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The Vitality of Letters, Memoirs and Diaries from Taken Lands

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The publication *Memoirs and Letters of Polish Authors from Taken Lands in 19th Century – Role and Place in the Historical Research* is devoted to a historically and literary complex issue. At the end of 2012, a research team formed at the Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce was granted a project within the framework of the National Programme for the Development of Humanities by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Poland. The aim of the project is to identify, document, catalogue and look in detail at the memoirs and collections of letters written by Polish authors from the Taken Lands (in other words, Western Krai, the outskirts of the former Polish state, lands taken by the Russian Empire) at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 20th century. The project provides an explanation of archival and library research in Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Russia, France, England and Poland. The material of the publication involves the articles presented in the international scientific conference held in June 2016 in the framework of the national project “Memoirs and Letters of Polish Authors from the Taken Lands (Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine) in the Period 1795–1918”. The project was implemented from 2013 to 2017. The international conference was organized by Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce, The Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences, The Committee of Historical Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences. The partners of the conference organizers were the Świętokrzyskie Voivodship and Commune and City of Chęciny. Nearly 60 Polish-language reports were presented at

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the conference by scientists from Krakow, Warsaw, Poznan, Olsztyn, Wroclaw, Lublin, Kielce, as well as from Vilnius, Kaunas, Lvov, Kiev, Lutsk, Minsk, Grodno, Novosibirsk, Omsk, Yekaterinburg, Abakan and Tomsk.

The book publishes 27 scientific articles in Polish language, 8 in Russian language, and 6 in Ukrainian language. The publication consists of four parts. The first part named “Memoirs and Letters of Polish Authors from the Taken Lands in Local and Foreign Archives Collections” carries out the investigation of the individual and collective manuscripts by Polish authors from different neighbouring lands.

Wiesław Caban conducts an analysis on the characteristics of the National Programme for the Development of Humanities. The scientist puts an emphasis on the main results of the project team in his article. Witold Molik provides an explanation of the extent the principles of publishing on the 19th century diaries can be violated. The author is convinced that the current parameterization of scientific publications and the commercialization of big publishers will not expand the offer of carefully edited diaries where the instructions for historical sources have been applied.

The scientists Lidia Snitsarchuk, Jerzy Pająk, Jerzy Szczepański, Olga Wowk, Tadeusz Epsztajn and Anna Putowa carry out research on the 19th century manuscripts by Polish authors from the Ukraine. The memoirs and diaries have been preserved at the Manuscript Department of Vasyl Stefanyk National Scientific Library of Ukraine in Lviv, and at the Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine. By revealing private and public documents the researchers provide an illustration how difficult problems of the past could be solved, especially of the Ukrainian, Polish and Jewish inhabitants, owners and prisoners of Galicia, Wolyn and Podillia.

Tomasz Kargol provides examples and analysis the family correspondence and memoirs of Polish authors of the landed gentry from the Eastern Borderlands: the Sanguszko Family Archives, the Chodkiewicz Family Młynów Archives, the Spokoćko Family Archives, the Tomkowicz Family Archives, Adam Wolański of Rudka Archives, Wysocki Archives, and Zbigniew Gloger’s Collection. These documents have been preserved at the National Archives in Krakow. One must emphasize that the article characterizes family letters of landed gentry and aristocrats, as well as administrative correspondence of an economic character.

Dmitriy Karnaukhov conducts an exploration of Polish and Russian views on the memories of the Poles exiled to Siberia from the Land of the Commonwealth incorporated into the Russian Empire in the 19th century. These testimonies establish an important source for social and cultural history of the Polish nation. The article examines the issue of the perception of Siberia by the Polish exiles in the national (Russian) and regional (Siberian) cultural context.

The second part of the publication entitled “Memoirs and Letters of the 19th Century in Contemporary History Studies” carries out the investigation of a wide range of issues related to the life of the Polish people, their private life and history, culture, literature, politics in the Russian Empire, as well as at the edges of the one.

Alicja Kulecka makes an attempt to describe the reflections on letters and diaries of the coterie of St. Peterburg in 1841–1845. The most active members of this literary group

were gathered around the magazine „Tygodnik Petersburski”. The members of the one Michał Grabowski, Henryk Rzewuski, Ignacy Hołowiński and Józef Kraszewski aimed to promote the culture of Volyn, Podolia, Polesia and Lithuania in order to gain world-class recognition for it by private and public correspondence.

Maria Korybut-Marciniak carries out the research about two high-ranking officials of Russian Empire, i. e. Stanisław Doliński and his son Artur Ignatius Doliński, born in the territory of Lithuania and Belarus. The correspondence from the Lithuanian State Historical Archives provides an illustration of how Poles searched for their place in the 19th century reality: became civil servants, made careers, worked in the office, maintained relations with superiors and colleagues, led a private life.

