

in order to “repay the debt” of gratitude to the eponymous general by defending his country’s newly-regained independence in the Polish-Bolshevik war of 1920. Finally, it is the cause of freedom and the desire for independence that drove three generations of Poles to oppose two of the twentieth century most brutal totalitarian regimes, no matter the cost, until they had their country back—a nation of free men, claiming their right to dignity and self-determination.

Incidentally, Pew Research Center published its *free expression index* shortly after Poland’s last presidential and parliamentary elections. For the first time since the fall of communism in Poland, one party won the presidency and scored an unprecedented landslide victory that gave it a parliamentary majority along with the mandate to form the government alone. Those elections mark a shift: the coming to power of the political class with roots in anti-Nazi and anti-communist underground, Solidarity movement, and student organizations committed, above all, to ending the occupation of Poland by the Soviet army and winning back Poland’s independence.

Few outside of Poland realize that it is this commitment to the country’s independence, rather than the notions of political left and right, that is the true demarcation line in Polish politics.

Independent Poland is a steadfast ally of the United States, unequivocally committed to the Trans-Atlantic Alliance and cooperation between our two countries. Acutely aware of national security and energy security demands in Europe and around the world, Poland is not only a proud NATO ally, ready to do its part, but also a loyal EU member, a true partner committed to Europe’s security, energy independence, and compassionate treatment of those who come to our borders in need of help—more than one million Ukrainians fleeing Russian aggression found refuge in Poland.

Our strength and security are in our independence. Our generosity comes from our freedom.

Europe’s forgotten refugees—our next-door neighbors whose plight no longer makes the news—remind us how fortunate we are to have our freedoms and opportunities. As we celebrate our independence, let us never take them for granted.

I would now like to introduce Dr. Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, whom I asked to say a few words about Poland’s independence in the broader historical context. Dr. Chodakiewicz is a historian who authored numerous articles and monographs published in English and Polish, most recently the magisterial *Intermarium: The Lands Between the Black and the Baltic Seas*. He is Professor of History at the Institute of World Politics in Washington, D.C., a graduate school of statecraft, where he holds the Kościuszko Chair in Polish Studies. His unmatched expertise in modern European history earned him a presidential appointment to the U. S. Holocaust Memorial Museum Council. Dr. Chodakiewicz will share with us his encyclopedic knowledge of history and an unmatched command of facts born of a lifetime spent in archives and in the field. He never lets his audiences forget that the past is not a lofty idea or a theory frozen in a book, but that it was once lived, imbued with all the imperfections and surprises of human nature. Filled with joys, grudges, fears, toothaches, and random acts of cruelty or kindness, the only way the past differs from the present is that it had already happened. Ladies and Gentlemen, please welcome Professor Marek Jan Chodakiewicz. Happy Independence Day!

MORE BOOKS

Andrzej Maksymilian Fredro, *Kwestia wojskowa, czyli o prawidłach wojny i pokoju dwie księgi (wraz z pewnymi pomniejszonymi pismami tegoż autora)* [Militaria, or the rules of war and peace in two books, with the addition of shorter works by the same author]. Translated from Latin into Polish by Jagoda Chmielewska and Bartłomiej Bednarek. Introduction by Marek Tracz-Tryniecki. Polish Political Thought - Military Library Series, vol. 2. Warsaw: Narodowe Centrum Kultury (<http://nck.pl>), 2016. 839 pages. Notes, index. ISBN 978-83-7982-160-0. Hardcover. Illustrations. In Polish and Latin.

This handsomely produced and carefully edited bilingual edition of Fredro’s writings on military issues is long overdue. Fredro’s works were virtually forgotten as the Polish

nation struggled for survival ever since the eighteenth century. Suffice it to say that *Militaria* was not translated into Polish until 2016. In the seventeenth century it was available to the Polish elites who spoke Latin; when Latin ceased to be a language commonly taught in schools, Fredro's books were pushed aside and even maligned as backward products of the Catholic Counter-Reformation.

As is the case with his other works, in *Militaria* Fredro navigates comfortably in the world of ancient authors, with Tacitus being his favorite historian. As the introduction states, Tacitus was perhaps the most read ancient author among the Polish elites in the seventeenth century (63). It was Tacitus who noted the incompatibility of the idea of empire and liberty, and Fredro shared his view in this regard. Among other historians who influenced Fredro are Livy, with whom Fredro shared a deep respect for the nation's ancestors and Polybius. Among other influences on Fredro one should mention Julius Caesar, Curtius Rufus's *History of Alexander the Great*, Francis Bacon, and of course the Bible.

Fredro is an Aristotelian, yet he seldom quoted Aristotle directly. The logic of Aristotle was so deeply grounded in the Polish psyche that there was no need to invoke the philosopher by name. Fredro is also a strong believer in natural law, and his observations and advice on war and peace are grounded in this premise. Fredro understands the fact that human beings are flawed creatures and therefore unlikely to construct a utopian society in which wars would become a thing of the past. Fear, selfishness, and anger will always be among human motivators, although they can be countered by nobility of spirit, generosity, and love of one's country. Fredro values knowledge and study but warns that they should not overshadow common sense. The most important task of the education is to instill virtue in citizens since virtue in conditions of liberty brings magnificent results.

