Escape from the Polish labyrinth

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Summary/Abstract: The authors of this book reviewed by János Tischler have endeavoured to present the process of transition and the formation and consolidation of democratic structures in Poland. The eleven studies are scientifically meticulous. They build on each other to present a coherent picture of Poland's political, economic, social and administrative changes between 1989 and 2003. Beyond the political and social history of democratic transition, the authors also devote a great deal of attention to two other subjects. They explore the significance of Leszek Balcerowicz's so-called „shock therapy”, which saved Poland from total economic collapse. They also analyse
the importance of Lech Walesa's political role, focusing on the leader who most markedly influenced Polish politics during the first years of transition. As part of this, the authors describe and analyse the semi-presidential system Walesa managed to establish. This book guides the reader through the labyrinth that is the democratic transition in Poland between 1989 – 2003, and thus contributes to an understanding of the current political situation in Poland. Jerzy J. Wiatr, Jacek Raciborski, Jerzy Bartkowski, Barbara Fratczak-Rudnicka - Jaroslaw Kilias: Demokracja Polska, 1989-2003. Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, Warszawa, 2003, 348 pp.)