

The Revue of the State Archives in Katowice and its Contents

The State Archives in Katowice, Poland, publishes its yearly since 1998. The journal bears the title “Archival and historical sketches” (in Polish: “*Szkice Archiwalno-Historyczne*”). After publishing two volumes in 1998 and 2000, the Archives ceased to prepare the publication due to financial reasons. However, in 2007 there appeared the third volume and since then the institution publishes the journal every year.

The editor-in-chief is the present director of the Archives, Piotr Greiner, Ph.D., while the editor’s secretary is Sławomira Krupa. The articles are reviewed by the Editing Council, which consists of two professors of the Silesian University in Katowice (Edward Długajczyk and Ryszard Kaczmarek) and one professor of the University in Wrocław (Marek Czaplński). In 2010 the publication received the journal ranking of 6 points.

The articles in “Archival and Historical Sketches” are written mainly on the basis of documents stored in the State Archives in Katowice. The authors discuss a variety of topics, which through regional history show main themes of the European history in general. Several articles concern also the archival methodology. Besides, the journal contains edited primary sources, reviews and reports. The following is a summary of contents of the revue published between 2008 and 2010.

2008

ARTICLES

Tomasz Hajewski, *The archives functioning before 1939 within the present area of operation of the State Archives in Katowice*

The article depicts history and holdings of the archives that functioned before 1939 in the Silesian Voivodship (without the district of Częstochowa) and in the western districts of the Lesser Poland Voivodship. The archives include administrative archives, legal archives, religious archives, guild archives, industrial archives, archives of societies, and family archives. After their creation in 1932, the Archives of Historical Records for Silesian Voivodship acquired collections from several non-historical archives. The Archives of Historical Records for Silesian Voivodship functioned till the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939.

Barbara Kalinowska-Wójcik, *Ezechiel Zivier – his life and work as an archivist and historian in the Upper Silesia at the turn of the 19th century*

Ezechiel Zivier was the archivist of the Pszczyzna princes, a scholar of Polish and Silesian history, a longtime Jewish activist, as well as an editor-in-chief of a journal devoted to popularization of the Upper Silesia. His great achievement was the founding of the first archives to collect records of the German Jews. Thus, thanks to his managerial abilities and an archival “sixth sense”, he preserved many important materials. He also made a considerable contribution to archival science and historiography on a regional and trans-regional level. Born in the Russian partition and raised in a Jewish family, he studied and worked in Germany. He began as a Slavist and an Orientalist to become an accomplished historian and archivist. Upon settling in the Upper Silesia, he contributed to the revival of the regional scholarship. Consequently, the Upper Silesia became not only his workplace but also a new “little fatherland”.

Sławomira Krupa, *Ludwik Musioł (1892-1970) – a sketch to a portrait*

On the basis of archival materials recently made accessible, the author attempted to write a biographical sketch of Ludwik Musioł, a famous Upper Silesian archivist and historian. He stands out as an exceptional personage among the twentieth century's regional intelligentsia, authoring several city and parish histories, as well as works on primary sources, which are widely used in practically every modern historical publication. During World War II he worked in the Upper Silesian County Library (*Oberschlesische Landesbibliothek Beuthen-Kattowitz*) and the Institute for the Upper Silesian Research (*Institut für Oberschlesische Landesforschung*). In 1948 he was arrested and sentenced to 6 years in prison for acting against the Polish state during the war. He was released on probation in 1952. In the next years he was deprived of a right to employment, so continued his scholarly work only through the support of the Church.

Joanna Szczepańczyk, *Józefa Okoniewska – the archivist at the Archives of the Pszczyna Princes*

This is a biographical sketch of Józefa Okoniewska (1892-?), an unknown personage among archivists working in the Upper Silesia before 1939. Employed at the State Archives in Poznań, she processed the archives of Krotoszyn. In the years 1935-1939 she cooperated with Kazimierz Kaczmarczyk, Ph.D., and Ludwik Musioł in cataloguing the Archives of Pszczyna Princes.

