

Author Response

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Author Response:

In reference to author Romana M. Bahry's letter to the editor of *East/West: Journal of Ukrainian Studies* (EWJUS [Edmonton and Toronto]), I would like to clarify that indeed, regretfully, there was an unintentional mistake in the text of my review of her book for the journal. When I was writing about the topics of Katyń and service in the Polish army, I had in mind, of course, Bahry's father, Jarosław Bahrij, and not Włodzimierz (Wladimir) Sylwester Kindraczuk. However, the name of Kindraczuk somehow crept into the body of my review. The author is right in this regard, and I thank her for this correction.

At the same time, I do stand by all of my other views, including my remark that it is difficult (if not, at times, impossible) to write an objective and critical scholarly monograph about members of one's own family. It, unfortunately, does not seem to me possible to perfectly combine the two divergent aims outlined by the author in her introduction, which find their reflection in the text of her monograph. I am referring here to Bahry's intention to write about her grandfather for the preservation of his memory within the family—the author even notes feeling that her “grandfather had handed [her] a sacred trust” to complete such an undertaking—juxtaposed with her desire to produce a study that “will contribute not only to the reintegration of Europe, but to the rehabilitation of European scientific history as well” (Bahry 12–13).

I sincerely appreciate the many years of effort that Bahry devoted to the writing of the book under discussion. Her many research trips and her refusal to abandon her work in the face of various obstacles provide clear evidence of the great determination with which she conducted her research. And she deserves praise for her finished product—her completed monograph. After all, her work sheds light on the life of a person whose biography reflects a history of the Polish-Ukrainian border region that has thus far been ignored in general historiographies in Poland and Ukraine. That being said, this does not alter the fact that the author's personal connection to the subject of her study limits her ability to adopt a critical perspective on that subject. In other words, I am of the opinion that it is difficult to remain objective when writing about one's own grandfather, even if one bases one's work on archival materials and historical literature.

Regardless of these reservations, I uphold my opinion that Bahry's book represents an interesting biographic and genealogical study that may, and should, inspire many individuals with assorted family memorabilia in their personal archives to pass on these materials to research institutions or to individual scholars for academic study and to publicize them in a variety of ways. The more numerous the source materials in scholarship reflecting the

lives of witnesses to, and participants in, important historical events, the more accurate the examination of broader historical processes.

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Translated from the Polish by Marko Robert Stech

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