khomyakov claimed that true listening is possible only inside a group that speaks and hears together, Haxthausen, who did not speak Russian, in his book *The Russian Empire: Its People, Institutions and Resources* declared that he was able to understand Russian people because of the universal human bond between him and them. Safran associates this claim not only with Schellingian ideas, but also with a recently invented telegraph – the means of communication which allowed for creating invisible connections between people who were physically far away from each other, but who shared the same values and ideas.

In the next two chapters, Safran expands on the theme of appropriate and inappropriate listening as a topic of discussion in the Russian press. Chapter Three is devoted to Vladimir Dahl, who was born to a Lutheran family with German, Swiss and Danish roots, and yet turned out to be one of the best-known Russian ethnographers and the author of the famous *Explanatory Dictionary of the Living Great-Russian Language*. Safran depicts him as an omnivorous listener who collected literally everything he had heard

during his extensive travels throughout the Russian Empire, which provided him with many opportunities to listen to numerous representatives of lower groups of the society. She notes that Dahl's practices were possible only because of the development of the paper industry, which made the material much cheaper and allowed the ethnographer to write down peculiar words used by people on countless pieces of paper, which he kept either in wooden boxes or hanging from special strings. At the same time, Safran mentions that Dahl was often criticised for his inclusive approach to listening and writing, and was considered unable to discriminate between the poetic and the vulgar in the folk language and way of thinking. Dahl's opponents, as Safran notes, demonstrated the suspicious mode of listening, perceiving folk voices as potentially dangerous and, therefore, not needing any amplification.

Another thread developed by Safran in this chapter is the peculiarity of Dahl's dictionary, where he presented words not in alphabetical order, but collected based on their etymology and meaning. To describe this way of presenting the material, Dahl concocted the term 'the nest' [*гнездо*], which afterwards was adopted by Russian lexicography. Safran ascribes using the term to Dahl's understanding of the language and its words as living organisms, such as birds, and to the vision of his dictionary as a way to restore life to the language; she links it with Dahl's interest in Spiritualism.

Chapter Four deals with another Russian writer with foreign roots: Dmitry Grigorovich, whose mother was French. His contemporaries accused him of relying too much on his notebooks and thus listening in a too-mediated way, which made his language seem artificially composed. According to the accusations, it exposed him as a foreigner without any connection to the people and places he described, and his imitation of folk speech as a play or, using more contemporary Ben Rampton's term (which Safran cites), 'crossing'.

As Safran points out, discussions about Grigorovich's works inspired further debates over the meaning of listening to the people, its recommended method, the question of who had the right to write about peasants and to what extent writers could use dialect in their literary works. Many critics juxtaposed the mechanical collecting of folk words and tales, and genuine participation, available only for those truly close to Russian people, like Alexander Pushkin. Yet, as Safran remarks, those critics created a myth about Pushkin as a 'true Russian man', who had a deep, innate understanding of people thanks to his bond with his nanny Arina Rodionovna, while, in fact, he was also a notebook user.

In Chapter Five, Safran turns to one of the most famous depictions of peasants: Ivan Turgenev's *Notes of a Hunter*. She focuses on two aspects: the author's remarks about local hand-making of paper, and his acousmatic listening. The first one allowed Turgenev to claim that rural papermakers, because of their locality and the non-mechanicality of their work, participated in an unmediated kind of communication. That let him suggest that his own

listening was unmediated. The second observation demonstrates that most of the listening described in Turgenev's stories took place in darkness, which increased the mystique associated by Michel Chion with acousmatic sounds. Safran links it with Turgenev's own passion for attentive and emotional listening to beautiful sounds, possible especially in darkness, where distractions are limited. She notes that in the story *The Singers* Turgenev described the singing contest juxtaposing two modes of listening: the loud, participatory one, and the quiet and emotional; she goes on to create a parallel between them and two kinds of hearing at the Paris Opera. In the last paragraph of this chapter, Safran switches to yet another topic and ponders on nineteenth--century discussions about transcribing regionalisms, which she links with a broader problem of conveying people's voices – an issue important to nearly all European writers of that era. She links the political representation of the electorate with the written representation of the vernacular, thus developing the idea of a connection between the political and literary representations, popular among cultural criticism authors.

In Chapter Six, Safran focuses on Pavel Rybnikov, the collector of epic folk songs, and discusses yet another way of listening, the 'hypnogogic' one, when people hear a seemingly otherworldly message in their sleep. In the case of Rybnikov, that was how he described his first listening to a folk singer Leontii Bogdanovich performing a *bylina*: with his eyes closed, on the verge of sleep, and thus especially sensitive to mystic experience. He also stressed his ability to sing with peasants, which expressed belonging as a condition of appropriate and effective listening. Yet, as Safran reminds us, Rybnikov's story was invented to present his folkloristic practice more appealingly and take on some of the heroism of the *bylina* characters. Then she proceeds to narrate about Rybnikov's development as a listener, and his striving to be perceived as a person close to his folk informants, a kind of 'organic intellectual' (using the term introduced by Antonio Gramsci, cited by Safran). The author also discusses more technical aspects of Rybnikov's listening and collecting, addressing the problem of the accuracy of transcribing *bylinas* and other folk texts.

Chapter Seven is devoted to Fedor Dostoevsky and demonstrates how the author participated in informal 'listening contests', boasting about his access to modern stenographer's technologically marvellous listening, and at the same time resorting to mocking listening tactics borrowed from his fellow prisoners from the times of his penal servitude in Siberia. In her highly interesting interpretation, Safran demonstrates the influence of the ritual insult structure on Dostoevsky's works, especially his journalistic writing about other intellectuals listening to and recording people's words. In my opinion, this observation may be expanded to Dostoevsky's literary works, especially his famous 'scandalous scenes', which may be linked with the folklore genre of insult. Safran limits her observations to *Notes from the Dead House* where

some scenes of ritual insults and reciprocal mocking are quoted, and then proceeds to Dostoevsky's polemics with Nikolai Leskov, where Dostoevsky used similar techniques to ridicule his opponent. The polemics also repeated the earlier discussions about mediated and unmediated listening, as Dostoevsky accused Leskov of using too many characteristic words, as if the latter had noted them down and then entered into his texts too abundantly.

In this chapter Safran continues her analysis of different approaches to transcription of the local peculiarities of speech and phonetics and demonstrates how in the case of Dostoevsky, it was influenced by stenography as the art of accurately rendering one's words, but without the possibility to render their exact sound. She points out the paradox that Dostoevsky dreamed about the exact reproduction of speech and quotes his famous short story *The Meek One* as an example of what she calls "fantastic stenography" (p. 184), that creates a monologue which seems as if written by an invisible stenographer.