Tomasz Hajewski, Mirosław Węcki, *Karl G. Bruchmann, Ph.D., as the leader of German archival institutions in the Upper Silesia between 1939 and 1945*

The following article provides an abbreviated biography of Karl G. Bruchmann, a renowned archivist in post-war Germany. The future director of the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz (1961-1967) spent the years 1939-1943 in Katowice, where he led German archival institutions, like Staatsarchiv Kattowitz and Archivberatungsstelle Kattowitz. Both his archival and scholarly work during that time is shown in the light of his commitment to the Nazi party.

Anna Machej, *Wacław Bandura i Karol Bałon – the first managers of the Cieszyn archives*

Both Wacław Bandura (1898-1964) and Karol Bałon (1914-1987), the first managers of the Cieszyn Branch of the State Archives in Katowice, succeeded in gathering and cataloguing an impressive collection of records, dating back to the 14th century. Presently the scholars of Eastern European history may benefit from the basic historical sources concerning the Cieszyn Silesia.

Piotr Greiner, *Professor Jerzy Jaros (1925-1992)*

This article is a biographical sketch of Jerzy Jaros, an archivist at the State Archives in Katowice in 1950-1967, where he specialized in industrial records. He created the Mining Records Department that functioned till 1960. In this period he conducted an extensive research in archival science and mining history, which resulted in obtaining a doctorate in 1964. Between 1967 and 1973 he worked at the Silesian Scientific Institute in Katowice to become a professor at the Department of History at the Silesian University in Katowice in 1973. Eight years later he organized and led Archival Studies at the Department.

Zbigniew Kiereś, *"Kill that Polish son of the bitch!" – A contribution to the question of national awareness in the Upper Silesia in the 17th century*

The author tackles the issue of national awareness in the Upper Silesia in the 17th century. Starting with the registered accounts of hostility toward Poles and analyzing declarations and attitudes, he attempts to isolate factors that formed this awareness in the period. Moreover, he describes how the attitudes toward Poland and Poles were created. He concludes that the same language and ethnicity did not necessarily mean that the Upper Silesians felt Polish; rather they felt closer to the Kingdom of Bohemia. At the same time they had a strong sense of Silesian separateness. The relations with Poland and Poles brought both positive and negative experiences, which in turn shaped different attitudes. However, available sources make it impossible to define the social range of those attitudes.

Zdzisław Jedynek, *Records of the Oberschlesische Knappschaft zu Gleiwitz from the period 1922-1945*

This article is a continuation of the article published in 2007 in "Szkice archiwalno-historyczne", Vol. 3. The division of the Upper Silesia in 1922 affected also workers' insurance. Two insurance companies for coal and steel miners were created: a Polish one in Tarnowskie Góry (Górnośląska Spółka Bracka w Tarnowskich Górach) and a German one in Gliwice (Oberschlesische Knappschaft zu Gleiwitz). Property and records were divided between two institutions. The records of the company in Gliwice reflect the times during which it functioned: normal activity until 1929, the Great Crisis 1929-1932 and the Nazi regime 1933-1945. They serve as the important source for industrial and social policy and the history of medical care in the German part of the Upper Silesia in 1922-1945.

Andrzej Kołodziej, *Industry in Tarnowskie Góry in the light of materials collected at the State Archives in Katowice in 2004-2008*

Recently the State Archives in Katowice have acquired archival materials from several industrial plants in Tarnowskie Góry due to either privatization ("Zamet" and "TAGOR") or liquidation ("Tarnowskie Góry") of the factories. The accession process has not ended yet, since in the near future the loan contracts between the Archives and the companies "Chemet" and "Faser" will be terminated.

Adam Dudek, Sławomira Krupa, *Weeding the records of the Polish United Workers' Party in the light of experiences of the State Archives in Katowice*

The article describes methodology of processing and problems in weeding the records of the Polish United Workers' Party after their acquisition in 1990 by the state archives. The question is illustrated by the example of the State Archives in Katowice, which holds two linear kilometers of this documentation.