Fredro is a great believer in liberty. In a typically Polish Sarmatian fashion, he argues that liberty is necessary to work efficiently and to develop one's full potential. Much of the volume is dedicated to the problem of how to reconcile liberty and the republican principles with the idea of monarchy. Fredro is opposed to absolute monarchy, which never developed in

free Poland and he criticizes Poland's neighbors for implementing it. He maintains that these countries' failures are due precisely to imposing limits on the citizens' freedoms. At the same time, he is not unaware of the dangers that liberty can bring, especially in the conditions of electability of kings (Poland elected its kings rather than relying on dynastic arrangements). He points out that in order to rule efficiently the king must have a range of advisors who know how to distinguish between personal and community interests. He believes in a communitarian (*wspólnotowy*) model of a nation: those who live together in a nation state should be aware that communal interests have to trump personal interests in matters of importance.

Fredro believes that a monarchy can exist alongside democratic principles, as was the case in Poland. He is also scrupulously concerned with justice for the lower classes of society, and approves the custom of peasants suing their masters if these masters act unjustly. Interestingly, although he saw signs of decline in the Polish democracy, he did not blame the nobility but rather the "Frenchified" court.

The book also contains technical chapters concerning the army and how to run it. Altogether, it is an immense cultural loss for Poland that Fredro's writings were so thoroughly forgotten during the partitions period. He spoke to the entire Polish nation and expressed its foundational beliefs and aspirations. His writings should become part of the school curriculum in sovereign Poland.

***Continuity: Eleven Sketches from the Past of Mathematics*, by Jerzy Mioduszewski. Translated by Abe Shenitzer.** Katowice: University of Silesia Press (zamowienia.wydawnictwo@us.edu.pl), 2016. 107 pages. Graphs, illustrations. ISBN 978-83-8012-873-6. Paper. Zł 20 plus postage from the publisher.

A series of essays on the great mathematicians whom the author either knew personally or who otherwise were important to him.

***Prawo naturalne a ład polityczny (Natural law and political order)*, by Zbigniew Stawrowski.**

Kraków: Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN–Instytut Tischnera, 2006). 467 pages. Bibliography, index of names. ISBN 83-922957-5-7. Paper. In Polish.

Like C. S. Lewis, Stawrowski starts with simple and universal things, such as the apparently innate recognition of injustice. Unlike Lewis, however, he moves onto academic philosophy and seeks to explain the connection between natural law and the political systems the Western world has produced.

Niemoralna demokracja (Immoral democracy), by **Zbigniew Stawrowski**. Kraków: Ośrodek Myśli Politycznej (www.omp.org.pl), 2008. 207 pages. Bibliography, index. ISBN 978-83-60125-34-3. ***Budowanie na piasku: Szkice o III Rzeczpospolitej (Building on sand: comments about the Third Republic),*** by **Zbigniew Stawrowski**. Kraków: Ośrodek Myśli Politycznej (www.omp.org.pl), 2014. 210 pages. Index. ISBN 978-83-62628-89-6. Paper. In Polish.

Unlike the book on natural law, these two essays are directed at a common educated reader rather than at a specialist. The first contains a historical summary of how democracy was regarded in history and today. Issues such as abortion, euthanasia, morality, and Christianity are discussed in the context of democracy. The book ends with a provocative thesis about evil and its place in democracy.

The second book is specifically directed at postcommunist or postcolonial Poland. It sums up the achievements and failures of what in Polish has been called “the third republic,” the original Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth being the first republic, the Polish republic between the two world wars being the second, and postcommunist arrangements being called the third. In a clear and persuasive way Stawrowski points out that the Polish judicial system has never been revamped and it continues to consist of judges appointed and educated by the communists. A special problem is the fact that the Polish political scene begins to be peopled by professional politicians who tend to treat the state as their private sinecure rather than feeling a responsibility to the electorate. Stawrowski

concludes that the Polish constitution, another remnant of communist times, needs fundamental changes.

Debaty Artes Liberales: Syberia—tradycja i modernizacja, edited by **Kamil Maria Wielecki**. Warsaw: Artes Liberales Department of Warsaw University (www.al.uw.edu.pl), 2015. Vol. IX. 167 pages. ISSN 2299-8799. Paper. In Polish, English, and Russian.

Stenograms of the round table debates that Artes Liberales initiated at Warsaw University several years ago. In this volume participants from Siberian universities and the University of Warsaw debate the past and future of Siberia. Truly a humanistic volume.

THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE ANNOUNCES SUMMER STUDY IN POLAND

at the School of Polish Language and Culture at John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin.

The five-week Polish language course (July 3-August 5) includes 100 hours of instruction at the beginning, intermediate, or advanced levels, plus lectures on Polish culture and sightseeing in Warsaw, Sandomierz, and elsewhere. Cost estimate: \$2,975 including tuition, room and board, and 5 UWM credits; plus round air trip transportation Chicago-Warsaw-Chicago. Also being offered are two, three, four, five, six, seven, and eight-week courses as well as two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight-week intensive and highly intensive courses of Polish language in July and August.

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