

economic literature. Certainly the general observation of practice could lead one to a conclusion that the vast majority of fast growing economies rarely exceed the 10% limit of GDP growth, however no one would dare conclude that this 10% growth depends in total on good or bad governance. Such a statement would ignore such influential drivers of state's economy as global trends for instance. Not to mention that transition economies – let us say, in Central Europe – provide us with empirical knowledge that high economic growth is quite often generated despite of (or one should say – in opposition to) poor economic performance of the government.

Also some pieces of advance acclaim put on the back cover seem a little too optimistic, if not over-optimistic. For example, George Soros' opinion on the book: "This is a path breaking work providing penetrating insights into the largely unexplored borderland between economics and politics" is understood in terms of general positive feedback on P. Collier's writing, nevertheless the publication could not be "accused" of path breaking character not to mention that there are rather few better investigated areas than the borderland of politics and economics.

Undoubtedly the book it is a synthesis and, by necessity, is full of generalizations, sometimes even simplifications. Nevertheless it can play an important role of a collection of arguments that is a provoking and consequently stimulating reflection on global problems touching almost 20% of our planet's population. It is a striking voice that should move the "rich north's soul", hopefully not only intellectually, but in result also into action.

"The Bottom Billion" seems like a book dedicated to those who work in development in particular, but also social sciences or economics. The truth is that it should be read by anyone worried about or aware of global challenges and it has a chance to become a part of a mainstream literature of the decade.

Those missing the boat get more and more marginalized, which makes it more and more difficult to escape from the identified traps, which makes it more and more unlikely for them to catch up. Living in a globalised world we cannot however pretend that this depressing situation is isolated, somewhere there... Both for ethical reasons as well as rational reading the emerging threats (for example: migration pressure), we should take Paul Collier's recommendations seriously and specially carefully go through the agenda for action.

Book review Jarosław J. Piątek, *Tactical Aspects of the Armed Struggle*,  
Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2005

by Piotr Krzyżański

In 2005 Adam Marszałek Publishing House published a pioneer book: *Tactical Aspects of the Armed Struggle*, which intended to be

a briefing position about a not very well explored part of military history – the analysis of evolution of tactical factors influencing

warriors and soldiers in the past historical époques.

The main factor guaranteed reliability of the publication in this narrow scientific branch was the sophistication of the author. Jarosław J. Piątek has plentiful experience, as an associate professor of National Defence University in Warsaw and the Head of Warfare History Department. His skills are also supported by experiences achieved in time of his military career in Polish Army – Jarosław J. Piątek finished his service in armoured forces as a colonel. The author specialises in military history<sup>1</sup> issues of Interwar period of 20<sup>th</sup> Century, particularly in the development of the armoured forces and military thought. The author also cooperates with the Military History Unit attached to the History Faculty of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, where he published his thesis in “*Studia z dziejów polskiej historiografii wojskowej*” [Researches over the Polish Military Historiography]. He is also a lecturer at the Faculty of Political and European Sciences of Szczecin University. The author has analysed such subjects as eg. the changing form of a military conflict, applying armed forces in conflicts, changes and conditioning of combat measures applying. An author of a scientific and popular science book: *Czołgi w Wojsku Polskim 1918–1939 na tle tendencji rozwojowych w Europie* (2000) [Tanks in Polish Army 1918–1939 in the context of the developmental tendency in Europe], *Polska broń pancerna*

w latach 1918–1939 na tle europejskim (2002) [Polish armoured forces 1918–1939 in the European context], *Generalny Inspektorat Kawalerii 1921–1926* (2002) [General Inspectorate of Cavalry 1921–1926], *Pododdziały i oddziały broni pancernej a zasady taktyczne walki lądowej w armiach wybranych państw europejskich w latach 1918–1939* (2003) [Sub-units and units of armoured forces and tactical fundamentals of land combat in chosen European armies in the period 1918–1939].