MATERIALS

Paweł Hudzik, *Primary sources to the history of the Council in Zator in 1848*

Within the framework of researching the period of the Spring of Nations in the context of regional history, the article presents primary sources to the history of the

Council in Zator, which are stored in the Oswiecim Branch of the State Archives in Katowice. The materials include protocols of the Council sessions and reports on “the state of the minds” of Zator citizens. Despite their obvious subjectivity, the latter seem to be an interesting and unique historical source.

Mirosław Węcki, *“Juden sind hier unerwünscht“ – materials to the history of Jews in Zabrze in the record group Kreisleitung NSDAP Hindenburg*

“The Jewish question” held an important place in ideology and program of the Nazi Party. When the Nazis took power in Germany in 1933, they could realize their anti-Semitic policy. Although “the Final Solution” was conducted by the independent SS, the NSDAP organized several anti-Jewish actions and played a key role in the Holocaust. The records of the NSDAP in Zabrze illustrate anti-Jewish activities targeted against the Jewry in that city.

REPORTS

Piotr Greiner, *A 2007 report of the Director of the State Archives in Katowice*

In 2007 the State Archives in Katowice celebrated its 75th anniversary. On this occasion, the archivists prepared an exhibition and presented their new publications, e.g. *The guide to the collection of the State Archives in Katowice*. On April 1, 2007 the State Archives in Katowice started a project *Protection and conservation of written heritage of Cieszyn*, partially financed through the grant of the EEA Financial Mechanism and The Norwegian Financial Mechanism. The purpose of the project is to secure and digitalize the collections of the Cieszyn Branch of the Archives. Moreover, a mass deacidification plant was opened in that year too. The plant is one of four such establishments in Poland. The Archives acquired 115 new fonds amounting to 39,975 file units (431.59 linear meters). The collection increased to 4649 fonds amounting to 1, 810, 576 file units (19,218 linear meters). The archivists processed 61 fonds (23,509 file units – 236.3 linear meters).

Katarzyna Słysz-Szczucka, *Report of the 75th anniversary celebration at the State Archives in Katowice*

In November 2007 the State Archives in Katowice celebrated its 75th anniversary. The ceremony included the opening of a mass deacidification plant. Moreover, the archivists presented the exhibition *There was a document once...* and their new publications. The report describes the events, which took place on December 7th, 2008.

Tamara Domanik, Katarzyna Kwaśniewicz, *Large-scale preservation of endangered archival and library collections at the State Archives in Katowice through the Long-term Government Program “Acid Paper”*

The technological changes in paper production that were introduced in the 19th century resulted in decreasing paper quality. Paper made by machines was quickly acidified and became brittle. Therefore, the “Acid Paper” Program, introduced in 2000 for 8 years, aimed at mass deacidification of endangered books and records. In 2007 the State Archives in Katowice opened a mass deacidification plant, which in the Neschen Conservation Machine C900 deacidified materials of the 19th and 20th centuries.

2009

ARTICLES

Paweł Hudzik, *Zator during the First World War*

The article discusses the participation of the Zator inhabitants in the Polish Legions and in the Austrian Army. It also describes the daily life in the city during the war and how the creation of the Polish state influenced the local environment.

Ryszard Kaczmarek, *The organization Todt in the Third Reich and in Silesia in the years 1933-1945*

The organization *Todt* in the Third Reich was created because it was necessary to obtain cheap workforce to realize giant building projects. The article discusses the history of the organization in Silesia and how it participated in the most important investments of the Second World War.

Bartłomiej Warzecha, *The beginnings of the functioning of the NSDAP propaganda in the Upper Silesia (September-December 1939)*

The author analyzed the functioning of the NSDAP propaganda in the first months of the occupation of the Upper Silesia, showing the main directions of its influence on the population of the *Regierung Kattowitz* as well as applied operating procedures.

