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Professor Wiesław Jamrożek – Poznań Educational Historian, Humble man, and Master

**Profesor Wiesław Jamrożek – poznański historyk wychowania, pokorny
człowiek i mistrz**

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Abstract

Aim. This study aims to present the existing evidence of the scholarly community's memories of the late Professor Wiesław Jamrożek, a historian of education from Poznań (based on existing sources) and to present certain facts related to the Professor's later life (from the Professor's daughter's perspective). The problem of the study is the following question: What evidence of remembrance of Professor W. Jamrożek was recorded after his death (on April 2, 2021), and what facts accompanied the Professor's final moments?

Methods and materials. To achieve the study aims, the author used a source analysis method. The author also concluded the personal memories of Wiesław Jamrożek's daughter. The existing sources include articles from scientific journals, fragments of scientific monographs, monographs devoted to the professor's memory and the activities of the Department of the History of Education at the Faculty of Educational Studies of the University

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of Adam Mickiewicz in Poznań, as well as electronic sources related to the professor's medical background.

Results and conclusion. The study attempts to present the scientific profile of Wiesław Jamrożek and describe the evidence of memory expressed in the scientific community after his death. An attempt was also made to describe the latter part of the Professor's life and to present the emotions accompanying his long-term illness. Through the narrative employed in the study, the author expresses hope that future generations will have the opportunity to recognise Wiesław Jamrożek as a "master" and one of the leading researchers in educational sciences of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Keywords: Professor Wiesław Jamrożek, educational historian, academic profile, circumstances of death, evidence of memory

Abstrakt

Cel. Celem opracowania jest ukazanie dotychczasowych dowodów pamięci środowiska naukowego o śp. Profesorze Wiesławie Jamrożku – poznańskim historyku wychowania (w oparciu o źródła zastane) oraz ukazanie pewnych faktów wiążących się z ostatnimi chwilami życia Profesora (co dokonane zostało z perspektywy córki uczonego). Problem główny opracowania zawiera się więc w pytaniu: Jakie dowody pamięci o Profesorze Wiesławie Jamrożku odnotowano po jego śmierci (2 kwietnia 2021 roku) oraz jakie fakty towarzyszyły ostatnim chwilom życia Profesora?

Metody i materiały. Aby osiągnąć cel opracowania, posłużono się metodą analizy źródeł oraz odniesiono się do osobistych wspomnień córki Wiesława Jamrożka. Wśród źródeł zastanych wyróżnić należy artykuły z czasopism naukowych, fragmenty recenzji monografii naukowych, monografie poświęcone pamięci Profesora oraz działalności Zakładu Historii Wychowania funkcjonującego na Wydziale Studiów Edukacyjnych Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu, a także źródła elektroniczne powiązane z osobą zmarłego Profesora.

Wyniki i wnioski. W opracowaniu starano się ukazać życiorys naukowy Wiesława Jamrożka i opisać dowody pamięci wyrażone w środowisku naukowym po jego śmierci. Podjęto także próbę opisu ostatnich chwil życia Profesora, a także przedstawienia emocji towarzyszących jego długotrwałej chorobie. Autor, poprzez zastosowaną w opracowaniu narrację, wyraża nadzieję, że kolejne pokolenia będą miały możliwość identyfikacji Wiesława Jamrożka jako „mistrza” oraz jednego z głównych badaczy nauk o edukacji XX i XXI wieku.

Słowa kluczowe: Profesor Wiesław Jamrożek, historyk wychowania, sylwetka naukowa, okoliczności śmierci, dowody pamięci

Introduction

Prof. Dr. hab. Wiesław Jamrożek (born on August 24, 1954, in Żary, Lubusz Voivodeship, died on April 2, 2021, in Poznań) 2001 was the head of the Department of the History of Education, established by Stanisław Michalski in 1967 at the Faculty of Educational Studies of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań (at the time of its establishment, it was the Department of Pedagogy; Brenk, 2022). What seems particularly important for the ideas espoused by the professor and his scientific interests is that the professor's family settled in Żary after being displaced from the Eastern Borderlands (Hubner, 2003; Żołędź-Strzelczyk, Ratajczak, 2021).

