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### *In this issue:*

A Polish Moment? . . . . .	1628
<i>Sarmatian Review</i> Data . . . . .	1629
Poland: Strategically Active or Passive? by Walter Jajko . . . . .	1630
<i>Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin</i> , by James E. Reid (review). .	1634
Personal Reflections on the <i>Bloodlands</i> , by Raymond Gawronski, SJ (review) . . . . .	1635
<i>Ex fumo in lucem</i> : Barokowe kaznodziejstwo Andrzeja Kochanowskiego, by Joanna Kurowska (review) . . . . .	1638
More Books and Periodicals . . . .	1639
<i>Mitteleuropa</i> Blues, Perilous Remedies: Andrzej Stasiuk's Harsh World, Part 2, by Terrence O'Keeffe . . .	1640
Letters . . . . .	1650
About the Authors . . . . .	1653
Announcements & Thank You .	1653

### *Our Take*

## A Polish moment?

British journal *Quarterly Review* (established in 1809 and boasting such contributors as Sir Walter Scott and Charles Lamb) was recently revived after ceasing publication in 1967. Its editor Derek Turner seeks potential readers among nonaligned conservatives of the English-speaking world. The summer 2011 issue includes a long essay on Poland's potential place in the Western conservative movement by Edwin Dyga, "Eastern promise—why the West needs *Mitteleuropa*." Mr. Dyga, an Australian, challenges the stereotype (entrenched among Western conservatives) of non-Germanic Central Europe being a no-man's land, a place where wars occur but nothing else. Secularization and contempt for tradition are rampant in the West, he argues; Poland resist this trend more successfully than English-speaking countries, and may provide support for those who wish to reverse it. Poland is the "military

heavyweight"(14) in the region in spite of recent problems. Poland is also the world's best litmus test with regard to Russia, whose history and tradition make it a dubious partner for the West. One should add that Poland has a thriving conservative press (the bimonthly *Arcana* leads the way), and has quite a bit to offer intellectually.

*New Oxford Review*, an energetically highbrow American Catholic monthly, published in its July-August issue a pioneering article on Catholic Poles and the American Catholic hierarchy ("The Polish Catholic Experience," by Raymond T. Gawronski). Fr./Professor Gawronski focuses on the shabby treatment Poles received in Milwaukee, WI, and elsewhere, from the hierarchs of the American Catholic Church. Polish fidelity to the Church has scarcely been acknowledged, while the magnificent churches Poles built in Midwestern states were the first to go on the auction block when American bishops needed money. The bishops not only offered no support for the teaching of Polish in parochial elementary schools in areas of high concentration of Poles but, on the contrary, attempted to uproot Polish traditions and "Americanize" Polish immigrants. It does not take much intelligence to understand that the uprooting of national traditions often leads to the uprooting of religious life as well. Perhaps some bishops will draw conclusions from Fr. Gawronski's analysis? Let us hope so.

The fall 2011 issue of *Slavic Review*, a prestigious Slavic journal that can make or break a Slavist's career, published as its lead article a text by Elżbieta Ostrowska arguing that the relationship between Poland and the partitioning powers (as well as the Soviet Union

(continued on page 1653)

## About the Authors

**Raymond Gawronski, SJ**, is Professor of Dogmatic Theology at Denver Theological Seminary and author of, among others, *Word and Silence: Hans Urs von Balthasar and the Spiritual Encounter between East and West* (1995).

**Walter Jajko** is Brigadier General, U.S. Air Force (ret.) and former Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Intelligence Oversight (1994–1998). He is Professor of Defense Studies at the Institute of World Politics, Washington, DC.

**Joanna Kurowska, PhD**, is a published poet and writer; she teaches at the Summer Workshop of Slavic and Eastern European Languages at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

**Terrence O’Keeffe** was trained as an anthropologist and worked as a research scientist studying non-human primate behavior. His nonfiction book *The Posthumous Lives of Colonel Redl* is forthcoming.

**James E. Reid** is a Canadian writer and editor. His work also appears in *Vallum: New International Poetics* and the *Pacific Rim Review of Books*.

## Announcements and Notes

### 2011 Polish Writers Abroad Award goes to Janusz Ihnatowicz

The Society of Polish Writers Abroad gives yearly prizes to Polish writers residing and publishing outside Poland. This year, the Prize was awarded to Father (Professor) Janusz A. Ihnatowicz of the University of Saint Thomas in Houston for his poetic works. The Prize consists of a certificate and an amount of money that varies from year to year. Fr. Ihnatowicz is a member of the Advisory Board of *Sarmatian Review* and has been a faithful supporter of the *Review* since its inception. Needless to say, we are delighted. More about the Prize and the Society can be found at <<<http://zppno.com/nagroda-literacka,8.html>>.

### Score one more for *Sarmatian Review*

We are pleased to inform our readers that the number of places on the Web where *Sarmatian Review* can be read has significantly increased. A PDF version of ALL issues of *Sarmatian Review* starting with 1988 (before that year, our journal was titled *Houston Sarmatian*) can be found at Rice University’s

institutional repository (<http://scholarship.rice.edu>). This is a site “where the university’s intellectual output is shared, managed, searched, and preserved,” to quote the Web page of Rice’s digital scholarship archive. The address <<http://scholarship.rice.edu/handle/1911/21840>> leads you to Central and East European Studies where issues of *SR* are neatly arranged. Our Web address ([www.ruf.rice.edu/~sarmatia](http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~sarmatia)) continues to be valid for current issues and for archives going back to 1992, but Rice’s digital scholarship archive contains electronic versions of our journal in PDF format that go back to 1988. Δ

## A Polish Moment?

(continued from Page 1628)

in the twentieth century) bore every sign of colonialism. Perhaps this way of looking at things will help invalidate some of the absurd opinions about postwar Poland that still circulate among American Slavists.

Thanks to the indefatigable Allen Paul, a Katyn Conference took place in Washington, DC, in fall 2011. The participants included members of Congress and representatives of Polish organizations. A call was issued to Russia to finally fully open the Katyn archives rather than handing out select documents at Russia’s convenience.

Altogether, a nice crop of Polish-oriented articles and events. Can one speak of “the Polish moment” in these turbulent times, hoping that these events will have a follow-up appropriate to their potential? Δ

## Thank You Note

*Sarmatian Review* and the Polish Institute of Houston are grateful to those readers who support the journal over and above the price of subscription. Without them it would be difficult to continue publication. Donations to *Sarmatian Review* and its publisher, the Polish Institute of Houston, are tax deductible. Here is a list of recent donors:

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