Grzegorz Bębniak, *Who was Bertold Hildebrandt? A contribution to the history of a certain misunderstanding during September 1939 in the Upper Silesia*

The article deals with mechanisms, which form mythical interpretations of events during September 1939. Using archival sources and contemporary press, the author proves the frailty of such operations.

Edward Długajczyk, *The year 1945 in printing in the Opole Silesia. An attempt to settle the account*

On the basis of an undated list of printing houses in the Opole Silesia, the author presents how the printing industry in the region changed as a result of confiscation of the German property and subsequent nationalization in the first years after the Second World War.

Adam Dziuba, *The farm of the Polish Workers' Party: political relations in the Grodków powiat in 1945-1948*

In May 1945 the Polish authorities sent by the Silesian *voivode* Aleksander Zawadzki reached the city of Grodków. The article discusses the process of gaining control of the administration by the members of the Polish Workers' Party, whose incompetence and dishonesty were often more than evident.

Krzysztof Langer, *Crimes and the criminals in the powiat of Racibórz in 1945-1950 in the light of the materials from the Racibórz Branch of the State Archives in Katowice*

The article portrays the feeling of security among the inhabitants of Racibórz and its vicinity just after the end of the Second World War. Beside describing the so

called ordinary crimes, it informs about the crimes of the Polish police (*Milicja Obywatelska*) and of the Red Army.

Zdzisław Jedynak, *The collection of documents from the Municipal Archives in Bytom – processing methods and its significance for regional research*

The collection of documents from the Municipal Archives in Bytom encompasses the years 1477-1948 and provides important information on the functioning of judiciary system, daily life and morality of inhabitants of Bytom and vicinity. It is also interesting material for researching lingual and ethnic relations in the Upper Silesia from the 16th century until the beginning of the 19th century.

Sławomira Krupa, *Eustachy Czosnowski. The manager of the Municipal Archives in Bytom in the years 1945–1951*

The article offers a biographical sketch of Jan Eustachy Henryk Czosnowski (1881-1954), who was the manager of the Municipal Archives in Bytom between 1945 and 1951 and who authored the first post-war inventory of the collection of municipal documents.

Elżbieta Matuszek, *Stanisława Poprawska (1909-1985)*

A biographical sketch of Stanisława Poprawska, a distinguished archivist at the State Archives in Katowice. She specialized in industrial records. She also participated in collegial organs at the Archives in Katowice, as well as in the Central Methodological Commission at the Head Office of the State Archives in Warsaw.

Joanna Sowa, *Halina Bolesławska (1954-1999)*

A biographical sketch of Halina Bolesławska, the archivist at the State Archives in Częstochowa, who between November 1995 and June 1996 served as the director of the institution.

MATERIALS

Mirosław Węcki, *September 1939 in the Upper Silesia as recorded by the NSDAP in Zabrze*

Zabrze was located on the Polish-German border, therefore it served as a preparation ground for the German invasion on the Upper Silesia in 1939. The NSDAP in Zabrze played a role in those events. Directives and reports of the Party members may shed a new light on the functioning of the *freikorps* – diversion units of the *Abwehra* and on the building of the Nazi administration and propaganda in the Upper Silesia in September 1939.

Andrzej Różanowicz, *The year 1939 in the memory of a secondary school student in Katowice*

The memories of September 1939 by Andrzej Różanowicz, an eye witness of the events, who at that time attended a secondary school. After the war he lectured at the University of Economics in Katowice, obtaining a title of professor emeritus.

COMMUNIQUES

Zdzisław Jedynek, *The unknown sources on the paintings of a Berlin artist, Adolf Menzel in the fond: the records of the city Chorzów*

On the basis of materials discovered in the collection at the State Archives in Katowice, the author presents unknown facts on the genesis and fate of the famous painting *Eisenwalzwerk in Königshütte* by Adolf Menzel. The painting was later bought by *Nationalgalerie* in Berlin.

