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"W cieniu. 12 rozmów z Marcinem Wojciechowskim", Adam Daniel Rotfeld, Marcin Wojciechowski, Warszawa 2012 : [recenzja]

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Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej bazhum.muzhp.pl, gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

impression made on her by the visit of President Nasser, who asked her and her siblings: “which of you is going to avenge your father’s death by killing Jews?”

In spite of subjectivity – which is, however, difficult to avoid in her case – the book by Darwish makes a good study of Islam and sharia and fills the gap in the information about the everyday functioning of this system from the inside. Some shortcomings are of editorial nature – the same thoughts, and even expressions, are repeated in almost identical form in different parts of the book. Sometimes one may have reservations about the language the author uses, as colloquial phrases appear in many places. However, one cannot resist the impression that such a form of message is determined by deep emotions Darwish feels, after all describing also her own experiences. What’s more, the book reflects Darwish’s great involvement in protection of democratic values and her genuine fear of the expansion of Islam. The active attitude of the author certainly has an effect on the language of the book, which renders a great deal of emotions.

The great value of the book is Darwish’s personal experiences from the period when she lived in Egypt as a Muslim, as well as an extensive knowledge of the Arabian law sources in their original versions, thanks to which the book has both practical and theoretical value.

One of the drawbacks of this book are the incomplete footnotes (numbers of pages are missing) and a lack of index. Incidentally, one may notice the inaccurate Polish translation of the title, which suggests that the book applies solely the prosecutions of women in the world of Islam. Such a title detracts the value of complexity from the book which after all describes Islam and sharia both in the private and state aspects.

Darwish emphasizes that her aim is not to propagate hatred towards the particular group of people but “show the truth about the baseness of the Muslim sharia law”.

In 2008 Darwish was honoured with the Clare Boothe Luce Award “Woman of Exceptional Courage” for her attitude. There is no doubt that is a justified choice, and Nonie Darwish is indeed a woman of incredible courage.

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(rev.) Adam Daniel Rotfeld, Marcin Wojciechowski, *W cieniu. 12 rozmów z Marcinem Wojciechowskim* [In the Shadow. 12 Conversations with Marcin Wojciechowski], Agora SA, Warszawa 2012, pp. 288

Adam Daniel Rotfeld, b. March 4, 1938 in Przemyślany near Lviv. Polish Foreign Minister in 2005, a distinguished scholar, one of the best in the history of polish diplomats. Man for difficult issues, an expert on international security, indisputable authority in the international arena.

The most important moments in his academic career include: completing studies at the Diplomatic-Consular School of Foreign Service in Warsaw, where he defended his master’s degree in public international law, obtaining the title of Doctor of Law at the

Law Faculty of the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, receiving the title of Professor of the Humanities in 2001¹.

For many years, he has been working with the Polish Institute of International Affairs, was a member of the Polish delegation during the creation of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, was the head of a research project at the International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) in Stockholm from 1989 to 2002, since January 2008 the Polish-Russian co-chair Group for Difficult Matters. In August 2009, a member of the “Group of Wise Men” of NATO², author of numerous scientific papers dealing with international security, disarmament issues, public international law and international relations, including *Poland in an Uncertain World* (2006), *Whither the World* (2008), *Thinking about Russia... and beyond* (2012) and *In the Shadow, 12 conversations with Marcin Wojciechowski* (2012).

The structure of the reviewed book, enriched with the introduction written by Teresa Torańska, contains 12 chapters – 12 conversations with Marcin Wojciechowski, each presenting the memories of the people who rendered outstanding services to the history of international relations, with whom Adam Daniel Rotfeld met, befriended, argued, worked and talked. The professor says that he remains “in the shadow” of the following personalities: Ryszard Kapuściński, Czesław Miłosz, Zygmunt Bauman, Leszek Kołakowski, Henry Kissinger, Helmut Kohl, Charles de Gaulle, Mikhail Gorbachev, Pope John Paul II and Jerzy Giedroyc.

The first chapter (*Organizing Chaos*) and the last (*The Art of Diplomacy*) tie up the recent history of international relations, organize reality – the mentioned chaos, and illustrate the role of diplomacy in the current world.

Adam Daniel Rotfeld offers a collection of reflections as a witness of the age, he shows the connection between events of the last century and the current reality, shows their influence on today’s international order, examines contemporary issues that diplomats, politicians and leaders of all countries must face today. Everything is described from the perspective of the leading representatives of the intellectual and political life, “in the shadow” of ideas and concepts that accompanied the years of their lives.

The professor answers many important questions posed at the beginning of each chapter. He is of the opinion that we cannot predict the direction in which the world is changing and we cannot clearly define what is best for it. Moreover, author states that the further changes do not necessarily have to be connected with development and progress³.