Wiesław Jamrożek's research interests

[...] included: the development of educational ideologies and the educational activities of Polish social and political groups, the history of civic education in the Polish lands during the partition period and in independent Poland, issues of extracurricular education, the history of family upbringing and childcare, as well as the history of women's education, their activities in the educational field in the 19th and 20th centuries, pedagogical congresses and conventions, and the history of education in the era of the Commission of National Education. (Cybal-Michalska *et al.*, 2023, p. 284)¹

Jamrożek received the professorial nomination from the President of the Republic of Poland, Andrzej Duda, on October 16, 2016 (Prezydent.pl, 2016). During the ceremony, he was accompanied by his wife, Bożena Jamrożek, and his six-year-old grandchildren, Krzysztof Wojciechowski-Sadowski and Natalia Sokalska.

While working in Żary, at the Łużycka Szkoła Wyższa (Lusatian University of Applied Sciences), Professor Jamrożek developed his scientific passions, expanding the scope of his research to include regional elements related to the Lusatian tradition. Collaborating with the local Kresowe Towarzystwo Turystyczno-Krajoznawcze (Borderland Tourist and Sightseeing Society), he actively participated in local regional assemblies. The results of this work include publications and lectures about the University of Żary and its Lusatian context. Wiesław Jamrożek also wrote many articles on the culture of the Polish borderland and educational aspects of spending free time (Łużycka Szkoła Wyższa, n.d.).

He was the editor-in-chief of the *Biuletyn Historii Wychowania* [Education History Bulletin] and one of the founders of the Education History Society, serving as its chief for two consecutive terms (2008–2016; Cybal-Michalska *et al.*, 2023).

¹ Author's own translation.

The Professor's most important place, after the University of Poznań, was the Jan Benedykt Solfa Lusatian Higher School in Żary (Łużycka Szkoła Wyższa). The Professor contributed to its establishment, organised it, directed it, and lectured there. He served as its rector and vice-rector, as well as editor of the *Łużyckie Zeszyty Naukowe* (Lusatian Scientific Notebooks), published by the school. (Cybał-Michalska *et al.*, 2023, p. 284)²

In his statements and publications, Wiesław Jamrożek regularly emphasised the importance of the history of education in the education of educators. He lamented that, over the years, the history of education courses has increasingly been marginalised in higher education curricula, and that teacher education does not adequately address this field, resulting in its teaching being either ignored or treated superficially. He pointed out that for many educators, contemporary experiences, concepts, and theories are entirely a product of our times, and their emergence and development have no connection with past events or ideas. According to the Professor, it is not necessary to refer to history to understand these ideas. Furthermore, he believed that when selecting content from the history of education, one should strive to broaden the scope of topics to include information on the history of education in various communities and social environments, primarily issues related to the history of non-institutional education, human upbringing, and human development at different stages of existence. Educational content should be expanded to include the history of care, resocialization, adult education, and health education (Jamrożek, 2007).

This study aims to present the existing evidence of the scientific community's memory of the late Professor Wiesław Jamrożek, a Poznań historian of education (based on existing sources), and to present certain facts related to the last part of the Professor's life (from the perspective of the Professor's daughter).

The main problem, therefore, is contained in the question: What evidence of remembrance of Professor Jamrożek was noted after his death (on April 2, 2021), and what facts accompanied the Professor's final moments?

To achieve the study's goal, the author used source analysis and referenced the daughter's memories of Wiesław Jamrożek.

Evidence of Remembrance

Since his "farewell," numerous texts have been written about Wiesław Jamrożek, and many gestures have been made to honour his memory. The day after the Profes-

² Author's own translation.

sor's death, Bogusław Śliwerski posted his biography on his blog, not only recalling Wiesław's scholarly achievements but also describing the bond he shared with the deceased educational historian. The author wrote, among other things, about Wiesław's unparalleled publications and scholarly and organisational activities, but also included several personal reflections³. During this difficult time for the family, the Faculty of Educational Studies at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and the Polish Historians of Education sent words of support, confirming their belief that the Professor's death had touched the community of Polish educators and historians of education. The family also received expressions of remembrance and kindness from the staff of the Łużycka Szkoła Wyższa in Żary, where Jamrożek served as the first rector and, until his death, as vice-rector.