The last chapter showcases the opposite method of cross-class listening, focusing on the comic writer Ivan Gorbunov who parodied some of the previous modes of listening and depicted lower-class people not as passive sources of ethnographic data, but as active, successful listeners. In this chapter, Safran also notes the difference in listening to peasants before the emancipation and after it; she underlines that such writers as Turgenev and Dostoevsky in their texts of the 1870s juxtaposed frightening noises heard by narrators with the disturbing sounds of lower-class revelry and that the emancipation made them question their ability to collect or understand the voice of the people. This observation is consistent with other studies devoted to the changing representation of peasants in Russian nineteenth-century culture, and it corresponds with the period of disappointments stemming from the failure of the populist movement and its idea of 'going to the people'. Yet Safran focuses not on the tragic and better-known aspects of this tendency but on Gorbunov's comic lowbrow literary works demonstrating how he both continued the tradition and argued against it.

Safran finishes the book by mentioning "the great absent one" of her research, Lev Tolstoy. In the conclusion, she writes about his participation in the census of January 1882, his hopes that it would facilitate cross-class communication, his disappointment and the realisation that adequate listening across social divisions is not only a technical but also a moral problem. This small passage demonstrates how much more could be written on the topic, and indeed for literary scholars, there are several dissatisfying omissions in Safran's book, the most obvious of them being the *raznochintsy* writers. Yet, as a nineteenth-century fictional satirist Kozma Prutkov claimed, "Nobody will embrace the unembraceable", and this is indeed the case with listening and recording in Russia in the nineteenth century. Safran offers a new research perspective on the well-known texts in her study, and her approach may be

pursued in further studies. Another merit of her book is using lesser-known sources and including unexpected parallels, global contexts, and peculiarities and anecdotes.

Let me finish my review with some minor critical remarks and a major one. The latter is the absence of a bibliography, which makes looking for necessary information in the notes section tiresome and annoying. The minor remarks are related to Safran's digressive style and her truly omnivorous approach, as she combines well-known facts, sometimes a bit too obvious for scholars in Russian studies, and rare curiosities. In fact, this may also be considered a merit because it makes the book accessible for a broad audience. Sometimes she also lacks accuracy, as in the case of de Custine's and Haxthausen's books, the titles of which are not named in the main text but have to be located in the notes section. Those shortcomings do not deprive Gabriella Safran's book of its deserved evaluation as an engrossing reading for specialists and those simply interested in the topic.

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Anne-Christin Klotz, *Gemeinsam gegen Deutschland. Warschaus jiddische Presse im Kampf gegen den Nationalsozialismus (1930–1941)*, Berlin–Boston, 2022, De Gruyter, 518 pp, series: Europäisch-jüdische Studien Beiträge, 58

The 1930s were a time of rapid and radical change in the social and political life of many nations, marked in Europe by a turn towards nationalism and a rise of anti-Semitism. All eyes were on Germany in particular, and while the events surrounding Hitler's rise to power seem to have been relatively well described, the reaction of the Yiddish press in Poland has only just received its analysis. Anne-Christin Klotz's doctoral thesis, written under the supervision of Prof. Gertrud Pickhan at the Freie Universität in Berlin (slightly reworked for the publication) describes and illustrates the reaction of the national Yiddish press to the major events in Germany. The author defines the time frame of her work as 1930–41, with two moments being emphasised and analysed in detail. These were the years 1933–4, when anti-Semitic sentiments in Germany rapidly increased after Hitler seized power. Polish Jews then began mass protests (e.g. boycotting German goods and cultural goods), and the Polish government tried to reach an agreement with the German government at the cost of, among other things, keeping quiet about the situation of German Jews and quelling anti-Semitic sentiments. The second turning point occurred in the late 1938 and early 1939, when

Polish Jews became outlawed citizens and their situation worsened by the day following their expulsion from Germany [Ger. *Polenaktion*, *Kristallnacht*]. Klotz considers 1941 the year marking the symbolic end of the Yiddish mass press in Poland, thus finishing her analysis of the subject. This was the year when, after the outbreak of the German-Soviet war, the very few journalists who managed to survive would flee Poland and begin to create in a different context. Most of them, however, found their death in the Nazi gas chambers.

Based on articles published in four nationwide Yiddish newspapers: *Haynt*, *Der Moment*, *Naye Folkstsaytung* and *Dos Yudishe Togblat*, Klotz examined what kind of information had been published and how it had been interpreted and obtained. Her work was not only limited to the description of the articles, but she also looked at the information intermediaries [*Vermittler*] – journalists and writers, their relationships, cooperation, competition, as well as their networks of acquaintances and contacts, going beyond the borders of Europe and reaching out to wherever there was a Jewish diaspora.

Analysing the texts and the attitude of the authors, Klotz refers to a tradition derived from Shimon Dubnov. In his call to the Jewish people in the Russian Empire, published in 1891, he called on Jews to research their own history by collecting sources and documenting events. Following the Kishinev pogrom of 1903, he founded a group to document the crime. Dubnov believed three elements were needed to build Jewish self-awareness and historical consciousness [*Selbst- und Geschichtsbewusstsein*]: self-help, active self-defence and the collection and documentation of anti-Jewish violence. According to Klotz, this idea influenced generations of Jewish intellectuals – writers and journalists – who also took up the fight against Jewish anti-Semitism and persecution in the 1930s, in which "the Jewish newspaper was a communication platform, an information source and a documentation medium" (p. 445). Jewish intellectuals, except for their philosophical analyses, descriptions of events, reports and accounts from Germany, also reacted by organising and promoting protests and boycotts as well as participating in relief efforts for refugees and expellees from Germany. 'Gemeinsam gegen Deutschland' [Together against Germany] also paints a picture of a close-knit journalistic community that cooperates and supports each other, despite differences in worldviews. In the eyes of Klotz, Jewish journalists at the time were: "On the one hand, carriers of knowledge and information [*Wissens- und Informationsträger*], on the other hand, initiators, drivers, motivators of the protest campaign". They wanted to get the Jewish readership engaged in protest actions, fund-raising for refugees from Germany and supporting the boycott of German goods (p. 3). The editorial board of each newspaper and journalist society appears in her work as a vibrant place of political and cultural life.

