

blood for the fatherland. He criticizes thoughtlessness and prematurity of actions that often lead to tragic effects. On the other hand, in making an effort to read the unnoticed, silent, and forgotten deaths ("To Walenty Pomian Z." and "On the Death of Jan Gajewski"), Norwid brings out their symbolic meanings and their hidden but significant and valuable subtexts. Both these ways of "reading" death, the polemic and the postulative, demonstrate the originality of Norwid's reflection in the context of Romanticism and emphasize his uniqueness as a Polish poet-thinker. Δ

(Endnotes on Page 1793)

Carpe diem

Jan Twardowski

Love while we can people are soon gone
 leaving empty shoes and unanswered phones
 only the trivial drags its bovine hooves
 what's important happens so fast it catches us out
 the ensuing silence so normal it's unbearable
 like innocence born of sheer confusion
 thinking of someone who's left us
 Don't be sure you've time, for unfounded
 certainty
 Robs us of our awareness just as all happiness
 Comes at once like pathos and humour
 Like two passions always weaker than one
 Fleeting as a thrush's song in July
 Like a slightly harsh sound or a stiff bow
 In order to see aright eyes are closed
 Though being born is a greater risk than dying
 Yet we still love too little and always too late
 Don't write of this too many times rather write it
 once and for all
 And you'll be gentle yet strong like a dolphin
 Love while we can people are soon gone
 And those who don't go don't always return
 And speaking of love you never know
 Whether the first is the last or the last is the first

Translated by Patrick Corness

Intermarium The Land Between the Black and Baltic Seas

By **Marek Jan Chodakiewicz**. New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 2012. vi + 568 pages. Index, bibliography. ISBN 978-1-4128-4774-2. Hardcover. \$59.95.

Karl A. Roider

In 1962 Oscar Halecki published a book entitled *Limits and Divisions of European History*. In this work he divided Europe geographically into four zones: Western Europe, which comprised Britain, France, Netherlands, Spain, Portugal; West Central Europe, which consisted of Italy and Germany; East Central Europe, made up of Poland, Hungary, Bohemia, the Baltic States, and Slovakia; and Eastern Europe, which comprised the Ukraine and Belarus. Everything east of that was Asiatic barbarism. Chodakiewicz's work is reminiscent of that book. For Chodakiewicz the Intermarium includes the Baltic States, Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova. It is hard to pick out the primary theme of the book—there are many—but one of them is that the struggle for the soul of the Intermarium is between the Polish model, which represents tolerance, prosperity, parliamentary democracy, intellectual achievement, and freedom, and the Russian model, which represents totalitarianism, corruption, cronyism, atheism, and moral relativism.

Chodakiewicz declares early on that the audience his book seeks to capture is an American one, particularly Americans who can influence foreign policy. He wants Americans to be more aware of Polish history as part of Western civilization, and voices the old complaint that America did not do enough to assist Poland in resisting communism between 1945 and 1989. But the book demands that the reader know a good deal about Polish and Eastern European history. The author mentions a number of historical events, organizations, and movements without explaining what they were; he assumes that the reader will know. The

structure of the book is chronological in a general way, but it is hard at times for the reader to link cause and effect as the text proceeds.

Most of the book focuses on the post-1989 Intermarium. The two contenders for power are what he calls the postcommunists and the patriots. The postcommunists are the Russians or the Russophiles, who are in cahoots with Western deconstructionists, feminists, environmentalists, gay rights advocates, nihilists, and postmodernists who are entrenched in American and Western European universities. These folks are all conspiring to do—something, although Chodakiewicz is not clear what that might be. In fact, there are conspiracies everywhere in this book, but the author offers no names, no institutions, no objectives, and no strategies. Whoever these apparent evildoers are, they are undermining the Intermarium's return (and he stresses a *return* following the example of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth before 1772) to the ideals of parliamentary democracy, rule of law, respect for private property, widespread religious faith, freedom, and individualism. But who exactly is preventing this from happening is unclear; all Chodakiewicz is certain of is that the conspiracy runs deep.

Chodakiewicz's most important message comes in Chapter 19, titled "Lifting the Velvet Curtain." There he calls for an alliance between the United States and the old Eastern European countries—Poland, the Baltic States, the Balkans, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary—to contain Russia. Chodakiewicz declares the Western European countries and therefore NATO too anti-American and too infected with political correctness to be of much use. Proposing such an alliance in some ways reminds one of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's distinction between the New Europe and Old Europe following the 9/11 attacks, and in other ways the old French *cordon sanitaire* against Germany from the interwar years.

Chodakiewicz is at his least polemical in chapters 17 and 18 when he analyzes recent politics in the different Intermarium states. In these chapters he shies away from his postcommunist and patriot labels and discusses current politics in a rational and informative way—who is in, who is out, who is waiting in

the wings, and why. The one thing all of the Intermarium states have in common, no matter what side of the political fence they are sitting on, is corruption. Heritage, tradition, conspiracies, and religiosity all take back seats to corruption.

Chodakiewicz's call for more American attention focused on the Intermarium states and their neighbors will likely fall on deaf ears. It would seem that American foreign policy is now shifting from a focus on the Middle East to one on East Asia, which means that other parts of the world will be garnering little attention. The author complains that Russia uses its energy and economic policies to extend its influence, but for America those matter little compared to the oil-producing Middle East and the manufacturing power of China. Besides, the only foreign policy issue that generates passion among the current national politicians is the security of Israel, and that passion usually consists of accusing one another of being insufficiently supportive of it. Add to that the virulent divide between Republicans and Democrats on virtually any domestic initiative, and no one of consequence in the United States will be paying attention to the geopolitical fortunes of the countries Chodakiewicz cares about. That is just the way it is at this time in history. Δ

Politics, History and Collective Memory in East Central Europe

Edited by Zdzisław Krasnodębski, Stefan Garsztecki, and Rüdiger Ritter. Hamburg: Reinhold Krämer Verlag (info@kraemer-verlag.de), 2012. ISBN 978-3-89622-110-0. 400 pages. EUR 39.80. Paper.

Paweł Styrna

First, briefly: this book, a collection of papers by eminent scholars, is recommended reading not only for historians of the region, but also for policy analysts and journalists reporting on it. It deals with the territory of the Intermarium (Polish *Międzymorze*, Ukrainian *Mizhmorya*, and