In 2021, the *Biuletyn Historii Wychowania* [The Bulletin of the History of Education] published an article by Professor Krzysztof Ratajczak and Professor Dorota Żołądz-Strzelczyk (2021), entitled "Professor Wiesław Jamrożek (1954–2021)." In the memorial, the authors mentioned the deceased's connections with the Bulletin:

In 1993, the initiative to establish a historical and pedagogical journal arose among Poznań historians of education. The idea was conceived by two then assistant professors of the Department of the History of Education: Wiesław Jamrożek and Dorota Żołądz. This journal was intended to become not only a place for the publication of scholarly texts, but also a platform for discussion and information. (Żołądz-Strzelczyk & Ratajczak, 2021, p. 198)⁴

This journal was important to Jamrożek because the *Biuletyn Historii Wychowania*, initially published by the Poznań-based Eruditus publishing house and since 2005 by the Poznań Society of Friends of Science Publishing House, was created on the initiative of Żołądz-Strzelczyk and Jamrożek, and thanks to their efforts, "[...] it is currently one of the most important Polish historical and pedagogical journals" (Żołądz-Strzelczyk & Ratajczak, 2021, p. 198). It is also worth emphasising that the Bulletin is an organ of the Society for the History of Education, which celebrates its 25th anniversary in 2025. The authors of the memorandum, Żołądz-Strzelczyk and Ratajczak, stated that "Professor Jamrożek was the editor-in-chief of the magazine for many years, until his death" (Żołądz-Strzelczyk & Ratajczak, 2021, p. 198).

³ The text of the memorial was also published in *Przegląd Historyczno-Oświatowy* (2021), and was also posted on the website of Prof. dr hab. B. Śliwerski on April 3, the day after the death of Prof. dr hab. Wiesław Jamrożek (Śliwerski, 2021).

⁴ Author's own translation.

Professor Żołędź-Strzelczyk, who, together with Jamrożek, initiated annual scientific seminars entitled *Research Workshop of a Contemporary Educational Historian* in Obrzycko, named each of them after the deceased, bearing in mind that:

Professor Jamrożek organised many scientific meetings, seminars, and conferences. Particularly well-known were the scientific seminars organised by the Department of Educational History, headed by the Professor, entitled *Research Workshop of a Contemporary Educational Historian*, held in late spring, most often in June, in Obrzycko (one meeting took place in Ciążeń). These meetings have become a permanent fixture in the academic life of Polish educational historians. (Żołędź-Strzelczyk, Ratajczak, 2021, p. 199)⁵

The first Professor Wiesław Jamrożek Scientific Seminar took place remotely in June 2021, and this year saw the fourth edition of this renamed event. Each seminar is an opportunity for the most distinguished historians of education to exchange experiences and support in their academic development. The seminar, scheduled for June 4–5, 2025, was dedicated to the anniversary of the Society for the History of Education, of which Jamrożek, as mentioned, served as president for two terms. The event included, among other things, the launch of the latest book, *From the Works of Poznań Historians of Education. A Book Dedicated to the Memory of Professor Wiesław Jamrożek on the Seventieth Anniversary of His Birth*, edited by Mikołaj Brenk and Konrad Nowak-Kluczyński, commemorating the life and scholarly achievements of their doctoral dissertation advisor (Brenk & Nowak-Kluczyński, 2024b).

Prof. Dr. hab. Władysława Szulakiewicz, a leading historian of national education and a long-time associate of Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, also paid tribute to the deceased. During the conference, which took place on March 30–31, 2022 (with the participation of the Section of the History of Pedagogy of the Committee on Pedagogical Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences and the Department of the History of Education at the Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow), she added the year to the title of the event to commemorate the Poznań-based researcher. Among the many papers presented during the conference, three presentations were devoted exclusively to Jamrożek. The first of these was a presentation by Dr. Danuta Apanel entitled: “Professor Wiesław Jamrożek (1954–2021) as the initiator of seminars on the history of education at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań.” The author of the second paper was Dr. Tomasz Fetzki, who entitled this presentation: “The Courage of Trust. Reminiscences of Professor Wiesław Jamrożek (1954–2021).” Memories of Wiesław Jamrożek were complemented by a presentation by Katarzyna Sadowska entitled: “On the Humble Humanity of the Father and Master – Reminiscences of Wiesław Jamrożek.”

⁵ Author's own translation.