The thesis consists of six main chapters (chapters from two to seven) and is supplemented by an appendix with biographies of the individual journalists (among the presented authors, there was only one woman, Rachel

Auerbach, which is why Klotz refrains from using feminitives in her work). In her introduction, the author precisely presents the methodology, the literature on the subject, the general idea and her way of working. She also explains the most important concepts, placing them in a broader context. Her work can be regarded as a part of the research on Polish, German and Jewish history, and it fits into various categories of historical research, such as the History of knowledge or Holocaust studies (the issues described in her thesis are a kind of prelude to the Holocaust and they help to understand the numerous attitudes of its participants). She also defines the key terms of her work: knowledge [*Wissen*] and public [*Öffentlichkeit*]. The great advantage of the thesis is undoubtedly an exhaustive study of Yiddish sources conducted by the author. Following in the second chapter, titled: 'Making Jewish News: Warsaw Jewish Press and Its Authors before 1933", the author introduces the reader to the subject matter of her work: she briefly describes selected titles, the ambivalent and changing attitude of the Jewish press (and, through it, of ordinary people) towards Germany and Germans over the years, characterises the role of the press as the only mass medium for the Jewish community and the role that writers played among Jews, influencing their way of perceiving the world. The reader is also given a characterisation of the German correspondents as a group of people with much in common: most came from the Russian Empire, studied in large cities and were socially and politically active. Against the background of the general history of the press and its creators, Klotz also presents the networks of interconnections between writers – both in Poland and abroad, the meeting places where knowledge was exchanged, events discussed and information received and processed (editorial offices, cafés, associations).

In the third chapter, titled 'Berlin–Warsaw Express. Jewish Journalism in the Context of Persecution and Surveillance in Poland and Germany', the reader learns about the changing social and economic situation of the Jewish press and its authors, especially after Poland signed the German–Polish declaration of non-aggression, which resulted in the German side making it difficult to obtain information and Poland banning its publication. In this part of her book, Klotz wonders how journalists and newspapers were able to gain objective information about the events and situation in Germany in the face of increasing exclusion and persecution of Jews, as a result of which Jewish intellectuals began to leave Berlin en masse. The political upheaval led to reporters being forced to seek other sources and ways of obtaining information. Despite financial obstacles and increasing censorship, Jewish journalists who saw their profession as a social mission invented new ways of gathering information and passing it to their readers.

In the fourth chapter, titled 'The Dance of the Demons Begins. Writing about Nationalism and Anti-Semitism', the author presents the surge of interest in the situation in Germany and the rash of all sorts of articles

related to events in Germany. Klotz notes that Jewish journalists were not only equally well informed as their foreign colleagues but often knew more about the Nazis' anti-Semitic and anti-communist activities and took Hitler's appointment as German Chancellor more seriously seeing that moment as a watershed, while their German colleagues often saw it as "the result of a chain of coincidences". In this section, Klotz also shows the attempts made by the Jewish press to find the causes of anti-Semitism – to understand it, redefine it and determine the threat.

Chapter Five, titled 'Documenting the Crime', includes an analysis of the travel reports and reportages between 1933 and 1938. Klotz indicates that the journalists' activity expanded, according to the tradition mentioned before, beyond the framework of merely theoretical analyses. Nazi Germany had become a place about which readers wanted to know as much as possible. Therefore, disregarding the danger, "two dozen journalists from Warsaw had travelled to Germany" (p. 257) between 1932 and 1939. Reportages were written by people not necessarily working for the newspaper in question but visiting Germany as well as intellectuals living there permanently. The texts described the reactions of Germans and Jews living in Germany to, among other things, Hitler's rise to power (1933), the introduction of the Nuremberg Laws (1935) or the Olympic Games (1936), as well as the ordinary life of representatives of various social strata among Jews living in Germany. The journalists were also keen to make observations on trains and at the German borders, showing, on the one hand, the indifference of ordinary Germans and, on the other, blind followers of Führer, especially in the pages of the *Naye Folkstsaytung,* there was shown opposition of common people (p. 280). Through the reportages, readers became observers of the increasingly difficult everyday life of German Jews. Klotz points out that observations of the Jewish journalists on the role of Nazi anti-Semitism coincide with the research of contemporary scholars, which testifies to the professionalism of the journalists of the time and the importance of their coverage, also in the context of Holocaust research.

In the sixth chapter, titled 'From Theory to Practice', Klotz returns to the argument stated at the beginning of her work. The journalists were not only describing and informing but also organising protests, urging people to participate and helping those affected. This chapter describes the first deliberations, discussions, and plans for a boycott that arose among the Jewish intelligentsia and creative circles, the attempts to provoke a reaction from the Polish authorities, and the subsequent exhortation in the press pages to take specific protest actions. It was thanks to these actions, Klotz argues, that the pillars of organised protest emerged: the boycott of German goods and cultural goods coordinated by the Head Office of the Merchants' Union, and the humanitarian aid for refugees led by the United Committee for German Refugees [*Fareynikter Komitet far di Pleytim in Daytshland*]. Attempts

were made to organise the protest together, and so, for example, on 30 March 1933, the slogan "Jews boycott German goods while Hitler persecutes Jews in Germany" appeared on the front page of almost all newspapers (p. 326). Only the *Naye Folkstsaytung* did not follow – the Bund, as Klotz indicates, would often take a different route to achieve the same goals.

During this period, the Jewish press also more and more often reacted to the tragic reports from Germany with jokes, caricatures and satires. The reading of books burned as part of the 'Bücherverbrennung', etc., was also encouraged as a protest. Is it not interesting that because of the boycott of German cultural goods, the Warsaw Philharmonic, whose primary audience was Jewish and which did not want to stop performances by German musicians, had to give up maintaining its own orchestra (pp. 350–1)?

In Chapter Seven, titled 'Escalation. The Crisis of 1938 and the Outbreak of the Second War', Klotz shows that the reactions of Jewish intellectuals to the Nazi assumption of power in Germany as well as the forms of protest described before, did not help much. In July 1935, the protest movement became illegal in Poland, and the growing anti-Semitism in the country gained the dominant place in the Jewish press. It was only in the face of three major events that the Jewish press – constantly fighting against censorship – wrote back. These were: *Polenaktion* (October 1938), *Kristallnacht* and the outbreak of the Second World War. The Jewish population reached then for familiar and worked out mechanisms – aid committees were formed again, the press and intellectuals rushed to help. They went to Zbąszyń to document the tragedy while informing the world about it, despite the fact that the Polish authorities did not allow too detailed information about the situation at the border.

These activities came to an end with the outbreak of war. Klotz briefly presents the fate of journalists after the outbreak, as well as the situation and activities of those who managed to escape from Europe. In this section, the image of a large family of writers and journalists who were still trying to continue their work in Vilnius, among other places, returns. They documented events, wrote papers and supported each other – it was thanks to that tradition, practice and experience, Klotz argues, that groups such as Oneg Shabbat could be formed. Those of them who managed to survive described the rich pre-war life of Warsaw's Jewish intellectuals and documented the Holocaust.

