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patriotic duty with the fight for the possibility of personal development, where excessive entanglement in Polishness can constitute an obstacle. Polishness should be therefore recreated, reworked and built anew (Piłsudski is thinking similarly here to Brzozowski) or one needs to escape from Polishness – to the South of the mythical republic, as Bobkowski did, or to the dangerous oceans of real life as Conrad or Szczepański advised. It's also possible to look for an opportunity in the restitution of the familiar existential power of Roman Catholicism, which Stanisław Szczepanowski described (but also the later Brzozowski) or in throwing off romantic delusions searching for some kind of sense in the macabre of life (Jarosław Marek Rymkiewicz).

It's impossible to describe or even point out, in such a short note, every element which makes up the considerations of Piotr Augustyniak about Polish struggles with modernity. Each essay, forming a separate whole, clearly corresponds with the others in the book as well as appeals to the entire series of figures, works and ideas. The panorama of diseases and flaws of Polish life, made up of the voices of the creators called upon, was excellently deepened and filled with original insights, commentaries and conclusions. In an even greater degree, this applies to the presentation of methods of freeing oneself from Polish insecurities and miasmas. Augustyniak is not only a restorer of Polish self-knowledge, proficient in historical work, but also a passionately engaged participant in the debate which for at least two centuries forms the most important current of Polish thought.

By Michał Bohun
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Historia filozofii politycznej. Cześć druga [A History of Political Philosophy: Part Two],
**ed. By PIOTR NOWAK (Warszawa: Fundacja Augusta hr. Cieszkowskiego, 2016,
pp. 1146).**

Seven years ago the Count August Cieszkowski Foundation published a translation of the classic textbook *The History of Political Philosophy* edited by Leo Strauss and Joseph Cropsey. 'Textbook' in the case of this work is a rather modest designation – this work stands not only as a general and systematic introduction to the history of political ideas, but also a collection of original studies written by leading scholars. This volume combines academic discipline with original independent thought, and therefore gained its position and three more editions (1963, 1972, 1987).

Last year, Polish readers received a continuation of Strauss and Cropsey's work, in keeping with its title and intention. *History of Political Philosophy: Part Two* however, was edited by another person: Piotr Nowak, who, along with Mikołaj Wiśniewski, oversaw

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the Polish publication of the original 'part one'. In its scale, the volume presented by the Polish editors is an appropriate follow up to Strauss and Cropsey's 'textbook'. It contains close to sixty entries dedicated to the political aspects of various characters' thought – philosophers and other varied thinkers and leaders – from Moses, through Socrates all the way to Lenin. The chapters fit into over 1000 pages of tiny text. It is thus quite a piece of material which would take a long time for even a cursory study, and even more to form an honest evaluation.

For now it's worthwhile to turn our attention to Piotr Nowak's intentions guiding this work. As I mentioned, Strauss and Cropsey's book had the ambition to be a textbook. For the most part, the entries were written specially for this book by professional historians of ideas and philosophers. The chapters also contain – aside from the analyses of political points of view – basic, encyclopedic information about the author analyzed, and the entire composition ends in a parade of 'big thinkers' of the international canon of the history of ideas. 'The second part' of the *History of Political Philosophy* takes advantage of the 'textbook' format of the volume of which it is meant to be a continuation, but really it is also partly a collection of classical historical studies, partly a collection of quite distinct essays from diverse authors. The essay is, as we know, not a very textbook-like presentation of a given subject, but rather a personal musing on that subject.

What's more, some of these texts were written specially for this volume and thus sometimes with the intention of a presentation that is somewhat 'textbooky', while others serve a completely different purpose. Thus we will find within studies by both Polish historians of philosophy such as Ryszard Legutko or Andrzej Wawrzynowicz, and also thinkers who have already passed on such as Alexandre Kojève or Leo Strauss. These texts were thus written in very different historical moments by authors far away from each other and with very different goals in mind. In effect, the whole it forms has an even more heterogeneous character than it would result from the very fact of placing all these historical works and essays together in one tome.

