

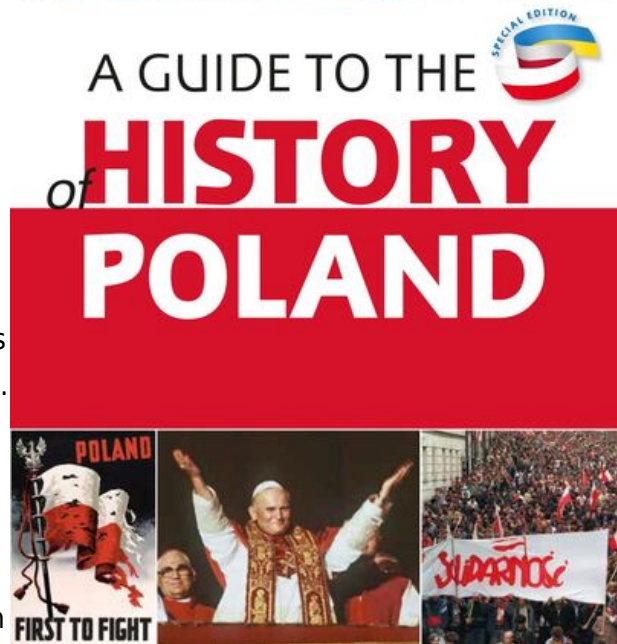
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A Guide to the History of Poland

Łukasz Kamiński, Maciej Korkuć, *A Guide to the History of Poland*, IPN, Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Warsaw 2022, 127 pp., 978-83-8229-664-8 (epub), 978-83-8229-665-5 (mobi)

We were first a medium-sized state of the first Piasts, who had to fight for their place among their neighbours. We were a small kingdom of Władysław Łokietek (Władysław the Short), just getting itself established and reunited after a period when the Polish lands were fragmented into separate principalities. We were a powerful Jagiellonian state, and a major actor in European politics. We were the Commonwealth of the Two Nations, full of self-esteem and pursuing their own unique governance model based on freedom and religious tolerance. And we learned the bitter taste of subjugation, demise and erasure from the continent's map. We had a rump Duchy of Warsaw, full of hopes for rebuilding the old glory. At the Congress of Vienna, Poland was divided among the occupying powers that did not ask the Poles for their opinion. This story, as a result of the tragic years of World War II, would repeat itself in Yalta a century later. Today, we are again a medium-sized European country, a country with the experience of a laborious economic reconstruction after a period of communist enslavement. In such dramatically divergent circumstances, Poles were shaped primarily by a gene of freedom passed down between generations – the ethos of a free state of free citizens, a



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society which does not give up its dream of sovereign statehood and keeps on fighting. Originally intended for World Youth Day held in Kraków in 2016, A Guide to the History of Poland was an introduction to learning more about Poland. And, I am sure, it can still do that.

Karol Nawrocki
President of the Institute
of National Remembrance

PLIKI DO POBRANIA

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