The figure and achievements of the educational historian were also discussed by several other researchers, who shared their reflections on the development of Polish educational history and the publishing activities of Polish education historians during the conference. The mourning over Wiesław Jamrożek's death was also demonstrated by the initiative of Professor Witold Chmielewski, who, as editor-in-chief of *Przegląd Historyczno-Oświatowy* [Historical-Educational Review], devoted many pages of his 2021 journal (issues 3–4) to the events surrounding the deceased's "departure" and his scholarly achievements. The journal published a text titled "Professor Wiesław Jamrożek (1954–2021). A Memoir" by Professor Karol Poznański, who summed up his reflections by noting:

Professor Wiesław Jamrożek's achievements are significant in every respect—scientific, didactic, and organisational—and constitute a tangible contribution to the development of the social sciences, especially pedagogy and the history of education. The fact that they are distinguished by their substantive maturity and high methodological skills is evidenced by the many awards that Wiesław Jamrożek has received from the Rector of Adam Mickiewicz University. (Poznański, 2021, p. 149)⁶

In the same issue of the journal, Professor Jamrożek was written about by the doctors he supervised—Konrad Nowak-Kluczyński and Mikołaj Brenk (2021). An article by Professor Zbyszko Melosik, Vice-Rector of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, was also published (Melosik, 2021). Melosik wrote: "Dear Wiesiu! Professor! Friend! Honour to your memory!!!" (Melosik, 2021, p. 135). The Dean of the Faculty of Educational Studies, Professor Agnieszka Cybal-Michalska, also wrote about the professor in the *Przegląd* (Cybal-Michalska, 2021). She noted:

Today, we bid farewell to a valued scholar, an outstanding scientist who made a significant contribution to the development of pedagogical thought and Polish pedagogy, a nationally recognised academic teacher of many generations of students, and a promoter of the scientific development of young scientists. Representatives from numerous academic centres in Poland participated in the doctoral and postdoctoral seminars, drawn to Poznań, the University, and the Faculty by the name, authority, and renown of Professor Wiesław Jamrożek. The grieving academic community bids farewell to a man of the university, but also a tireless social activist, Professor Wiesław Jamrożek. (Cybal-Michalska, 2021, p. 136)⁷

⁶ Author's own translation.

⁷ Author's own translation.

The *Przegląd Historyczno-Oświatowy* also published a memorial by Śliwerski dedicated to the Professor (Śliwerski, 2021).

A separate project initiated by the Department of the History of Culture and Education (formerly the Department of the History of Education, headed by Wiesław Jamrożek) at the Faculty of Educational Studies of Adam Mickiewicz University was a publication edited by Mikołaj Brenk and Konrad Nowak-Kluczyński from the series *From the Works of Poznań Historians of Education*, published by the Adam Mickiewicz University Publishing House in Poznań in 2024 as *A Book Dedicated to the Memory of Professor Wiesław Jamrożek on His Seventieth Birthday* (Brenk & Nowak-Kluczyński, 2024b). This monograph showcases the scholarly interests of authors representing various high schools in Poland, who were colleagues and friends of the Professor. It is an expression of remembrance and respect for his achievements and role in continuing the research traditions of Poznań historians of education and the academic community related to the history of education in Poland. In the introduction, Brenk and Nowak-Kluczyński inform:

In 2024, the Professor would have celebrated his seventieth birthday. As his students, and in memory of our mentor, we present to you the publication *From the Works of Poznań Historians of Education. A Book Dedicated to the Memory of Professor Wiesław Jamrożek on the Seventieth Anniversary of His Birth*. The first part of the title is a reference to the book *From the Works of Poznań Historians of Education* by Jan Hellwig, Wiesław Jamrożek, and Dorota Żołądz, published in 1994, which was dedicated to the memory of Stanisław Michalski the first Head of the Department of the History of Education and Organisation of Schools, whose memory was cherished by his successor, Professor Wiesław Jamrożek. (Brenk, Nowak-Kluczyński, 2024a, p. 10)⁸