Andrzej Kołodziej, *The sport club "Górnik" in Zabrze in the light of archival materials transferred to the State Archives in Katowice*

Between 2008 and 2009 the State Archives in Katowice acquired the historical records of the famous sport club "Górnik". The records included: materials of the general assemblies held for reporting and electoral purposes, protocols of the Board meetings, protocols of the Presidium of the Board meetings, personal records of more than 100 the club members.

Agata Rojek, *Tadeusz Karuga's (PhD) personal papers transferred to the State Archives in Katowice*

Since 2004 the collection of the State Archives in Katowice is constantly enriched by the personal papers of Tadeusz Karuga, a historian researching sport in the Upper Silesia. The article describes materials from the years 1919-1976 that deal with the development of fencing and sport clubs in the Upper Silesia.

IN MEMORIAM

Katarzyna Słysz-Szczucka, *Marian Gałuszka (February 3, 1951-December 10, 2007)*

The article is dedicated to Marian Gałuszka, a historian and an archivist who worked at the State Archives in Katowice for 35 years. In particular, it focuses on Marian Gałuszka's passion: history of Chorzów, his hometown.

REPORTS

Piotr Greiner, *A 2008 report of the Director of the State Archives in Katowice*

The Archives acquired 170 new fonds amounting to 60,999 file units (946.35 linear meters). The collection increased to 4819 fonds amounting to 1, 871, 575 file units (20,164.43 linear meters). The archivists processed 163 fonds (61,248 file units – 592.18 linear meters).

Katarzyna Słysz-Szczucka, *A 2008 report on outreach activities of the State Archives in Katowice*

In 2008 its functioning started Outreach Program Department at the State Archives in Katowice. The report describes publications and expositions (organized by the Department or by other institutions), which were presented at the Archives. It also mentions projects, conferences, seminars, and scholarly publications in which participated the archivists from Katowice.

REVIEWS AND SUMMARIES

Tomasz Hajewski, *Frédéric Dessberg, Enjeux et rivalités politiques franco-britanniques: le plébiscite de haute Silésie (1921)*, "Revue historique des armées", nr 254, 1^{er} trimestre 2009, s. 53-66.

The review summarizes the article of Frédéric Dessberg which dealt with the antagonism between France and Great Britain during the plebiscite in the Upper Silesia in 1921.

2010 ARTICLES

Piotr Greiner, *Plans of the towns in the Prussian Upper Silesia between 1811 and 1815*

The author analyzes the first successful attempt to create in the Prussian Upper Silesia a cartographically standardized set of large-scale city plans. In effect, despite the archival losses in the Second World War, a modern scholar may access today a tool to compare 28 out of 30 towns existing in the beginning of the 19th century. It must be pointed out that all 28 cities, which were photographed cartographically in the same historical moment, have a basic map in the scale 1:7200.

Przemysław Snoch, *The registry of the city Sosnowiec in 1916-1939*

The article describes organization and functioning of the registry of the city government in Sosnowiec during the First World War and in the years 1918-1939. Using internal ordinances in the fond *City records of Sosnowiec* the author discusses the registry system employed by the municipality. He also mentions the attitude of the authorities toward a 1931 reform of record management in Poland and difficulties concerning introduction of a non-journal registry system based on a thematic file plan.

Edward Długajczyk, *Political and investigative units of the Police of the Silesian Voivodeship 1922-1939*

In the Upper Silesia in the years 1922-1939 not only Polish military intelligence, but also political units of the autonomic Police of the Silesian Voivodeship carried out intelligence activity against the Germans. Initially, it included offensive actions in the German part of the region; later, it was limited to defensive counter-intelligence. The author presents changes in organization of the political and investigative units along with their successes and failures in fighting foreign intelligence.

