

‘Samuel has written a beautiful intellectual biography of the historian Percy Schramm, who during the years of National Socialism was tempted to become a National Socialist himself. He was not the only academic who made his choice; the most well-known example is perhaps the philosopher Martin Heidegger. But others also found the allure of National Socialism too great to resist. Why could they not withstand National Socialism, why did they also become 'willing executioners' of the Nazi-ideology? In his thesis, Samuel tries to understand Schramm's political choice through his historical publications: those on medieval kings, but also those on the 19th century. Do we see traces here of National Socialist ideology seeping out through his historical works? After the war, Schramm felt guilty about his choices and tried to make his fellow Germans aware of the great mistakes they had made. He sought to help them understand the person Hitler, even though he had not known him personally. In his thesis, by following Schramm's intellectual development, Samuel manages to paint a nuanced picture of his Nazi sympathies. This portrayal of Schramm is written in an engaging style, blending historical research that sometimes reads like a historical novel. It goes beyond a descriptive and chronological bibliography of Schramm, using a holistic method to place and interpret him in his historical context.

The result is a very compelling and beautifully told story, drawing from numerous sources from various archives. It is an intellectual biography of a fascinating person, truly exemplary!’

The jury would also like to use its conferred powers to give an honorable mention to Vicente Rodrigues for his thesis.