His publication is intended for people studying issues of the historical development of armed forces and ways of leading in combat since ancient to present times. This monograph is a result of experience related to delivering lectures in military history in Military University. Most students have no problems with the analysis of military activity in separate historical periods. This ease disappears when it comes to discussing an action taken not by a State or Army but by a single soldier. This publication could provide a sum of basic information about realities, forming the basis for further and extended researches, based on the specialist literature, so this publication cannot be replaced by it or other synthetic monographs. It is only an introduction to most important military aspects and information about the tactical plane. Indeed the author asks a question not researched in science before: “How did a warrior, a soldier fight?”

Analysing the already published materials, the author wants to provide the reader with significant information about historical and military facts, binding them with changes of military structures, ways of warfare and development of technique. But as the author

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<sup>1</sup> According to thesis of Professor Benon Miśkiewicz, scientists in Poland divided a military history into two schools: history of armed forces and history of military conflicts.

himself admitted we could certainly discuss the adopted periodization and typology of military activities, as well as some comment or descriptions.

The most important authors, constituting a point of reference for the author were Michael E. Howard, (when it comes to European warfare) and Marian Kukiel, a famous Polish historian specialising in Polish military history.

The book was constructed to present changes of warfare, weapons and military organisations taking place over the centuries in Europe and Poland, and also in armies involved in most important world conflicts after 1945. The background of these changes was only drafted, because the author headed to depict first of all an armed struggle and evolution of the tactical aspect, so he made a synthesis of European and Polish warfare. The entire material was divided into two parts: "Genesis and development of land warfare till the beginning of XX century" and "Air-Land Combat of XX century".

The first part raises the following issues:

In the first chapter, "Dominant tendencies in ancient warriors' combat", the author brings up a question of factors affecting ancient soldiers, as defining aims in leading of combat, the influence of religious rituals or evolution of large and dense infantry unit manoeuvre. What was also very important was the differences in wealth between the status of soldiers, which remained a standard for next few centuries. The author rightly remarked that ancient history was known just by military conflicts, and we could agree with this point of view, and add that a better understanding of military aspects is a better understanding of ancient history.

The next chapter, "Fight from horseback" was devoted to the époque with the dominant role of cavalry over the battlefields, since the late ancient time to the XV century. The author tries to describe in this chapter the determining factors that influenced a cavalryman, because in that period a horse was crucial to tactics and the status of the combatants. Furthermore, the economic and following them social realities, caused that the most important class of contemporary warriors, the knighthood, developed one and only type of warfare.

In the third chapter, "Firearm as a combat factor" the author made an analysis of combat development triggered by the appearance of firearms and artillery, but as we could conclude from his studies, the author supposes that the value of gunpowder was not recognized until the end of XVI century (this was described in the next chapter). So he suggests that in that period the most important determinant, that decided about the return to the battlefields of large and well organized formations of infantry was the development of the economy of goods and money. Feudal cavalry was supplanted by mercenaries, fighting for money, which caused peculiar effects, like condottieri avoiding battles. To essential change, induced by the influence of improved weapon when it comes to small-arms, came not until the end of the XVI century, notably to Marice of Nassau, and he will be, main object of the author, interest in charter four: "Fights of professionalist". It look like a paradox but the system created in the republican Neetherlands, was quickly adapted by other, not exactly republican Monarchies and strenght-

ened the power of ruling dynasties, which would have impact on the political system in Europe for next two centuries. In this period the first military and officers schools were created – a fundament of professional army. All these factors put soldiers in a completely new situation on the battlefield. Moreover, for people not familiar with military history of Poland the author in an inteligible and concise way depicted this issue, which will help to understand this specific but indeed phenomenal Polish art of warfare, especially when it comes to the XVII century.

The last chapter of this part of book was devoted to “Rise of mass armies and leading of combat”. Changes initiated by the French Revolution, evolution of concept described as a “Nation”, a tendency to leaving full professional units to conscription armies, based on military trained citizens, conducted to involve all nations to military activities in time of war. Not only professionals, but also civilians, had to be aware of military realities – which significantly influenced a single soldier – his war experience and methods of combat. As the author notices, in this period transformation of warfare was an effect of the innovative attitude to tactics, not influenced by technological developments.