Anne-Christin Klotz's work is a significant contribution not only to the pre-war social history of Polish Jews, but also to Holocaust studies. Only by knowing what happened before Holocaust are we able to understand better what happened during it. The author had shown that the Yiddish press was an important source of materials concerning Jews in Germany, descriptions of various attitudes of Germans and also to look at the actions of the Polish authorities, which do not always clearly correspond to the image of Poland as only a victim (or even a hero) of the Second World War – the picture

which is being forcibly projected today. Klotz points out, which is reluctantly discussed, that the Polish government did not stand unequivocally against Hitler, but sought ways of agreement with him, hindered the distribution of information about the fate of the Jews in Germany, delayed taking a strong stance on the matter and remained silent even in the face of the human catastrophe that was undoubtedly the detention of Jews in Zbąszyń.

Although Klotz chose four nationwide newspapers published by different Jewish circles, the reader may get an impression that the perception of the situation in Germany was similar in all of them (the most significant difference she notes is the attitude of *Naye Folkstsaytung*). It would be interesting to look at what it was like in the case of the press outside Warsaw. There are also many repetitions in a book based on her doctoral thesis. Certain things seem apparent, but there still remain some others that may surprise the reader. The work underlines how much was noticed about the Nazi danger and how much was done (or perhaps how little could be done). Concluding her book, Klotz writes about the relevance of the described problems – and this statement becomes even sharper after the outbreak of war in Ukraine.

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Friedrich Cain, *Wissen im Untergrund. Praxis und Politik klandestiner Forschung im besetzten Polen (1939–1945)*, Tübingen, 2021, Mohr Siebeck, 534 pp.; series: Historische Wissensforschung, 14

In 1982, for several months, I filled in for the interned secretary of Professor Witold Kula, who was by then very ill. The almost daily visits to the apartment of the Professor and his wife, sociologist and historian Nina Assorodobraj-Kula, in Warsaw's Żoliborz district, were one of my formative experiences. We talked a lot, i.e., Witold Kula spoke, and I – then a third-year student of history at the University of Warsaw – listened. Due to the 'wartime' conditions, a large part of the topics revolved around the occupation, especially the current state of science, the role of books, etc. He recalled his underground activities, the fortuitous rescue of his private library, and his stay in a POW camp after the Warsaw Uprising (August–September 1944) when he finally had time for his long-overdue reading. All the more so, in the Oflag II-D Gross-Born, the library was also well-stocked with scholarly works.[1]

[1] On both the occupation activities and the captivity of Witold Kula, see Marcin Kula, 'Wspomnienia o wspomnieniach. Syn o pobycie Witolda Kuli w niewoli', *Łambinowicki Rocznik Muzealny*, 32 (2009), 123–35.

In the Professor's narratives, the then little-known to me characters of Natalia Gąsiorowska, Stanisław Ossowski, or Józef Chałasiński featured prominently. These conversations were complemented by the Professor's wartime diary published in 1994, which significantly differed from most of the wartime diaries I knew (at the time).[2] This was not surprising, as constant malnourishment prompted the author to broader social and historical reflections. I must also admit that this little booklet, along with Kazimierz Wyka's *Życie na niby* [*Life as if*], thanks to the intellectual finesse of the authors, and their ability to make observations and put them on paper, prompted me to change my perspective on the occupation and pay more attention to both its ambiguity and the role of emotions and psychological issues.

It is also not surprising that it is Kula, Wyka, and Stanisław Ossowski (whose wartime diary was unfortunately not published until 2022[3]) who are among Friedrich Cain's most important guides through the back alleys of Polish science during the occupation. There is no doubt that the German historian has offered us one of the most innovative, though at the same time not indisputable, perspectives on the occupation in general. To a large extent, he owes this to his thematically and geographically diverse academic path, as he studied in Halle, Bremen, Cracow, Berkeley, and Konstanz. In the latter, he obtained his doctoral degree in 2018 based on a dissertation, under the German requirement, published in the form of the book under review.

He has effectively demonstrated that one can see much more clearly from the outside. The young researcher was also able to look at the occupation without the encumbrances characteristic of older generations and, at the same time, take advantage of a methodological revolution, incorporating, among others, sociological and psychological tools into the research on war and occupation, especially emotions, without consideration of which it is difficult to imagine any description of social behaviour. Cain went far beyond the hitherto reconstructive and factual accounts of underground science. He notices, of course, the institutions and organisations dealing with it, but they are not at the centre of his interests. Nor does he attempt to present the entire landscape of wartime science, focusing instead on three broadly defined fields: social sciences (mainly sociology), medicine and physics, astronomy and technical sciences. One may, of course, ask why the author did not deal with, for example, historical sciences or literary studies, in which there was quite a lot going on during the occupation.

On the other hand, the areas of science that Cain dealt with provided a starting point, as in a good novella, for related issues and often fascinating

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[2] Witold Kula, *Dziennik czasu okupacji*, ed. by Nina Assorodobraj-Kula and Marcin Kula, introd. and footnotes by Marcin Kula (Warszawa, 1994).

[3] Stanisław Ossowski, *Dzienniki*, ii: *1939–1949*, ed. Róża Sułek (Warszawa, 2022).

case studies. Indeed, the researcher notices both the macro and the micro level, focuses on particular topics, phenomena, and characters, trying to penetrate as deeply as possible, reconstructing contexts, motivations, limitations, and frameworks for action, threats, and benefits, everyday practices, and the functioning of social networks, etc. In an excellently constructed introduction, he both convincingly justified the methodological issues and defined and contextualised "underground science", pointing out its psychological, material, and political conditions.

With the onset of the occupation, science and scientists were suddenly deprived of their existing tools, facilities, social status, friendly environment, and security. For example, the rector of the University of Warsaw, archaeologist Włodzimierz Antoniewicz, worked as a stoker in a school during the war's first winter. In any case, he was in a better situation than the scientists deported to the General Government from the territories incorporated into the Reich, deprived not only of all their possessions but also of their former surroundings.[4] Even in Cracow, where the possibility of compromise with the occupiers was most hoped for, the arrest of professors of the Jagiellonian University and the University of Science and Technology quickly demonstrated the actual framework for action. The defeat of France in June 1940 and, finally, the German aggression against the Soviet Union a year later convinced the hardened optimists of the need to focus on long-term activities and develop new strategies.

