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BOOK REVIEW: WITH A ZEST AND IN A REFINED FORM... THE 7TH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF HISTORICAL SCIENCES IN WARSAW, 1933

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The book titled: *With a Zest and in a Refined Form... The 7th International Congress of Historical Sciences in Warsaw, 1933* was edited by Krzysztof A. Makowski, Maciej Michalski and Tomasz Schramm (Makowski et al., 2021b). Karolina Filipowska also participated in the editorial work. The book was published on the occasion of the XXIII International Congress of Historical Sciences, Poznań 2020/2022 (XXIII ICHS, Poznań 2020/2022), held in Poznań. The editors of this book are professors at Adam Mickiewicz University. Professor Tomasz Schramm is President of The Committee of Historical Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences, who, together with the Rector of Adam Mickiewicz University, Professor Bogumiła Kaniewska, chaired the Organizing Committee of XXIII ICHS, Poznań 2020/2022. Professor Krzysztof A. Makowski was chairman and Professor Maciej Michalski was general secretary of the Executive Committee of XXIII ICHS. Miss Karolina Filipowska served as the head of the Bureau of the XXIII ICHS, Poznań 2020/2022 (*XXIII International..., 2022*).

It was the organization of the XXIII ICHS-Poznań 2020/2022 that became the main impetus for writing a book about the previously held VII International Congress of Historical Sciences in Poland (VII ICHS,

Warsaw, Krakow 1933). "The 1933 congress directly inspired the organizers of the Poznań meeting, while revealing a number of similarities between our approach regarding mode of operation, on the one hand, and that of our predecessors, on the other" (Makowski et al., 2021b: 7). The purpose of writing the book was to demonstrate the temporal context of the Warsaw Congress, while also examining its impact on the progress of historical science and the global community of historians. The VII ICHS took place in Warsaw and Krakow from August 21–29, 1933.

The book titled *With a Zest and in a Refined Form... The 7th International Congress of Historical Sciences in Warsaw, 1933* is divided into several parts. The first part consists of scientific articles on the said *International Congress of Historical Sciences in Warsaw*. The second part consists of Source Appendix, and the third part is Addendum. The presentation of source materials well illustrates and complements the issues covered in the book. Familiarization with the contents of the book is certainly facilitated by the prepared list of illustrations, bibliography, index of personal names and notes on the contributors.

The substantive part opens with a chapter by Rafał Żebrowski entitled: *Warsaw: the host of the 7th International Congress of Historical Sciences*, which describes Warsaw in the 1930s as the "Paris of the North" (Żebrowski, 2021). The author of this chapter succinctly presents the history of Warsaw and often in a broader context. Thanks to this procedure, readers, especially foreign readers, can get a good feel of the atmosphere of the place where the VII ICHS was held in 1933. However, it is worth recalling here that part of the deliberations of this Congress was also held in Krakow. It will be useful if a twin text on interwar Cracow was also produced here.

In the next chapter, titled: *"7th International Congress of Historical Sciences" Genesis, Course, Reception*, Krzysztof A. Makowski, Maciej Michalski, Tomasz Schramm and Krzysztof Zamorski talk about the several years of preparations carried out by Polish historians under the supervision of the Polish Historical Society for the VII ICHS, the course of the congress itself, and the academic, political and social overtones of the event (Makowski, et al., 2021a). This is the main part of the book (76 pages). The endeavors of Polish historians to have the next Congress of historical sciences held in the newly established state are described in an extremely interesting way. Noteworthy is the fact of excellently described emotions accompanying the preparations, communication, and, above all, the process of creating the program of the VII ICHS, publication of abstracts and papers or introduction of new ideas (e.g.: historical-geography exhibition,

Polish language as one of the working languages of Congress). To this day, traces of this activity can be found in the private archives of scientists participating in VII ICHS (for example: APTPN, Rkp. 1501). Very interesting, although described only residually, is the influence of the dollar exchange rate on the financing of the congress.

While still having in mind the course of the XXIII ICHS in Poznań, it is worthwhile to get acquainted with the description of the course of the VII ICHS in Warsaw itself, the events preceding and accompanying the congress. In the section of the chapter titled: *"7th International Congress of Historical Sciences" Genesis, Course, Reception*, dedicated to the course of the VII ICHS, there was no lack of information on the structure of the participants, taking into account their origin and gender. There was an interesting description of which "celebrities" attended the congress and how the participants were equipped (what were in the yellow envelopes?), as well as what the barges for the participants of the VII ICHS looked like. In describing the conditions of accommodation, the reader was not limited to dry facts, but was acquainted with more than one "slip-up".