Krzysztof Langer, *A contribution to the history of 'small fatherlands' – what stank in Lubomia and why Grabówka seceded*

The article focuses on a small episode in the history of three towns in the present district of Wodzisław (former district of Rybnik): Syrynia, Grabówka, Lubomia. In the early twenties of the 20th century the inhabitants of Grabówka decided to leave the commune of Syrynia and integrate with the commune of Lubomia. They sent their decision to the district administration in Rybnik requesting approval. The whole matter was rooted not in logical arguments, but in mutual mischievousness, insults and complaints. Thus, it illustrates local pettiness and barratry.

Grzegorz Bębniak, *"Kowalski and company". An episode in the history of German subversion in August and September 1939*

The author recounts one of the cases of German subversion in August 1939 – the attempt to blow up railway between Częstochowa and Poraj. On the basis of records of the Police of the Silesian Voivodeship and records of the German *Abwehr*, the author tries to reconstruct the events, focusing on the would-be assailants and their connections with the German intelligence. In the conclusion, the author debates whether the case could have mirrored the preparation of the *Abwehr* to its actions in the beginning of the Second World War.

Mirosław Węcki, *First months of the occupation of Olkusz during the Second World War in the light of landrat Heinrich Groll's records*

During the Second World War the district of Olkusz was located between the German Upper Silesia and the General Gouvernement (GG). Germans incorporated the western part of the district into the Reich because of its industrial value. However, due to the Polish character of the region, the reality of occupation resembled situation in GG rather than in the Upper Silesia. It impacted directly the functioning of the local German administration, as its leader, landrat Heinrich Groll, detailed it in his reports between September 1939 and June 1940.

Sławomira Krupa, Antonina Staszaków, *The staff of the Staatsarchiv Kattowitz in 1939-1945 according to its personal records*

The article portrays the personnel of the German archives in Katowice during World War II, the *Staatsarchiv Kattowitz*. It describes education and recruitment of the archivists. Basing their research on literature and personal records, the authors attempt to present biographies of the directors as well as their subordinates.

Jakub Grudniewski, *The example of tragic fate of the Upper Silesians in Wehrmacht – Josef Steinski of Königshütte*

The records of the Wehrmacht military court (*Gericht der Wehrmacht - Kommandantur des Industriegebiets Oberschlesien*) serve as a basis for describing tragic fate of the Upper Silesians coerced into service in the German Army during World War II. The records illustrate ruthless work of the military justice administration (even in January 1945) and tragic lives of men obligated to fight in foreign uniforms in foreign lands.

Dariusz Węgrzyn, *Difficult coexistence. Relationship between the Polish civil administration and the Soviet authorities in the Opole Silesia between March and December 1945*

The article treats situation in the former German part of the Upper Silesia (so called Opole Silesia) in 1945 after conquest of this region by the Soviet Army. The new Polish administration had to cooperate with the Soviet military authorities and military units. The author intends to show how the Soviets influenced key events in the history of the area: theft of the industrial potential, displacements, migration, national policy, creation of the political system and the Polish administration. The article presents also crimes committed by the soldiers of the Red Army.

Tomasz Szafron, Radosław Miłych, *Personal records of the Polish United Workers' Party in the State Archives in Katowice as a source for research of the history of the Polish People's Republic*

Not only archival materials of the Polish United Workers' Party (acquired by the State Archives in Katowice in 1991), but also non-archival materials, as personal records and salary lists of employees of the Party, are valuable historical source. The authors point out that those documents are the most important sources for writing biographies of the Party officials and for researching the functioning of the Communist regime in Poland before 1989.

MATERIALS

Zdzisław Jedynek, *Katowice [Kattowitz], Kuźnica Bogucka [Bogutschützer Hammer] and Brynów [Brwinow] according to the Urbarium of 1702*

The article examines an unpublished part of the Urbarium written in 1702. It depicts the social structure of Katowice, Kuźnica Bogucka and Brynów in the beginning of the 18th century, when agriculture was still the main occupation of their inhabitants, although the group involved in a local iron steel mill was growing steadily. The mill still functioned on the basis of a feudal relationship. The document describes the period, when local peasants and craftsmen spoke only Polish.

