

## POLISH REPUBLICAN DISCOURSE IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

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.

DOROTA PIETRZYK-REEVES is Associate Professor of Political Philosophy at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. Her major publications focus on normative political theory and include *The Idea of a Civil Society: Contemporary Debate and its Sources* (2004, 2012), *Questions of Contemporary Political Philosophy* (2007), *An Identity of the Old Continent and the Future of the European Project* (2007) and *Civil Society, Democracy and Democratization* (2016).

## IDEAS IN CONTEXT

*Edited by* David Armitage, Richard Bourke, Jennifer Pitts  
and John Robertson

The books in this series will discuss the emergence of intellectual traditions and of related new disciplines. The procedures, aims and vocabularies that were generated will be set in the context of the alternatives available within the contemporary frameworks of ideas and institutions. Through detailed studies of the evolution of such traditions, and their modification by different audiences, it is hoped that a new picture will form of the development of ideas in their concrete contexts. By this means, artificial distinctions between the history of philosophy, of the various sciences, of society and politics, and of literature may be seen to dissolve.

The series is published with the support of the Exxon Foundation.

*A list of books in the series will be found at the end of the volume.*

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-49323-9 — Polish Republican Discourse in the Sixteenth Century  
Dorota Pietrzyk-Reeves, Translated by Teresa Bałuk-Ulewiczowa  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

---

POLISH REPUBLICAN  
DISCOURSE IN THE  
SIXTEENTH CENTURY

DOROTA PIETRZYK-REEVES

*Jagiellonian University in Krakow*

Translated by Teresa Bałuk-Ulewiczowa



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-49323-9 — Polish Republican Discourse in the Sixteenth Century  
Dorota Pietrzyk-Reeves, Translated by Teresa Baluk-Ulewiczowa  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom  
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,  
New Delhi – 110025, India  
79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)  
Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108493239](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108493239)  
DOI: 10.1017/9781108695008

© Dorota Pietrzyk-Reeves 2020

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2020

Printed in the United Kingdom by TJ International Ltd, Padstow Cornwall

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

ISBN 978-1-108-49323-9 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.



NATIONAL PROGRAMME  
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMANITIES

The translation of this work was funded by the National Programme for the Development of Humanities of the Minister of Science and Higher Education in Poland in 2018–2020, project no. 21H 16 0034 84.

## Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	page vi
<i>Note on the Translation</i>	vii
Introduction: Classical Republican Tradition and the Polish Republican Discourse	i
1 Polish Sixteenth-Century Political Thought in Context	18
2 The Commonwealth ( <i>res publica</i> ): A Free Political Community	50
3 Virtue and the Common Good	128
4 Mixed Constitution and the Institutional Foundations of the Commonwealth	175
Epilogue	239
<i>Glossary of Polish Terms</i>	245
<i>Bibliography</i>	246
<i>Index</i>	264

## *Acknowledgements*

A number of friends and institutions have helped me write this book and it is an enormous pleasure to acknowledge them here. This version is a translation of the greater part of a monograph originally written in Polish and published with Księgarnia Akademicka under the title *The Order of the Res Publica: Polish Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century and the Classical Republican Tradition* (2012).<sup>1</sup> The translation was prepared by Teresa Bałuk-Ulewiczowa, herself a scholar with a strong interest in the Renaissance and its Latin works. My debt to her for her superb work done on the translation is immense. The translation of the Polish manuscript was facilitated by the National Programme for the Development of Humanities grant awarded by the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education in 2017. I would like to thank my previous publisher, Mr Adam Lejczak, the head of Księgarnia Akademicka, for his generous assistance with the translation of the book into English.

I am grateful to friends and colleagues, Bogdan Szlachta, Paulina Kewes, Anna Grzeškowiak-Krwawicz, Steffen Huber and Krzysztof Koehler, who read and commented on the Polish monograph and later on encouraged me to pursue the English translation. I am also indebted to scholars whose work had much impact upon my own reflection on the republican tradition and its Polish variety, above all to Quentin Skinner and Robert Frost.

In the production of this book Cambridge University Press and the team I worked with provided much support and guidance as well as consummate professionalism, for which I would like to thank them. Special thanks to Liz Friend-Smith, who took care of this project from its earliest stages.

This book is dedicated to Mark and Antonia, whose presence, understanding and smile have been a great support.

<sup>1</sup> Dorota Pietrzyk-Reeves, *Ład Rzeczypospolitej: Polska myśl polityczna XVI wieku a klasyczna tradycja republikańska*, Krakow: Księgarnia Akademicka, 2012.

## *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.

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-49323-9 — Polish Republican Discourse in the Sixteenth Century  
Dorota Pietrzyk-Reeves , Translated by Teresa Bałuk-Ulewiczowa  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

---