On the one hand, the return to scholarly work made it possible to break away from 'life as if',[5] defined by Kazimierz Wyka, overcome the psychological effects of the defeat, and regain the sense of subjectivity and agency taken away by the occupiers. On the other hand, as Cain emphasised, such a 'real life' outside the framework of the occupation was marked by ambiguities, compromises, and entering into spaces that were even associated with collaboration. Scientists deprived of their previous facilities – libraries, studios, or laboratories – either had to look for topics or forms of activity that would allow them to work without them or to use institutions licensed by the occupiers or, like Prof. Rudolf Weigl's Institute of Typhus and Virus Research in Lviv, even working for them. The occupiers needed libraries and medical and technical personnel both for their needs and for the more efficient functioning of the colony, which was, in fact, the General Government. Thus, medical and

[4] See the memoirs of Stanisław Kasznica, lawyer, rector of the University of Poznań: Stanisław Wincenty Kasznica, *Druga wojna światowa. Wspomnienia spisane na podstawie codziennych notatek*, ed. and introd. by Marta Szczesiak-Ślusarek (Warszawa–Poznań, 2013).

[5] A full edition of *Życie na niby* in a language other than Polish was published only in 2022: *Leben als ob. Aufzeichnungen aus dem besetzten Polen*, introd. by Jerzy Kochanowski, transl. by Lothar Quinkenstein (Paderborn, 2022).

technical schools were allowed, which were the foundation for clandestine medicine and polytechnical faculties; municipal and private vocational education was similarly used. 'Civilising' Polish cities by the occupiers required architectural and urban planning studios. All the above institutions employed scientists, guaranteeing documents that protected them to some extent against repression and provided the necessary research facilities.

The stabilisation of the occupation structures was accompanied by their 'taming' by the Polish society and the professionalisation of the underground institutions financing and organising scientific activity. Thanks to this, Włodzimierz Antoniewicz mentioned above, formally employed in the Warsaw magistrate's office, was able to become involved in clandestine university structures (and, on the other hand, to cooperate with the Cracow Institut für Deutsche Ostarbeit, which employed a not inconsiderable group of Polish researchers), official publications (e.g., legal ones) were published, of course with the observance of various masking methods, such as backdating, etc. I must admit that in Cain's book, I missed a more explicit acknowledgement and definition of this additional scientific 'taming' of the occupation.[6]

On the one hand, the author treated underground science as an analytical category beyond heroism and struggle, but at the same time, he perceived it as one of the essential forms of resistance, pointing out, however, the role of the conviction, already widespread during the occupation, that armed struggle is not the best foundation for building a modern society. It was necessary, it was argued, to move from the romantic cult of the intelligentsia to a pragmatic, egalitarian cult of education. It is then not surprising that the author began his presentation of individual fields with the social sciences, guided by the texts of Stanisław Ossowski, with his left-wing sensibility and knowledge of two occupations (he spent the years 1939–41 in Soviet-occupied Lviv). It is also no coincidence that part of the chapter on 'sociologies of occupation' is devoted to the clandestine activity (albeit within the framework of a studio licensed by the occupiers) of also mostly left-wing urban planners and architects.[7] The social backing for their projects was taken care of by Ossowski, who prepared plans for the socialisation of Warsaw, including the 'smoothing' access of all residents to science and education institutions.

As leitmotifs for the next chapter, in keeping with the trend of rapidly developing biohistorical and biopolitical research, Cain chose microbes and hunger. In both cases, Cain pointed to the ambiguity of underground science. For both the Soviet and German occupiers, the fear of the epidemic was

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[6] See recently Marta Dziedzicka, 'Oswajanie okupacji. Kontynuacja życia przez polską inteligencję. Rekonesans', *Przegląd Historyczny*, cix, 4 (2018), 587–610.

[7] See recently Małgorzata Popiołek-Roßkamp, 'Architects in the General Government: Activities, Reckoning, Memory', *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung*, lxx, 4 (2021), 663–88.

stronger than ideological, class, and racial rules. As a result, both communists and national socialists took great care of Prof. Rudolf Weigl's Institute of Typhus and Virus Research in Lviv, which researched the disease and produced vaccines. This gave Weigl ample room to manoeuvre, allowing him to carry out advanced research work and care for a large group of intellectuals, including Jews. For example, although Ludwik Fleck, a bacteriologist employed by him, was sent to Auschwitz in 1943 and then to Buchenwald, he did survive while working on vaccines there. Weigl was also able to supply concentration camps and ghettos with typhoid vaccines illegally. However, he could not help everyone, risking accusations of selfishness and collaboration.

The doctors in the Warsaw ghetto were no strangers to ethical dilemmas either – albeit for entirely different reasons – divided into seven teams; they examined hunger-related diseases, from dystrophic dermatological and haematological reactions to neurological and psychological ones. Hunger and its effects were (and are) a global phenomenon, but never before had such a thorough study been conducted on such a large group. Smuggled out of the ghetto, the results were published shortly after the war.[8] These are not easy topics to present, but one must admit that the author managed to find a compromise between empathy and a necessarily dispassionate scientific description devoid of emotions.

While in a chapter devoted to the 'occupation of the body' Cain noticed primarily 'borderland institutions', located between collaboration and conspiracy (closer to the latter, however), he devoted more space to purely conspiratorial scientific institutions in the third chapter, 'Physics and the Nation. The Underground State and Science'. But, as above, this is not so much a detailed analysis of the Department of Education and Culture of the Government Delegation for Poland, but rather an indication of frameworks and goals for scientists to work within, not only in accordance with the patriotic catalogue and the imperative to shape a new citizen but also tailored to the conditions of the occupation. As in the previous chapter, the main theme was medicine, including sciences, especially physics. On the one hand, in the case of the sciences, according to the proposal of the hydrobiologist Marian Gieysztor, it was possible to limit oneself to theory, without laboratories, etc., but with the possibility of the practical application of the results in the future. On the other hand, also in these fields, there were institutions necessary for the functioning of the occupation, providing the basis for experimental research. Cain mentioned here the Astronomical Observatory of the Jagiellonian University or the Department of Physical Measurements working for Warsaw's needs, which was, in practice, part

[8] Emil Apfelbaum (ed.), *Choroba głodowa. Badania kliniczne nad głodem wykonane w getcie warszawskim z roku 1942* (Warszawa, 1946).

of the former Faculty of Physics of the University of Warsaw. By the way, the head of the Department of Measurements was Prof. Stefan Pieńkowski, a two-time rector of the University of Warsaw in the interwar period, and from 1941 on, the head of the Delegation for the Government of Poland's Department of Science and Higher Education (and the first rector of the University of Warsaw after the war, 1945–7).

This chapter was also an opportunity for a more in-depth description of the functioning of social networks, the basis of all survival strategies during the occupation. The author also chose an excellent case study – the co-founder of the Polish Physical Society and collaborator of Maria Curie-Skłodowska, Ludwik Wertenstein, who came from a Jewish family. He survived until 1944 in various places and under different names, thanks to transnational social networks. In 1944, he reached Budapest, where in January 1945, he died accidentally from shrapnel during the siege of the city.