In the matter of the Polish culture, he believes that Polish literature lacks what is most important in the lives of Poles. There are no lofty, epic books which would allow

¹ Adam Daniel Rotfeld, The Internet Archive, http://web.archive.org/web/20080612182359/http://msz.gov.pl/auths/91/files/min_cv_de.html [access: 30.07.2013].

² Archives of the Polish Institute of International Affairs [access: 30.07.2013].

³ A. Rotfeld, M. Wojciechowski, *W cieniu. 12 rozmów z Marcinem Wojciechowskim* [In the Shadow. 12 Conversations with Marcin Wojciechowski], Warszawa 2012, p. 37.

the reader to move to the old days and to experience former realities. Writers create shallow, mass and chaotic books – it is highly probable that the former level of literature will never return⁴.

The author says that there is no nation predestined to crime, or ethnic communities completely impregnated and incapable of crime. The source of evil which prevails in different countries is an ideologized political system based on terror and manipulation of human masses on a large scale⁵.

Rotfeld also describes the evolution of Marxism from Marx's philosophical thought with the task of healing the economy, to transformation into a "new religion", an instrument to eliminate political opponents. Marxism as an ideology remains an important point of reference for other ideologies of the XIX century, however, being implemented it leads to distortions, contradicts the very idea of the original concept, breeds the formation of sects and propagandists⁶.

He also gives attention to the radicalism with which the world has changed. Democracy has become the norm, the population of the countries are not subject, but political society. Therefore, the actions that were taken in the XIX century would not yield the same results today. In an increasingly demanding world, we need to use more complex methods. Decisions are made by continuously growing groups of decision-makers, while the number of matters hidden from the wide population is decreasing due to the level of technological development. According to the professor, current politicians lack the courage to make significant reforms in the country, to actually change the situation for the better. What matters is the support of voters to maximise the chance for re-election. It leads to a kind of populism, where the government will promise anything, as long as the society is happy. According to the author, there was no lack of moral courage in Mazowiecki, Balcerowicz, or Kuroń. They paid a heavy price for it – have been hated by the society and thus lost a chance to be re-elected. However, for the good of the state and its citizens they did what was necessary. In today's world politicians lack the courage to tell the truth⁷.

Rotfeld believes that empty statements are not enough in order to strengthen the spirit of Europe. They have to be followed by specific actions that will reinforce the presented position. Decisions must be made rationally, there is no place for favouring the members, belittling the problems, and creating inequality. In the EU, everyone should play by the same book⁸.

The professor points out that the contemporary world is a great challenge caused by the existence of countries that are not able to control the situation within their own borders. These are weak, failing and failed states. In the interest of all, Russia, Europe,

⁴ Ibidem, p. 61.

⁵ Ibidem, p. 80.

⁶ Ibidem, pp. 101–102.

⁷ Ibidem, pp. 176–177.

⁸ Ibidem, pp. 190–191.

and our neighbours should show no acceptance to an increase in number of those states. We should take such measures that would facilitate the process of their development and growth⁹.

Author notes that the secularization of society does not lead to the collapse of ethical and moral principles. He concludes that they are respected there even more than in countries where religion is demonstrated in a very ostentatious way¹⁰.

In today's world these are valuable ideas for policy makers. According to Rotfeld, no old idea can meet new challenges and threats. There is a need for the EU and other countries to learn new ways of overcoming the global crisis. They should create new ideas that will inspire leaders to take action and strive to achieve a consensus¹¹.

In my opinion, this book is one of the best positions regarding foreign affairs released in 2012. The original intention of the author – to create a volume of reflection – is fully achieved. The book touches, intrigues, forces to confront our own perceptions with the memories of a witness of the age. It describes the main problems of the modern world and shows possible solutions. The chapters contain similar number of pages, together form a coherent, logical and harmonious whole.

Author brilliantly analyzes and interprets the facts, as well as explains their connections to the events of the last century. Dialogue is not conducted in a haughty or arrogant manner. Rotfeld allows readers to get to know his history and become familiar with the presented ideas, regardless of level of their knowledge.

Reading this book not only allows to learn about Adam Rotfeld, but also to learn about people in whose shadows he claims to remain. However, delving deeper and deeper into the reading, we come to the conclusion that Rotfeld does not deserve the title of being in someone's shadow. His contribution to the development of international relations is so immense that the reason the world has the highest respect for him is highly understandable.

From my perspective, the reviewed book should be on the shelf of anyone who is looking for reliable information, wants to understand the complexities of the modern world, and wishes to consciously participate in the political life, to know the history of his own country, but also its relationship with the rest of the international community over the last century.

⁹ Ibidem, pp. 208–209.

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 215.

¹¹ Ibidem, p. 240.