In the second part, “Air-Land Combat of XX century” the author drafts the factors, that to a great degree pressed ahead the way of leading in combat. For most important determinant the author considers the evolution from one-dimension (land) to two-dimension (land and air) combat. The author reflected how the technical combat measures influenced the character of warfare. He analyses the modifications, that permanently get into the sub-

units structures, were used in the creation of combined units and were most important in the revolution of small-arms.

The author selected and presented his point of view, about this complicated military issue in following chapters: “War experiences 1914–1918 and evolution of combat methods”, “Transformation caused by World War II” and “Genesis and development of air-land combat activities, since the middle of the XX century, to the present”. In each of these parts, author included general information about the transformation of warfare by certain military conflicts, although he concentrates on specific issues. As an example we could mention the comprehensive description of a German infantry assault from the Great War, de facto the first tactical sub-unit, using a wide range of weapon, which opened a new chart in military development. The author also depicted the Interwar period and connected it with World War II, bringing interesting effects. For example the author drafted the evolution of combat in new dimensions, especially when it comes to air forces, that open new possibilities to cooperating and conducting combat. Commanders and soldiers, from centuries fighting in similar way, had to challenge, in less than twenty years, a completely new issue – the mechanization of battlefield, which opened a new possibilities, but also increased the level of efforts required from soldiers. In a chapter relating to history after 1945, the author refers to almost every important conflict and ways that affected the fighting soldiers, however the most absorbing part of this chapter is a description of the Soviet Army warfare in Afghanistan.

Recapitulating, although the author takes a long shot, it seems that he finds a way out, and with quite good results. Of course, the wide topical draft and the synthetical, not indepth approach to the material may raise some hesitation, but we should remember what was the main target of the author – a depiction of the centuries long transformation of tactical aspects of combat. And this target has been successfully achieved.

The importance of these reflections seems significant, because treating a war from State and Armies point of view, could not include a full answer, to the most basic question of a historian: “Wat was it really like?”. While an explication of the aspects determining soldiers: weapons that they depended on, their training, mentality and organisation of their

unit – certainly improve the truthfulness of the thesis. The book of Professor Jaroslawa J. Piątek gives every reader the possibility to be introduced with these issues and using the author’s analysis go further, looking for what will be adequate.

Regarding the future, readily depicted in lots of military books and scientific positions, the author wrote clearly: “We cannot today, basing on fragmentary materials, predict what will the future of combat look like. This look we are leaving to others”. And the author is right, because regardless of the way, that yesterday and today events will be analysed, the future will definitely surprise us. So the only thing that we could do, is to: “Better understand the military transformations affecting the development of modern tactical solutions.”

**Book review: *Local Government: A Politological Study*,  
ed. Joanna Marszałek-Kawa, Wydawnictwo Duet, Toruń 2007, pp. 262.**

*by Mariusz Popławski*

The history of local government on Polish territories is not shorter or less fascinating than in other European countries. However, political obstacles, military conflicts, changes in the statehood system or finally its loss caused that what wherever else is the basis for further development of local democracy in Poland has to be built from the start. I mean here of course the long-lasting tradition of independent shaping and strengthening patterns, views and visions of local & regional self-governance, of which chance to fully develop Poland had not have. The socio-political reality of today’s 3<sup>rd</sup> Republic is a dynamically evolving country,

which due to the rapidness of that change demands strong support from its finest researchers and scientists. The goal set for them is to present a wide range of concepts that will allow to program the future direction of progress. This way the necessary fundamentals for Polish democracy at the regional and local level, and a tradition of discussion and sustainable development is born. In my opinion a good attempt to take part of the mentioned responsibility was the book edited by PhD Joanna Marszałek-Kawa from Univeristy of Nicolaus Copernicus in Torun, Poland.

Being acquainted with many publications