Slightly less space was devoted to describing the second part of the VII ICHS held in Krakow. This part begins with a description of the logistics. The description of the tourist offer that congress participants were able to take advantage of on the last days is delightful. In the chapter, the authors also mentioned building international relations (not only positive ones!) during VII ICHS. I think this is valuable knowledge that is still worth using today.

It is noteworthy that both the chapter on Warsaw and the one describing the course of the VII ICHS devote relatively much space to Jewish history. This is an important event given the international political situation in the atmosphere of the city where the Congress was held. A session entitled: Jewish history with this title just appeared for the first time at the congress in Warsaw. The book also describes the discussion on the place of Jewish history in general history (Makowski et al., 2021b: 66-67).

The last part of this chapter deals with the reception of the VII ICHS. This is a list that always attracts readers of the numerous references from the Warsaw and Krakow press and in scientific journals concerning the Congress. This section is also worthy of attention for its reflections comparing then and now perceptions of such events as scientific congresses.

Such a major event as VII ICHS has more than short-term results. For a reflection on the impact of VII ICHS on the development of historiography, see the chapter titled: *The Warsaw Congress: a Historiographic*

Reflection (Zamorski, 2021). It is difficult to decide whether the VII ICHS contributed to a breakthrough in the historical sciences or only accelerated the indispensable changes. One can form one's own opinion on the subject based on Krzysztof Zamorski's meticulous analysis of the subject matter of each section and its impact on Polish historiography. Also noteworthy in this chapter is the description of the ways in which Polish history was promoted among the participants and observers of the Congress. It was during this VII ICHS that "the historians as historians were desirous of seeing first-hand this newly resurrected nation" (after Fling, 1934: 269; Makowski et al., 2021b: 9). For economic historians, undoubtedly, the most interesting part of this chapter will be the description of the section VIII of the Congress on social and economic history. This was the first event of its stature to discuss the establishment of the journal *Annales* in 1929. The representation of Polish historians during this section was particularly rich. It is, especially, worth reading about the remarks on the ground-breaking paper by Jan Rutkowski, founder of the Poznan School of Economic History, on the theory of synthesis in economic history research, referring to Henri Berr's historical synthesis. It is also worth tracing the description of the origins of the influence of scientism on historical research and the discussions of this approach conducted among historians from around the world.

Among the threads in this chapter, those concerning the history curriculum in schools attract attention. After reading Natalia Gąsiorowska's postulates in this area, one has the impression that they have lost none of their relevance. Similar emotions are still evoked today by the discussion on the definition of Eastern Europe and the idea of building an ecumene of historians.

In the last chapter entitled: *Visible Person, Invisible Persons: the Gender Order at the 7th International Congress of Historical Sciences in Warsaw*, Iwona Dadej and Maria Solarska addressed the roles played by women – primarily historians during the VII ICHS. The authors note that "the microcosm of the conference of historians presents itself as an opportune stage for the observation of social processes and tendencies." How different is the situation of women historians today from that in 1933? Is history today still a "masculine" science written by men? The chapter begins with a universal argument on the perception of visible and invisible person. This chapter teaches how to change the perspective and way of looking at the world, at history, at the actors of particular events. For this reason, it is worth reading. It is also worth learning about the women who took part in the VII ICHS and became invisible in the historical narrative.

The book under review also adds to the scant historiography covering the Warsaw Congress (for example: Erdmann et al., 2005; Zamorski, 2020). Just a few years ago, international economic cooperation seemed obvious. The war in Ukraine effectively verified this perspective. The conflict exposed how fragile and delicate these relationships are. It is worth going back to read this book in order to realize that it was the scientific community of humanists that took an active part in rebuilding these relations in the past. For example, at the first Congress of Historical Sciences after World War I in Brussels in 1923, “American scholars canvassed for a peaceful settlement of international relations and expulsion of the demons of war” (Makowski et al., 2021b: 8). I hope that after the end of the war in Ukraine, the experiences of historians described in this book will be utilized and the idea of the ecumene of historians can again be put into practice.

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