The young researchers divided the study into four parts preceded by “[...] a scientific didactic and biography in the area of organisational activity of the Professor prepared by the editors, as well as memories of the father and master from the perspective of his daughter, Katarzyna Sadowska” (Brenk & Nowak-Kluczyński, 2024b, p. 10). The first part contains contributions from the Rector and Dean of the Faculty of Economics (for the 2020–2024 term), prepared by Zbyszko Melosik, Agnieszka Cybal-Michalska, Agnieszka Gromkowska-Melosik, Kinga Kuszak, Magdalena Piorunek, and the current Dean of the Faculty, Professor Waldemar Segiet. The second part features contributions from members of the Department of the History of Education: Dorota Żołądz-Strzelczyk, the current Head of the Department; Edyta Głowacka-Sobiech; Justyna Gulczyńska; Katarzyna Kabacińska-Luczak; Krzysztof Ratajczak;

⁸ Author's own translation.

Michał Nowicki; Anna Wojewoda; and the editors of the publication. The next part contains reflections by Wiesław Jamrożek's doctoral students (now doctors with significant academic achievements). Among the authors who accepted the invitation were Danuta Apanel, Anna Knocińska, and Grażyna Gramza, Jamrożek's last doctoral student. The fourth part of the book features chapters by authors who were friends and close colleagues of Professor Jamrożek. Among them are such authorities as Professor Władysława Szulakiewicz, Professor Krzysztof Jakubiak, Professor Kazimierz Przyszczykowski, Professor Andrzej Ćwikliński, Professor Eugeniusz Piotrowski, and Professor Aleksandra Boroń. Regarding the monograph, Prof. Dr. hab. Renata Bednarz-Grzybek (2024) expressed the following opinion:

The commemorative book is a special form of honouring the many years of achievements and contributions of the late Professor [...] the publication is an expression of our deep conviction that the Professor, his scientific research, his many years of teaching, his contribution to the work of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, and his moral attitude are worthy of recognition and deep gratitude. Therefore, a large group of his students, friends, and colleagues participated in creating a joint work commemorating Professor Wiesław Jamrożek. (Bednarz-Grzybek, 2024, back cover)⁹

Bednarz-Grzybek (2024) also mentions that “[...] the book is an expression of respect and attachment to the Professor, confirming the existence and need for continuous building of a unique Master-Student bond in science” (Bednarz-Grzybek, 2024, back cover).

Prof. Dr. hab. Monika Nawrot-Borowska (2024)—the second reviewer—points out that the monograph in question is “[...] a testimony to the life and scientific activity of an exceptional and outstanding man—a scientist, educator, teacher, master, but also a friend who, with his knowledge, experience and kindness, served several generations of researchers and the community of historians of education in recent decades” (Nawrot-Borowska, 2024, back cover), and the texts published in the book, “[...] besides the obvious scientific value, testify to the respect, sympathy and kind memory of the late Professor Wiesław Jamrożek” (Nawrot-Borowska, 2024, back cover)¹⁰

Just a few days after the death of Jamrożek, Katarzyna Sadowska—the daughter of the deceased—also received from Agnieszka Cybał-Michalska a poem written by Professor Mariusz Dębiński (2025), who, having learned about the events of the Easter Triduum 2021, turned his thoughts towards the family of the deceased historian of education.

⁹ Author's own translation.

¹⁰ Author's own translation.

A separate text on the topic: “Wiesław Jamrożek (1954–2021) as head of the Department of the History of Education of the Faculty of Educational Studies of the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. Recollection on the 70th Anniversary of his birth” by Mikołaj Brenk and Konrad Nowak-Kluczyński was published in “Studia Edukacyjne” (no. 72 of 2024; Brenk, Nowak-Kluczyński, 2024c). The study reads:

As an academic teacher at the Faculty of Educational Studies at Adam Mickiewicz University, he supervised dozens of bachelor’s and master’s theses each year. In the study, he marked the diverse topics of research work, writing that the preferred research method during the seminars would be research conducted at the interface of pedagogical and historical sciences. During seminar meetings, he suggested to the students to use the advantages of historical-pedagogical methods, emphasising the need to work with sources and documentation of the socio-educational and educational institutions and facilities being studied. (Brenk & Nowak-Kluczyński, 2024c, p. 115)¹¹

The authors also note the Professor’s thorough work ethic. They write, among other things, that he placed great importance on a thoroughly prepared bibliography, with a classic division into sources and studies (Brenk & Nowak-Kluczyński, 2024c, p. 115). They also note that Wiesław Jamrożek was characterised by “kindness towards every student” (Brenk & Nowak-Kluczyński, 2024c, p. 115) and that in the educational process, “[...] he did not limit himself to academic textbooks. He shared his work ethic, enriched with numerous interesting facts, thoughts, and reflections, and illustrated the topics discussed in class with excerpts from documentaries and feature films, primarily biographical ones” (Brenk & Nowak-Kluczyński, 2024c, pp. 115–116).