In *Part Two*, one particular change in relation to the original project by Strauss and Cropsey is the placement of not only distinguished authors, but also those who are considered classic solely from the Polish perspective, such as Wincenty Kadłubek, Zygmunt Krasiński or Józef Tischner. One other interesting revision is the introduction to the canon of 'great political thinkers', characters who played a key role in the formation of the political identity of various communities and left behind some writings, but were more political 'writers', than thinkers – as in the case of Moses, Homer, Saint Paul, or Julian the Apostate. In Strauss and Cropsey's book Thucydides was the only character who performed a similar function. We most likely owe this to the volume editor's intention, who confesses in the introduction: 'I am often trying to connect philosophy with literature, since the inner kinship of the two seems obvious to me' (14).

Aside from that, in some cases entries were devoted to certain thinkers, such as Carl Schmitt or William Shakespeare, and even – as in the case of György Lukács – the

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author of both is the same person. Therefore one returns to the same thinker sometimes twice, from a somewhat different perspective, even if the same person is writing. It seems to suggest that what was more important for the editor of the volume than a textbook explanation for people searching for baseline and succinct information was to familiarize the reader with limited portraits of political thinkers through the personal interpretation of the authors of these texts.

All this means that a reader who picks up this enormous tome looking for simple views on the culmination of accomplishments achieved in the history of political philosophy will be disappointed. Instead, readers should prepare themselves for a journey full of surprises with very personal commentaries from the authors of each entry. Such a state of things makes it difficult to use the book to find the answers to questions we may already have in mind – instead, we need to rather resign ourselves to the fact that we will learn what each author has to offer. As expected, due to the heterogeneity of the work, we will also find here more classic studies from the history of ideas. However, their presence is more of an exception than a rule.

Each entry on the characters' political ideas ends with a short selection of sources on which the studies were based. This is a good starting point for readers wanting to go deeper into the subject of the works. Aside from the list of sources, Piotr Nowak also adorned each article with suggested readings, texts which touch upon the person or subject covered. It's worthwhile to quote the editor of the volume when he explains how he understands the meaning of these readings because, I believe, it says a lot about the intent of the whole work. 'The readings that I attached to each chapter, in principle are not necessarily academically rigorous. The reader will find among them poetry, prose, biographies, philosophical tracts, and fairy tales... Nevertheless I decided to limit "secondary literature" to a minimum. I did this partly because the many scholars and students to whom I dedicate this textbook, undeservedly praise ossified views and familiar "greats"' (14).

And so Piotr Nowak's 'textbook', similarly to Strauss and Cropsey's 'textbook', is for the academic community of students and scholars. The latter editors declared however, that 'this book is intended primarily to introduce undergraduate students of political science to political philosophy'.² Thus the goal of this 'part one' was a primary introduction for students in their given discipline. Piotr Nowak's intention reaches further. He wants to disrupt the rigid views of academics. The book he edited is striving to achieve the requirements of 'textbooks', but – to a much larger degree than Strauss and Cropsey's work – Nowak wants to reconsider the views presented here and lead the student beyond the usual academic lesson plan.

An appraisal of the effects of these intentions will depend on what we are looking for in this book. Those people who, upon seeing the title and allusion to Strauss and

² *History of Political Philosophy*, eds. Leo Strauss, Joseph Cropsey, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), xiii.

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Cropsey's textbook, will be looking for an easy guide to classical political thought may experience moments of great disappointment. Those who resign themselves to the fact that sometimes they will come upon a historical study, and sometimes an essay, will be satisfied. Certainly, the increased number and diversity of the type of characters presented in comparison to Strauss and Cropsey's work is an undoubted advantage. Moreover, the Polish reader receives an introduction to the thought of a few key authors from their own national tradition, while outside Poland, if this book were to be translated, it could be the first occasion for readers to familiarize themselves with the achievements of unique political thinkers. The introduction of certain previously undiscovered authors to the canon of 'classical political thinkers', such as Alexandre Kojève, Raymond Aron, John Rawls, René Girard, Jürgen Habermas and Giorgio Agamben, is an obvious advantage too. These writers had not been as yet recognized as classics at the time of the publication of the third edition of 'part one'. For all these reasons, the book Piotr Nowak has edited seems worthy of attention even if it does not serve as a continuation of Strauss and Cropsey's work in every sense, as its title suggests. Its length and heterogeneity mean that both budding students searching for a basic introduction, as well as people searching for original essays about the classic of political thought will find something for themselves here.

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