

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

TO THE EDITOR:

I am writing to express my protest against the publication in *The Polish Review*, vol. 65, no. 4 (2020) of Jan P. Hudzik's article, "Reflections on German and Polish Historical Policies of Holocaust Memory." Quoting all possible scientific authorities—from Aristotle to Agnes Heller—the author declares that history is not a science but a matter of opinion, and he builds an equivalency between the historical politics run by the Polish government and the work of the historians of the Center for the Study of the Holocaust in Warsaw. He then proceeds to defend (as a result of helplessness on the part of the authorities) the well-known "Polish concentration camps" law that curtails research on the Holocaust in Poland, and to frontally attack the participants in the Paris conference on the New School of Polish-Jewish Studies, basing his calumnies about it on completely unreliable right-wing online sites. The author repeats from these sites the invented quotes of conference participants, and he suspects some nefarious anti-Polish intentions in the very fact of having a conference in Paris, etc.

I am chagrined that such an unscientific, unscrupulous, and partisan article has found a place in the organ of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America.

Sincerely,

IRENA GRUDZIŃSKA-GROSS
Professor, Institute of Slavic Studies,
Polish Academy of Science, Warsaw
Research Scholar Emerita, Princeton University

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor:

It is very unlikely that Professor Jan P. Hudzik—a professor of philosophy at the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, the author of the highly acclaimed *Prawda i teoria* [Truth and theory, 2011], among several other publications in the field of theoretical foundations of the humanities and, more recently, contemporary political philosophy—had ever had any of his works described as “unscientific, unscrupulous, and partisan,” until such epithets were directed at him by Professor Irena Grudzińska-Gross in her letter to *The Polish Review* (vol. 66, no. 4).

Her ire was provoked by Jan P. Hudzik’s article “Reflections on German and Polish Historical Policies of Holocaust Memory” (*TPR*, vol. 65, no. 4) and, more exactly, by the author’s somewhat critical comments in the last section of the article, “Historian in the Public Sphere—a Case of the Paris Conference.” (The February 2019 conference in question was titled “The New Polish School of History of the Holocaust.”) In her brief letter, Irena Grudzińska-Gross admonishes the author on two grounds. First, that he allegedly “declares that history is not a science but a matter of opinion.” He does not. He wrote: “history as a science is not free from constraints of political and ideological conditioning.” Second, that he defends the Polish concentration camps law that curtails research on the Holocaust in Poland, “and that he attacks the participants in the Paris conference with “*calumnies*” (my emphasis) borrowed from the right-wing media. But rather than defend that law he presents arguments on both sides of the debate, quoting statements by the ambassador of Israel in Poland and by the US Department of State, along with provisions of the IPN Act that triggered those statements. He then writes: “It is not my task to determine who is right and who is wrong in this argument.”

The argument is indeed complex, infused with understandable emotional underpinnings, and I do not feel competent to address its content—nor would I attempt this response to Irena Grudzińska-Gross’s letter if not for its last sentence in which she chastises the *TPR* editors for publishing Jan P. Hudzik’s article. In its sixty-six years of existence, *TPR* has never compromised its principle of openness to diverse ideas and opinions, winning respect of a large, international, and multi-faceted community, including the Polish diaspora and readers in Poland. *TPR* would not stand for any form of censorship, and we trust it will so remain.

On a personal note, I have long admired Irena Grudzińska-Gross for her courage—as a young freedom fighter against the authoritarian regime in Poland—and her intellectual acumen in scholarly endeavors. We have shared our abhorrence of

all aspects of antisemitism in Poland and elsewhere. Hence my alarm at her disregard for the freedom of discourse in the journal to which we both subscribe and contribute.

JOANNA ROSTROPOWICZ CLARK
Princeton Research Forum

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