The doctors promoted by Jamrożek are not content with individual initiatives; however, they have also submitted further studies for publication. Two texts will soon be published: the first, “The History of Education as the Passion and Academic Identity of Professor Wiesław Jamrożek (1954–2021)—on the 70th Anniversary of His Birth,” which has been accepted for publication in the journal *Kultura-Społeczeństwo-Edukacja* [Culture-Society-Education], and the second, titled “The Academic Path and Scientific Activity of the Historian of Education Wiesław Jamrożek (1954–2021) at the University of Poznań,” which will be published in the national periodical *Pedagogika Społeczna Nova* [Social Pedagogy Nova]¹².

Holy masses were also held in various places across the country for the intention of the deceased in recent years. Just a few days after his death, on Saturday, April 10,

¹¹ Author’s own translation.

¹² Information obtained by the author from Konrad Nowak-Kluczyński.

2021, at 3:00 p.m. (as written in the announcement – “at the Hour of Divine Mercy”¹³) in the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Studzieniczna (in Studzieniczna near Augustów), a Holy Mass was celebrated “[...] for the soul of the late Professor Wiesław Jamrożek,”¹⁴ as informed the scientific community in an email correspondence by D. Apanel. This mass was celebrated by Fr. Dr. Wojciech Kotarski, Director of the Catechetical Department of the Episcopal Curia in Ełk. One of many masses also took place on April 3, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the Chapel of Retired Priests in Łódź (celebrated by Prelate Dr. Edward Wieczorek), as Monika Nawrot-Borowska wrote in her correspondence addressed to a group of Polish researchers.

A memorial meeting of the Scientific Council of the Discipline of Pedagogy at the Faculty of Educational Studies of Adam Mickiewicz University, dedicated to the memory of Professor Wiesław Jamrożek, took place on May 23, 2023, on the Szamrzewo Campus in Poznań. The meeting was chaired by Prof. Agnieszka Cybal-Michalska, and eminent scientists from across Poland were among those wishing to commemorate the professor. Jamrożek’s profile and achievements were presented thanks to coworkers in the Department of the History of Education. Many words of sympathy were delivered by, among others, the Vice-Rector of Adam Mickiewicz University — Prof. Zbyszko Melosik, Prof. Dorota Żołądz-Strzelczyk, Prof. Eugeniusz Piotrowski, Prof. Wiesław Ambrozik, as well as scientists from various academic centres, and doctors and professors promoted and supported by Professor Jamrożek during his lifetime. Also recalled were the period of the deceased’s collaboration with the Baltic Higher School of Humanities, the scientific events they shared and organised with him, numerous research studies, discussions, first meetings, last conversations, and the inspirations and passions that Professor Jamrożek inspired in the younger generation.

On June 20, 2023, the public doctoral examination of Grażyna Gramza took place at the Faculty of Educational Studies of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. Gramza was the last of the professor’s PhD students to complete her dissertation after her supervisor’s death under the supervision of Konrad Nowak-Kluczyński (who served as her assistant supervisor during the doctoral process) and Justyna Gulczyńska (her new doctoral dissertation supervisor). The dissertation, titled *Cultural and Educational Activity of Polish Diaspora Communities in the Netherlands in the Years 1989–2019*, most of which was written during Wiesław Jamrożek’s lifetime, received positive reviews and unanimous approval from the Pedagogy Discipline Council of the Faculty of Educational Studies at Adam Mickiewicz University. In 2025, Dr. Grażyna Gramza published a book based on her dissertation, writing on the first page with the following

¹³ Information obtained by the author from e-mail correspondence provided by Dorota Żołądz-Strzelczyk.

