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Axioms of Political Change in Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski's *De Republica emendanda*



kterou prosloví

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Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski (1503–1572) was both an academic and public philosopher. In his opus magnum *De Republica emendanda* (Kraków 1551, Basel 1554) he used a calm diction which became his distinctive feature in the Polish discourse. Yet, he implemented principles which, if they had been implied, would have led to a bottom-up reform of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. He elaborated a moderate naturalistic and egalitarian anthropology as an antidote against the ever stronger tendency towards the state dominated by nobility. He conceived politics as the art of improving the moral qualities of citizens by rationally responding to the evil which all men (including those at power) inevitably commit. And he described social custom and positive law as interdependent elements of what in a newer terminology could be called a hermeneutical circle. These axioms of political change evoked problems of theoretical philosophy and theology and will be, therefore, referred to two treatises written by Modrzewski in his later “theoretical” years, *De libero hominis arbitrio* and *Sylva* I.