There are many such fascinating cases in Cain's work, which are a good testament to his erudition, excellent knowledge of sources and literature, and ultimately a great sense of the realities of the occupation. The bibliography is also impressive, both in terms of archival material, published documents, egodocuments, journalism, and subject literature (over 40 pages!). Particularly noteworthy is the section of 'unpublished archival materials', coming from both Polish state and institutional archives (e.g., the Jagiellonian University, the University of Warsaw, the Polish Academy of Sciences, and the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences) and foreign ones (Germany, Canada). One wonders only why the author, using German materials in the Warsaw Central Archives of Modern Records (AAN), did not investigate the large collection of the Government Delegation for Poland. In addition to the "published sources and subject literature" used by Cain, one can also mention publications that he could have used if only to show the emotional background.[9] Instead, for future research, one can also indicate, for example, diaries and memoirs of scholars (e.g., Stanisław Srokowski, associated with the underground Academy of Political Sciences), which the author had no chance to use.[10]

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[9] For example, Andrzej Prinke, 'Listy Cioci Zosi: Korespondencja prof. Józefa Kostrzewskiego z czasów jego okupacyjnej tułaczki po Podkarpaciu (III 1941 – IV 1942)', *Analecta Archaeologica Ressoviensia* 11 (2017), 313–47; Jerzy Andrzejewski, Stefania Baczyńska, Tadeusz Gajcy, Karol Irzykowski, Karol Ludwik Koniński, Czesław Miłosz, and Kazimierz Wyka, *Pod okupacją. Listy*, introd. by Marta Wyka, ed. by Maciej Urbanowski (Warszawa, 2014); Jan Szczepański, *Dzienniki z lat 1935–1945*, ed. by Daniel Kadłubiec (Ustroń, 2009).

[10] Stanisław Srokowski, *Dzienniki 1939–1944*, introd. by Piotr Biliński, ed. by Piotr Biliński and Jacek Emil Szczepański (Warszawa, 2021); Stefan Kieniewicz, *Pamiętniki*, ed. by Jan Kieniewicz (Kraków, 2021); Karol Marian Pospieszalski, *"To wszystko przeżyłem…". Wspomnienia*, ed. Piotr Grzelczak, Bogumił Rudawski,

Although the title promises an analysis of underground science in 'occupied Poland', in practice, the author limits himself to three university centres in the General Government (Warsaw, Cracow, Lviv), treating, e.g., Vilnius or smaller centres where the research took place, for example after the Warsaw Uprising, far too briefly. It would not hurt to at least mention the clandestine Academy of Political Sciences and pay a little more attention to the Free Polish University. The latter, both because of how it operated (it focused on students, mainly of peasant origin, commuting to Warsaw), and because, after the war, it became the foundation for the new University of Łódź.

Cain devoted considerable space to the process of transition of underground science to peaceful activity. I would note, however, that, for example, the scientists employed during the occupation in the Government Delegation for Poland's New Territories Office formed the core of the Ministry of Recovered Territories after the war. I also missed the conversation in the autumn of 1945, crucial for understanding the situation at that time, between the historian, Professor Tadeusz Manteuffel, and his younger colleague Aleksander Gieysztor, who later became an internationally renowned researcher, the president of the Polish Academy of Sciences (completely omitted by Cain), about the dilemma of scientists: to remain in conspiracy and fight against the new authorities or take up science. As historian Karol Modzelewski commented,

> Tadeusz Manteuffel – before the war, an assistant professor in Marceli Handelsman's department, during the occupation, a comrade-in-arms of historians associated with BIP [Bureau of Information and Propaganda], and after the war, the spiritual leader of this milieu – declared: "Now we will not do any guerrilla warfare, but a university". … It was Manteuffel who became an authority in the new situation and brought together people such as Aleksander Gieysztor, Stanisław Herbst, Stefan Kieniewicz, and Witold Kula (all from the BIP milieu). When the black-and-white reality of the German occupation passed, and space for organic work appeared, the romantics of yesterday transformed themselves into positivists and replaced their insurgent armbands with professorial gowns to rebuild and protect under the communist regime imposed by the Soviet Union the national cultural institutions condemned by the Nazis.[11]

Although it sounds paradoxical, and from the point of view of current Polish historical policy, iconoclastic, those who fought in the underground with arms in their hands and made such great sacrifices achieved a moral

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and Maria Wagińska-Marzec (Poznań, 2019); Marcin Wolniewicz, 'Z czego żył historyk w czasie wojny? Przypadek Stefana Kieniewicza (1939–1945), *Kwartalnik Historii Nauki i Techniki*, lxvii, 1 (2022), 157–73.

[11] Karol Modzelewski, 'Aleksander Gieysztor', *Pauza Akademicka. Tygodnik Polskiej Akademii Umiejętności*, iv, 132 (8 Sept. 2011), 1–2; http://www.pauza.krakow.pl/132_2011.pdf [Accessed: 13 Jan. 2023].

rather than a military victory. On the other hand, science came out of the war unquestionably with a shield. Friedrich Cain's book leaves no doubt here.

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Józef Czapski, *Dziennik wojenny* [War Diary], ed. by Mikołaj Nowak-Rogoziński, Warszawa, 2022, Wydawnictwo Próby, Instytut Dokumentacji i Studiów nad Literaturą Polską, 648 pp., ills

A volume of the *War Diary* of Józef Czapski, one of the most important figures of Polish political history and the history of twentieth-century culture, aristocrat, painter, officer in General Anders' Army, co-founder of the Literary Institute in Paris, who died in 1993 at the age of ninety-seven, was just made available to the Polish readers. The diary covers a period of two years, from March 1942 to March 1944 (Czapski was at that time head of the Propaganda and Information Department in General Anders' army, and among other duties, served as an editor of *Orzeł Biały* [The White Eagle] weekly). Still, it is very extensive, consisting of more than six hundred pages of dense notes. The volume that reaches the Polish reader is the earliest preserved part of Czapski's diary if we exclude the notebook from the camp in Griazovets. Another thirty voluminous manuscripts are still waiting to be published.

Józef Czapski is known mainly as the author of two memoirs belonging to the classics of Polish gulag literature, *Wspomnienia starobielskie* [English edition: *Memories of Starobielsk: Essays Between Art and History*] and *Na nieludzkiej ziemi* [English edition: *Inhuman Land: Searching for the Truth in Soviet Russia, 1941–1942*]. The books, which are probably known to every high school student in Poland, had been published in Polish quite early – the first one in 1944, the second one in 1949 at Maisons-Laffitte; but while being crucial works from the Polish perspective, they did not resonate so much in the West. They cover Czapski's fate in the USSR after he had been taken captive on 27 September 1939. Interned in Starobilsk, he was released from the camp under the Sikorski-Mayski agreement; General Anders' Army headquarters, he was tasked with finding several thousand Polish officers who, like him, had been taken prisoner in 1939. As is well known, this mission did not succeed: the officers, by order of the Politburo of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), had been murdered in Kharkiv, Mednoye and Katyn in the spring of 1940.