¹⁴ Information obtained by the author from e-mail correspondence provided by Dorota Żołądz-Strzelczyk.

quote: “In Memory of Professor Wiesław Jamrożek (1954–2021)” (Gramza, 2025, p. 2). In the introduction, the author explains:

The book you have before you is an abridged version of the doctoral dissertation written under the supervision of Prof. Dr. hab. Justyna Gulczyńska and Dr. Konrad Nowak-Kluczyński. The public examination took place on June 20, 2023, at the Faculty of Educational Studies, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. The first supervisor was Prof. Dr. hab. Wiesław Jamrożek, who passed away suddenly on April 2, 2021. It was this Professor who encouraged me to write my doctoral dissertation, and his support and kindness in carrying out this project were invaluable. (Gramza, 2025, p. 9)¹⁵

On May 9, 2025, Jamrożek was also distinguished at the Łużycka Szkoła Wyższa in Żary. He was the first rector of this school and worked in it until the end of his life, serving in his final years as vice-rector and head of the Department of Pedagogy. On that day, the Łużycka Szkoła Wyższa authorities invited everyone to the School’s 20th anniversary celebration, during which the lecture hall located in the building at Pszenna 2b was named after Professor Wiesław Jamrożek.

A plaque bearing the deceased’s image was unveiled by Katarzyna Sadowska (with Konrad Nowak-Kluczyński), who, courtesy of the ŁSW authorities, also prepared a commemorative publication (Sadowska, 2025). This publication consists of three parts. The first describes the deceased’s scientific achievements, the second contains reminiscences from his close colleagues, and the third presents certain facts and emotions related to Jamrożek’s death. The publication also includes two appendices containing photographs of the professor. The first of them comes from family collections, the latter was provided by the ŁSW Chancellor, Agnieszka Maj. The pictures come from various periods of the professor’s life; some depict him in his youth, others portray him as a caring grandfather, and others present his academic profile, particularly as an employee and supporter of the Łużycka Szkoła Wyższa.

W. Jamrożek was associated with the Lusatian Higher School from its inception (the school was then called the Lusatian Higher School of Humanities, and its activities were inaugurated on March 2, 2004). He referred to the school as “his child” (Regionalna24, n.d.).

He not only initiated and conducted top-tier studies there but also transformed it into a research and cultural institution. He made this school a special place in the social life of the voivodeship. In recent years, W. Jamrożek served as the School’s Vice-Rector and also as Head of the Department of Primary Education. In these roles, he celebrated important school events, inviting distinguished scholars and guests, including Profes-

¹⁵ Author’s own translation.

sor Dr. Jerzy Strzelczyk and Dr. Józef Zych. Thanks to Jamrożek's efforts, the School publishes *Łużyckie Zeszyty Humanistyczne* [Lusatian Humanities Notebooks] which includes scholarly articles, reviews, notes, and reports. As we read:

The extraordinary initiative of the LSW authorities to name the lecture hall at the University after Professor Wiesław Jamrożek seems to be a tribute to all the efforts of my father, who fought for the possibility of building and modernizing the building at 2b Pszenna Street and was bursting with pride when the first classes were held in the new lecture halls, adapted for teaching purposes. My father, bustling around the School, looking kindly at the employees, greeting the seminarians with joy, encouraging the students to deepen their knowledge, being, in my opinion, the "soul" of the School... today he does not open the doors of the Rector's Office, does not correct the theses, does not answer the calls of the Chancellor and the Rector, does not rise at dawn and collect the key to the hall to begin classes or important discussions about the future of the university in Lusatia... He also doesn't put on a jacket, pick up a briefcase filled with documents, or turn on the computer to respond to urgent messages, prepare further accreditation reports, or make syllabus corrections. Today, he also doesn't call me to inquire about issues related to preschool and early school pedagogy, doesn't consult publications on music education or vocal training, or ask me about the design of the Lusatian nursery. Currently—I'm certain of this—he remains a silent companion, a kind guardian, and in the eyes of those who once worked with him, I still see his clear reflection, a part of his inexhaustible energy (Sadowska, 2025, pp. 96–97)¹⁶

A Humble Man—The Professor's Last Moments (From His Daughter's Perspective)

My father passed away on April 2, 2021. From the moment the pandemic was declared, he had been careful to protect himself, aware that he had many comorbidities. He also worried about his loved ones and tried to rationally participate in events that his social and professional roles required. He watched with concern the subsequent cases of infection and grieved the plight of those affected by the coronavirus.