The problem of Poles in the education system of the Russian Empire, in the Vilnius Science District (School) is outlined in Andzej Szmyt’s research. The collections of documents and correspondence analysed in this paper come from the archives in Kiev and St. Petersburg.

Research by Volodymyr Dolinovskyi, Mariusz Korzeniowski, Rafał Kowalczyk, and Svitlana Krawczenko describes the life, social activities and correspondence of the Polish people living in Kiev, Volyn and Podolia in 19th century.

The third part “Polish from the Taken Lands in Siberian exile in the light of the memoirs and letters of the 19th century” of the book aims to describe the letters of the 19th century and the diaries of the Poles that were deported in Siberia.

Anna Krikk from Omsk conducts an exploration on the correspondence of Polish political convicts in East-Siberia. The analysis is based on the perillustrated materials from the late 1860s. The article focuses on the metaphorical language used by exiles, the strict censorship applied to letters.

Svetlana Mulina from Omsk analyses the case of the correspondence between Michał Zaba and Edward Radwanski. The contacts of the exiled participants of the 1863 Uprising with their historic homeland are investigated.

Tatiana Mosunowa from Jekaterinburg is interested in personal letters of Siberian Catholic parish priests with the Archbishop of Mogilev as a source of knowledge about moral climate among Polish migrants and their interactions with the local population.

Lidia Michalska-Bracha from Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce makes an attempt to determine the methodological aspects of the critical approach to the correspondence of Stanisław Miaskowski, a publicist and participant in the January Uprising. The article can be regarded as an incentive for a discussion on the interpretation of epistolography, and the methodology for the investigation of letters by private persons.

Jacek Legieć from Kielce conducts an exploration of Zygmunt Sierakowski’s stay in Orenburg in the light of his letters to Włodzimierz Spasowicz. The letters of this man convey its wide range of emotions, belief in the future, and the ability to influence it.

Zbigniew J. Wójcik from Warszaw provides an explanation of the philologist, writer, historian, teacher, and translator, participant of the anti-Russian Uprising Marian Karol Dubiecki. The article discusses his life, activities, arrests, places of custody, personal testimonies as well.

Vasiliy Khanevich from Tomsk analyses the Orzeszko family correspondence and memoirs. The family was exiled in Tomsk after the January Uprising.

Mariusz Nowak from Kielce provides a survey on descriptions of Siberia in Józef Bogusławski's diary. It should be emphasized that all the documents analysed supplement the historical studies of Siberia essentially.

The fourth part named "Memoirs and letters of women of the 19th century" focuses on the autobiographical genres of the personal documents of women from Western Krai – letters, autobiography, memoirs.

Wiktoria Śliwowska and Anna Brus from Warsaw conducts an exploration of Emilia Michalska, who was beloved of the rebel Szymon Konarski, founder of the Polish People's Society. The article reveals the activity of the noble women during the Uprising, and the way how they were treated after.

The life, social activities, diary and correspondence of another noble women from Samogitia Kazimiera Białozorówna-Tańska are outlined in Tamara Bairašauskaitė's research from Vilnius University. The egodocuments reveal the image of a single woman who was forced to leave the family nest and live on her own. Finally, the historical sources record and mirror of the private life allows to disclose the portrait of a noble and independent landowner-woman seen through female eyes.

Karolina Statkevičiūtė from Vilnius conduct an exploration of letters and autobiographies of Lithuanian writers Lazdynų Pelėda, Žemaitė, Šatrijos Ragana. Henryka Ilgiewicz analyses memoirs of Helena Romer-Ochenkowska. One need to be emphasized that the writers' epistolary texts are not only the document of the difficult era, but it also witnesses the becoming of personality. The letters show us how the individual thinks and how he behaves being in a crossroad of history, policy and creative flouncing.

Lilia Kowkiel carries out the investigation of the image of a female reader from the Lithuanian-Belarusian province in the light of the letters to the Zawadzki, a family of booksellers from Vilnius. The correspondence testifies to a steady increase in the number of female readers in the 19th century and confirms their autonomy in choosing books or articulating specific requests. Moreover, it also documents the diversity of their needs, tastes and reading habits.

Letters by Tekla Bołsunowska and Róża Sobańska as a source for research on the attitudes of the landed gentry from Podolia are investigated in the article of Maria Domańska-Nogajczyk and Tomasz Wójcik from Kielce. The letters reveal moods of the period of the 19th century and tells the story of an individual. Epistolical texts are intimate, sincere. As authors claim, the current state of research on Tekla Bołsunowska is insufficient and she still remains a very mysterious person. One needs to find more of her letters and analyse them. Authors draw some attention to Russian archives.

To sum up, this book is a perfect example of cooperation between researchers from different countries of history and literature. The problems are solved not only in one way but in several ways (political, social, cultural), and as objectively as possible in many published articles. The one carries out a humanistic mission – it promotes the openness of nations and builds bridges in terms of scientific and cultural cooperation.