Exploring republican ideas and concepts that developed in sixteenth-century Poland under the impact of humanism and the Renaissance, as well as political and constitutional changes, this is a landmark study of republican discourse in sixteenth-century Poland–Lithuania. It provides a conceptual and contextual analysis of the rich political literature and debate which animated intellectual life and political reasoning during the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth and effectively demonstrates its republican character. Using a comparative perspective, Dorota Pietrzyk-Reeves situates the Polish republican discourse within both the classical and early modern republican traditions, bringing together contexts and ideas that have traditionally been overlooked by scholars of early modern Europe. In addition, she also underlines the originality of Polish concepts such as the relationship between law, liberty and virtue as key elements of a well-ordered commonwealth and the vision of a mixed res publica that had a monarchical character. This book is an invaluable resource for anyone interested in European intellectual history and the early modern republican tradition.

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POLISH REPUBLICAN DISCOURSE IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

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Translated by Teresa Bałuk-Ulewiczowa
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Note on the Translation

This book is a modified version of the Polish original published in 2012 as Ład rzeczypospolitej: Polska myśl polityczna XVI wieku a klasyczna tradycja republikańska (The Order of the Res Publica: Polish Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century and the Classical Republican Tradition). I selected four chapters of the original book for the English translation: those focusing primarily on the sixteenth-century Polish republican discourse. I omitted the first two chapters, on the ancient and early modern republican traditions, although some passages were incorporated where necessary to illustrate the context or for comparison. The original Polish terms, such as szlachta (the equestrian estate or nobility) or sejmik (provincial assembly) are used in their Polish version when exact English equivalents are not available or when the term is specific, such as the word Rzeczpospolita used as the proper name for the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. A glossary of Polish terms has been provided to facilitate reading. The Polish spelling of Polish names and terms has been retained, with the exception of some historic names, such as those of kings.