

nostalgia rather than a realistic political program. However, Koronacki worries about the tone in which the critique of Buchanan's other postulates is being delivered. In his view, the narrowing of the American debate is clearly visible in this case (78–79). In some areas of conservatism there is more room for debate in Poland than in America, a paradox that Koronacki does not explore but merely points out.

A good part of Koronacki's book is dedicated to the conservative media in the United States, especially *Chronicles*, *Modern Age*, and publications of the Intercollegiate Studies Institute. There also are references to *The National Interest* and *The Weekly Standard*. Among the thinkers whose works Koronacki invokes most often are Russell Kirk, Thomas Molnar, Peter Lawler, Claes Ryn, Wilhelm Röpke (while lamenting the scarcity of conservative writings on economics), Orestes Brownson, and the neoconservative Francis Fukuyama. Rodney Stark's argument about the role of Christianity in economic and scientific progress is described in detail. Edmund Burke also appears as the fountainhead of many conservative ideas in the English-speaking world. These thinkers are not presented chronologically, but rather invoked in connection with the topics discussed. From the Southern Agrarians to the war in Iraq, issues agitating the minds of American conservatives are presented clearly, accompanied by copious citations. It is a platitude to say "This book deserves a translation into English," but in this case it has to be said most forcefully.

It is ironic that the best book on American conservatism has been written by a Polish mathematician who spent several years teaching at American universities and returned to Poland to head one of the Institutes of the Polish Academy of Sciences. For nearly two decades Koronacki's writings have appeared in the Polish conservative bimonthly *Arcana*, and a great deal of the book consists of essays appropriately reworked that he wrote for that periodical. Its format accounts for its strengths: instead of repeating slogans or presenting one more time the well-known theories, Koronacki sketches out the flow in real time of

conservative ideas, personalities, and policies expressed in specific articles, journals, social trends, debates, and legislature. The result is a vivid picture of postwar American conservatism from the 1950s (the launching of *National Review* was a milestone) to the present day. As is well known, American conservatism soon split into paleoconservatism and neoconservatism, owing partly to the editorial policies of the same *National Review*. Koronacki rightly points out that the firing of Joseph Sobran and Samuel Francis from *National Review* did unspeakable harm to the conservative movement, making it a slave of political correctness just as has been the case with mainstream periodicals. Δ

## East West Street

**By Philippe Sands.** New York: Knopf, 2016. 425 pages. ISBN 978-0-385-35071-6. Hardcover.

### James E. Reid

"Where are you now, park benches of Lwów, blackened with age and rain, coarse and cracked like the bark of mediaeval trees?"  
*Mój Lwów*, Joseph Wittlin, (1946)

In an odd coincidence, on the morning I finished reading Philippe Sands's *East West Street*, I walked out to my mailbox and discovered his article "A Grand and Disastrous Deceit" in the July 2016 issue of the *London Review of Books*. Sands's survey in the *LRB* of John Chilcot's "Report of the Iraq Inquiry" is marked by a damning examination of Tony Blair's reprehensible maneuvering to twist the intelligence that Saddam Hussein did not present a threat to anyone other than his own citizens. Blair twisted the facts until he had an empty *casus belli* for a pointless war in Iraq, which has brought us ISIL, ISIS, Daesh, new wars and deaths, hundreds of thousands of refugees, and unprecedented acts of terrorism.

However, in *East West Street* Sands's tone is that of a thoughtful man searching for the

history of ancestors and their colleagues and friends who disappeared during the German Nazi occupation of Poland. The histories in *East West Street* extend in many directions, all of which are linked to Sands's central concerns that lie in the areas of Poland devastated by war and the Holocaust. Here he searches for any records of his ancestors and for any ancestors of Hersch Lauterpacht and Rafael Lemkin. Lauterpacht worked tirelessly to ensure that the phrase "crimes against humanity" became enshrined in international law during the Nuremberg trials. Lemkin also tried diligently, but failed to ensure that the term "genocide" was also enshrined at Nuremberg. Since then, however, "genocide" has come to describe the horror of the indescribable in places such as Rwanda, Cambodia, and Gulag archipelago of the Soviets.

In a generous gesture toward his readers, Sands has incorporated something not seen often enough in the writing of history—good maps. These are not one or two contemporary maps, which are often of limited use for a country such as Poland where borders shifted repeatedly during the period covered by *East West Street*. Instead, Sands has provided accurate and often detailed historical maps of LWÓW 1911, LWÓW & ŻÓŁKIEW 1930, ŻÓŁKIEW East-West Street 1854, GENERAL GOVERNMENT-NAZI-OCCUPIED POLAND 1943, LVIV 2016, and CENTRAL EUROPE 1920. Much of the sweep of history in this book is clarified with reference to these maps. Some of them also provide the locations of the former residences of a number of the central figures in *East West Street*.

Sands has also provided photographs of a number of Polish Christian figures, German Nazi *Gauleiters*, the residences of relatives, and other figures in *East West Street*. He has reproduced photographs of sessions of the Nuremberg trial, some of which do not appear in the official collections of Nuremberg photographs and were previously unpublished. Most moving are the photographs of relatives who disappeared during the war, and of the German Nazi crimes against humanity and genocide. Most damning are the photographs of the major participants in the Nazi enterprise,

those vile and amoral figures who always seem to be among us. Such a major participant is Hans Frank, the governor general of that part of occupied Poland that was *not* directly annexed to the Reich. Frank warmly befriended high-ranking Nazi officers, and in a photograph on page 219 he is pictured hosting a luxurious banquet for laughing Nazis while Polish Christians are executed in the streets, and Jews are transported to Nazi death camps. *East West Street* is occasionally a difficult book to read but it is a necessary book, with a deeply thoughtful and often tender heart.

*East West Street* is deeply committed to recovering more of Poland's lost history of betrayal by Western powers, as well as genocide and crimes against humanity committed by her occupiers. This is a book that clarifies the nature and devastation of Nazism in ways that are seldom encountered. △

My deep thanks to my colleague Kasia Seydegart,  
who read an early version of this essay  
while I recovered from a concussion.

## November 11, 2016 Polish Independence Day in Washington's Polish Embassy

On November 16, 2016, Polish Ambassador to the United States Piotr Wilczek held a reception at the Embassy on the occasion of the 98<sup>th</sup> anniversary of regaining sovereignty by Poland after World War 1. Below is his speech to the assembled guests. Printed by permission.



President Andrzej Duda and Ambassador Piotr Wilczek.  
Photo: Krzysztof Sikorski/KPRP

**L**adies and Gentlemen, Welcome! Thank you for being here, and thank you for joining me as we celebrate Poland's Independence Day.