Jerzy Stempowski, one of the most important columnists of the Paris-based monthly magazine *Kultura*, wrote to Czapski about the *Inhuman Land* after

it was published in March 1949: "there is something crystal clear in your book that is not always present even in the lives of Saints".[1]

However, what emerges from the diary is a somewhat different picture of Czapski himself and of the times than the depiction we find in his memoirs. First of all, Józef Czapski's *War Diary* is a detailed, even meticulous work, it has a somewhat working character, it was not subjected to any literary enhancements and compositional stylisations, so it makes a rather crude impression, at times even chaotic, as disorderly and chaotic notes written down in the heat of the moment can be. The war diary is thus rather a notebook, a journal where Czapski noted everything that should not be forgotten; often it was the account of most ordinary everyday, seemingly trifle events, as if the diary was not meant to be whole, but merely a source for further, actual writing to be composed at a later date. "Buy – brushes and paints. Put the underwear in the wash" (p. 155) or: "I'm going to a cobbler – to have my shoes stitched"(p. 326). This is essentially how Czapski's daily life was and how he recorded it.

Therefore, this diary will probably not yield great discoveries to researchers of political history, diplomatic relations and military historians. While Czapski was at the center of major historical events, and had constant and close contacts with the commander-in-chief of the Polish Army in the East, he did not extensively analyse or comment on London government-in-exile policy or other matters pertaining to international relations and the broader geopolitical game.

This is not to say, of course, that Czapski was a recluse or that he omitted the events that the whole world was concerned with at the time. He devoted much of the diary to his duties, military companions, and general army relations. He did not have a servile nature, so it is clear that he viewed the army and the military critically: "men of stature and smallness gnaw at each other, tear out bits of flesh with their teeth, and everyone is sure that he's right", he wrote (p. 315). Integrity dictated that he performed all his duties to the best of his ability, but he was not in his place after all: "life is gone, strength is gone, I may no longer have the resilience to return to my work. It is necessary to carry out this work, which I do, to the very end, with passion as if it were 'my' job" (p. 345).

One of the most interesting examples of Czapski's optics, i.e. noticing events that happened next door and were individual in nature, while overlooking those that were obviously important, but happened far away, and were global, can be found in his notes of April 1943. On 11 April 1943, Berlin radio reported the discovery of mass graves of Polish officers in Katyn near Smolensk. This sensational and tragic news was very soon to completely

[1] Stempowski's letter to Czapski of 19 March 1949.

overturn the entire policy of the London government-in-exile toward the USSR and, as a result, led to the severance of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and the government of General Sikorski. Meanwhile, in his diary, Czapski, who had recently devoted long months to the unsuccessful search for thousands of missing Polish officers, did not mention the German announcement! Only on 27 April, after more than two weeks, did he note: "This morning, the Soviets broke off diplomatic relations with Poland because of our 'solidarity' with the Germans over Katyn" (p. 261). We can assume with absolute certainty that the discovery of the Katyn graves, which became a fundamental political event, was also the most important topic of discussion among the military. Yet it did not make it onto the pages of the diary.

Czapski did not actually address the heart of the matter. Instead, he noted what was of seemingly secondary importance but was seen by him at close range, namely that this new situation would affect relations within the Polish army – the crisis would strengthen General Anders, while weakening Prime Minister Sikorski, who was seeking a settlement. "These are political games, how foreign to me!", he wrote (p. 261).

The same thing happened a few months later, after the plane crash near Gibraltar, one of the political events with massive and long-lasting consequences for the London government-in-exile. Czapski learned of General Sikorski's death the day after the accident; the news found him in Haifa. However, he devoted only one small paragraph to this exceptionally momentous incident which changed the course of political events; in addition, he commented not on the case itself, but on Berlin's propaganda follies on the subject: "Immediately driving to the ministry, confirmation and consternation. Already German news that [he was] killed by the English on Stalin's orders!" (p. 213).

Instead, Czapski's work, as a record of the writer's emotional and intellectual life, will certainly be of interest to his biographers. At one point, Czapski noted: "Suddenly, the war strangely receded into the background of my consciousness, and not only mine. Is it the mood of Tehran, this after all beautiful modern city among the wild mountains", he wondered, and called this state of mind "softening" (p. 139).

Czapski often returned to events and people from the past that were important to him, including Dmitry Filosofov – creator of the famous literary group House in Kolomna [*Domek w Kołomnie*], a great St Petersburg critic and publicist, a friend of Zinaida Gippius and Dmitry Merezhkovsky, one of the most important figures of Russian emigration in interwar Poland. Russian affairs are often mentioned in the diary, but usually as a recollection of a world that no longer exists. There are also echoes of Czapski's literary fascinations – from Tolstoy to Proust.

In the final passages, recorded in March 1944, Józef Czapski took stock of his two years of working in the Propaganda and Information Department.

And there again, he was looking more into himself than documenting the world around him. This excerpt, quite dramatic, testifies to the dilemmas Czapski faced as he tried to define the path he should follow – an officer in the army, a man in charge of a unit and working exclusively with others, but also, above all, a painter, an artist who works in solitude and who does not have the opportunity to frequently bear the fruits of his work: "little by little I created for myself my inner circle of people, where I took responsibility and, after all, worked persistently as best as I could". Yet he further noted: "I feel an emptiness and inner despair" and even "[feel] dead inside" (p. 594).

Józef Czapski's W*ar Diary* is thus, first and foremost, a testimony of the author's emotional and spiritual life; only later is it a wartime account. It testifies to the doubts that haunted Czapski, questions about whether it would be possible to return to practising art and whether his artistic and painting ambitions would find a satisfactory outlet. Czapski posed these questions to himself: "Will I return to painting? It was van Gogh who said that all his life he felt melancholy that it's more worthwhile to work in flesh and blood itself than in paint" (p. 598).