When he spoke to me in the hospital on the last day I had contact with him by phone, February 14, 2021, in a barely audible, breathless voice, he issued instructions that were like his "last will." He went to the hospital with suitcases of documents, which he had been working on for several days before his condition deteriorated significantly.

¹⁶ Author's own translation.

On February 14th, in his weak voice, I heard, above all, panic and a lack of faith in the possibility of returning. I heard, “They’re taking me to the intensive care unit,” and added as calmly as I could, “Good, they’ll help you there.” Despite my concerns about my dad’s health, I hoped he would beat the coronavirus, because in 2009/2010 (a decade earlier), he also suffered a very dramatic infection, and the doctors who reviewed his medical history at the time considered his recovery a miracle. He seemed strong and indestructible. Wiesław Jamrożek defeated COVID-19, but he was unable to breathe on his own. Although his lungs were deemed healthy after another X-ray, the ventilator treatment, several weeks of lying in a horizontal position, and comorbidities ultimately resulted in septic shock. On April 2nd, in the early morning hours, I received a call from the doctor asking the family to come and say goodbye to my father. This was a difficult moment, and I can only believe that, despite his serious condition, my father knew he was not alone. The professor died on Good Friday:

W. Jamrożek passed away after more than two months of heroic fighting for his life caused by COVID-19 infection. He didn’t stop working. He took three bags of documents he was working on to the hospital. He wrote reviews, proofread, and sent emails. He had a laptop and a router. He only stopped working in the intensive care unit. I collected those bags later, from the hospital... Tons of documents. But my dad couldn’t stop working. (Regionalna24, n.d.)¹⁷

My father worked until the very end, caring for the people he promised to prepare expert opinions and reviews for. He ensured that students had substitutes for his classes, and during his first days in the hospital, he remained in contact by phone, interested in everything happening both at home and at work. During his first days in the hospital, he also emailed the Dean of the Faculty of Educational Studies at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, requesting the excusing of his absence from the Pedagogy Discipline Council meeting.

My father’s life’s work is extraordinary. He was a hard worker, dedicated to his commitments, devoted to his family. He shared a big heart with anyone who needed him.

Observing my father’s daily life, I admired his research skills, organisational skills, and commitment to continuing academic traditions. I learned the way he supported the young faculty of the Department of Educational History and the way he integrated the Polish academic community. By following Jamrożek’s activities at the Lusatian University, I noticed, above all, an extraordinary concern to make this place a university open to everyone hungry for academic knowledge.

¹⁷ Author’s own translation.

Father humbly accepted criticism, revised the theses he supervised with some trepidation, did not abuse academic degrees or titles, did not abuse the power of secret ballots, and did not seek shortcomings, but first looked to the resources of his students and the colleagues he led. He knew how to engage in dialogue, was an excellent facilitator of all important events, and viewed the problems he encountered as challenges to be addressed.

Instead of an Ending

Educator, academic, master. What significance do these concepts hold today? A dynamically changing reality is adding a new dimension to the role of those responsible for education and upbringing. Reflecting on the essence of leadership in education entails reflection on values, especially in the context of young people at the beginning of their own life paths, for whom an axiological compass provides the foundation for building their own life orientation [...]. Values constitute a leading criterion shaping adolescents' life goals. In addition to such elements as personal interests, the educational influence of the external environment, school situation, prevailing trends, ethnic or religious affiliation, and mass media, social factors also play a significant role, including the immediate environment and educational conditions [...], including the academic environment. That's why the presence of educators, mentors, and academics seems so important in young people's lives—people who not only impart knowledge but also inspire, shape, and stimulate thought. One such authority was the late Professor Wiesław Jamrożek, an educator and historian of education, to whom a commemorative book was dedicated on his seventieth birthday. (Kędzia, 2024, p. 227)¹⁸

Professor Wiesław Jamrożek remains such an authority, and the evidence of his memory has been collected in this study so that, as Śliwerski wrote, “[...] subsequent generations can identify the Masters, main narrators, and researchers of educational sciences of the 20th and 21st centuries” (Śliwerski, 2025, p. 36). However, he was remembered not only as an outstanding scientist and master, but also as a “Wise and Good Man” (Apanel, 2025, p. 71).

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