Tomasz Hajewski, *Annexation of Zaolzie in 1938 in the reports of the French military attaché in Warsaw*

The goal of the article is to present an unknown historical source stored at the *Service Historique de la Défense* in Vincennes. It consists of the reports of the French military attaché, general Felix Musse, which he sent to Paris between September and October 1938. The reports describe the Polish annexation of the Czech part of the Cieszyn Silesia (called by Poles "Zaolzie") during the partition of Czechoslovakia following the München Conference.

Mirosław Węcki, *Unknown reports of the Upper Silesian Sicherheitsdienst 1942-1943*

During processing of the archival collection of the State Archives in Katowice, there were separated materials that had been created by the Sicherheitsdienst. This Nazi secret police had functioned in the area of Provinz Oberschlesien (1941). The reports show mainly reactions of the Upper Silesian community to the defeat of the German Army at the Battle of Stalingrad. Moreover, they contain surprising information on public awareness concerning Konzentration Lager Auschwitz.

REPORTS

Piotr Greiner, *A 2009 report of the State Archives in Katowice*

In the year 2009, the State Archives in Katowice acquired 29,597 file units from 121 archival fonds, which amounted to 507 linear meters. The Archives' collection increased to 4,940 fonds, that is, to 1,901,172 file units (20,672 linear meters). The archivists from Katowice processed 346 fonds (completely or in part), which included 61,658 file units (585.40 linear meters).

Sabina Klimkiewicz, *Managing the project 'The Preservation and Restoration of Cieszyn's Written Heritage' in the State Archives in Katowice*

The article sums up the project carried out by the State Archives in Katowice in 2007-2010. The purpose of the project was to secure archival collection of the Cieszyn Branch of the State Archives in Katowice and make it available for academic and cultural use. The project was partially financed through the grant of the EEA Financial Mechanism and The Norwegian Financial Mechanism.

*Tomasz Hajewski**

Peter Siani-Davies, *The Romanian Revolution of December 1989*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 2005, 315 p.

For any scholar interested in the former communist world, Romania is an odd case in many ways. The late-Soviet and East European studies discipline, at its heart a Russian and Slavic-centred field of enquiry, was always inadequately equipped to deal with the peculiarities of a Latin country deeply anchored within the political culture of southeast Europe. As a result, works published on Romania by western academics even since the fall of communism are still limited in number and scope. The country deserves more attention because of its size and strategic importance due to its former position as the second largest Soviet satellite state in Europe. Its foreign and military policy was also quasi-independent from Moscow, and it was governed by one of the harshest communist dictatorships, which, in 1989, underwent a uniquely violent regime change akin to the classical revolutions.

Peter Siani-Davies, with this highly detailed book, represents one of the few notable exceptions to the rule regarding academic publications on Romania. He sets himself the enormously ambitious task of charting the events of the Romanian revolution between December 1989 and January 1990. His chief objective is "to provide as accurate and as credible a narrative of the revolution as possible" (p. 6). He also, to a lesser extent, seeks to ascertain the relevance of these events to the current debates about the nature of revolutions.

There was little public dissent in Romania during the forty-two years of communist rule. The party, through its well-oiled structure and large security apparatus that included political police (the dreaded "*securitate*"), militia (militarised police), army, and armed workers' formations ("*patriotic guards*"), constituted a totalitarian regime of truly Orwellian dimensions governing an impoverished population of over 22 million. The revolution, in just a matter of days, pulverised this monstrous monolith and reached a climax when the presidential couple, the regime's symbolic embodiment, was executed on Christmas Day 1989.

The Romanian revolution has achieved notoriety as the first "televised revolution", its dramatic events being witnessed, or indeed shared, live worldwide. That was a decisive factor in its swift dissemination and the virtually instantaneous mobilisation of Romania's population from towns to the remotest villages. It heralded a

* The State Archives in Katowice, Poland.