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Adrianna Szczerba, *Kierownictwo Badań nad Początkami Państwa Polskiego (1949–1953). Geneza, działalność, znaczenie* [The Directorate of Research on the Beginnings of the Polish State (1949–1953). Genesis, Activity, Significance], Łódź, 2021, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 358 pp., ills, maps, plans

The management of cultural heritage in communist Poland remains an underresearched topic. Not only is research needed on the development of such academic disciplines as archaeology, ethnography, art history, and history, but also on the heritage policies of the communist regime and the role of the past in its politics. This inadequacy is especially evident in the case of administrative, cultural, and academic institutions responsible for protecting national heritage. Therefore, any attempt to fill that gap immediately attracts the attention of heritage historians. A recent example of such an attempt is a book on the Directorate of Research on the Beginnings of the Polish State [Kierownictwo Badań nad Początkami Państwa Polskiego]. It was an institution of fundamental significance for the development of both archaeology and the history of material culture in post-war Poland and a forerunner of the Institute of the History of Material Culture [Instytut Historii Kultury Materialnej], currently the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology [Instytut

Archeologii i Etnologii] of the Polish Academy of Sciences. The book was written by Adrianna Szczerba and published by the University of Łódź in 2021. The author, an archaeologist, works as an assistant professor [*adiunkt*] at the Institute of Archaeology of the University of Łódź, specialising in the modern history of Polish archaeology. Her book is the result of a project funded by the National Science Center [Narodowe Centrum Nauki] and was preceded by several articles on the history of the Directorate in Polish and Ukrainian journals.

The book is divided into nine chapters, including an introduction and a conclusion. In the introduction, the author presents the aim of the book as an overview of the impact of the Directorate. She stresses the contribution of that institution to the development of modern Polish archaeology, in spite of its theoretical (Marxist) tenets, which had been discredited by the 1960s. She argues that "without the experience of those years, especially that gained through the activities of the Directorate, it would be hard to imagine [modern] Polish archaeology, and not only the part of it which concerns the history and culture of the Middle Ages" (pp. 7–8). Regrettably, the author only mentions existing studies on the Directorate by way of references to different articles and books on the subject in a footnote. The lack of discussion of the work of her predecessors is a severe drawback of the book.

Similarly, little attention is paid to the methodology of the research, rather cursorily described as "the analysis of source content" and "critical discourse analysis" (p. 11). In my opinion, the latter term is misapplied in this context. Critical discourse analysis is a methodological tool rooted in the conviction that language is determined by power relations in society. In the reviewed book, this conviction is not expressed; thus, it seems that the author has misinterpreted the term, using it in place of source criticism.

The book's first chapter discusses the interpretation of the origins of the Polish state prior to the emergence of the Directorate. The author focuses mainly on the nineteenth and early twentieth century. The interwar dispute between Polish and German historians over whether the Polish statehood was of Slavic or Germanic origin is especially well covered. The author provides evidence of the political foundations of both viewpoints, stressing that the problem attracted particular attention in Poland among the academic circles in Poznań. The city was the centre of the so-called Western Thought [*myśl zachodnia*], an intellectual school advocating for Polish rights to such territories as not only Greater Poland (a territory acquired by Prussia in the late 18th century and regained by Poles in 1919), but also Pomerania and Silesia (mostly severed from Poland in the Middle Ages, and only partially reintegrated with the new Polish state after 1918).

The second chapter is dedicated to the idea of 'Millennial Research' that undergirded the works of the Directorate. In 1946, Witold Hensel, an archaeologist from Poznań, published an article entitled 'Potrzeba

przygotowania wielkiej rocznicy' [The need for preparing a great anniversary celebration], in which he called for a rapid intensification of archaeological research on the early medieval period. In this way, he intended to mark the upcoming anniversary of Polish statehood in the 1960s. The idea fell on fertile ground, finding such influential supporters as Stanisław Lorentz, head of the Chief Directorate of Museums and Monument Protection [Naczelna Dyrekcja Muzeów i Ochrony Zabytków] in the Ministry of Culture and Art. The author suggests that it was he who convinced the communist government to take up the idea because of its apparent political potential. The notion of Millennial Research appealed to the communists because of its anti-German orientation and the focus on the western borders of Poland (although Millennial Research projects would also investigate the early medieval past of the central and eastern parts of the country). The idea of the Slavic origin of the state also corresponded with the ideology of the pan-Slavic brotherhood of communist nations under the guidance of the Soviet Union.

The third chapter examines the beginnings of the Directorate, which was established to orchestrate the research of archaeologists and historians. Although there was initially no central supervision over excavations that began in 1948, the lack of it soon proved problematic for the state administration. Inter-disciplinary cooperation was seen as essential for the future success of Millennial Research; therefore, the Ministry of Culture decided to create a special body to effect it. The Directorate was established in 1949 with the intention of providing researchers from different disciplines and academic backgrounds with a uniform methodological framework. The latter was deeply grounded in historical materialism and oriented towards social and economic rather than political aspects of the early medieval development of the Polish state. The chief problem of Millennial Research was thus the connection between the emergence of the state structures and the progress of feudalism.

Chapters Four and Five discuss the organisational structure and economic foundations of the Directorate. The separation into two chapters seems unwarranted since the account of the financial history of the institution is limited to a brief enumeration of percentages and sums drawn from the public financial reports of the Directorate (some reports were secret and therefore not preserved in the remaining archival records). It should instead be integrated with the analysis of the structure of the Directorate. The author briefly profiles its members: historian Aleksander Gieysztor and archaeologists Kazimierz Majewski and Zdzisław Adam Rajewski. She observes that, unlike Gieysztor, Majewski, and Rajewski were communists, noting that the absence of Hensel, the originator of Millennial Research, is somewhat puzzling. Apart from that three-member supervisory board, there was also the Academic Commission (headed by Lorentz), comprised of academic staff and directors of excavations. From the beginning, the Ministry treated the Directorate as a temporary solution, paving the way for a proper research

institution. In fact, by 1954, it eventually metamorphosed into the Institute of the History of Material Culture. It continued to supervise the archaeological research under the Millennial framework, while some of the Directorate's traditionally historical projects became entrusted to the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

Chapters sixth and seventh expand on the Directorate's involvement in research activity – archaeological and historical. The former chapter is also the longest in the book, amounting to a little over half of its whole length. It meticulously lists all archaeological sites supervised by the Directorate in different parts of the post-war Polish state (in Pomerania, Greater Poland, Lesser Poland, Silesia, Mazovia, Subcarpathia, and central areas of Poland). It also outlines the results of the works at each of the sites. This chapter demonstrates the impressive scale of the archaeological projects under the Millennial framework between 1949 and 1953. The latter chapter, devoted to the documentary work of the Directorate's academic staff, is much less detailed. However, the legacy of the institution in the fields of source editing, lexicography, cartography, and numismatics of the early Middle Ages, is clearly no less significant.

In her conclusion, the author defends her argument about the significance of the existence of the Directorate for the post-war development of Polish archaeology. She distances herself from 'historical criticism' of that period, focuses on political factors, and remarks that "it was the best research [undertaking] which contemporary archaeology could achieve at the time" (p. 282). Despite my reservations in the introduction concerning the evident methodological weaknesses of the reviewed work, the author has generally achieved her aim and provided sufficient evidence to support her thesis.

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