



## Redrawing the Map of Europe Puts Poland in the European Union

Visiting Professor at Rochester Leads Continuing Economic Reforms



By Sharon Dickman

Sharon Dickman, University Public Relations  
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The Polish economist who was a key architect of that country's reforms in the mid-1990s is again directing economic policies as Poland prepares to join the European Union. The recent announcement that 10 new members will enter the union places Poland among 25 countries in the expanding European collaboration.

Grzegorz W. Kolodko, Poland's first deputy premier and minister of finance, began teaching political science and economics courses at the University of Rochester in 1999. His role in shaping Poland's transition from socialism to the free market gave students an insider's view of the dramatic changes in central and eastern Europe in the last dozen years. In 2000, Kolodko was named the John C. Evans Visiting Professor in Polish and European Studies.

Under Kolodko and Prime Minister Leszek Miller, Poland is now working to grow its economy, reduce unemployment, and help restructure troubled companies. When Kolodko held the same post from 1994 to 1997, Poland experienced sustained economic growth. Income increased by 28 percent, inflation fell 25 points, and unemployment dropped seven points to a post-transition low.

"The most important target of my policies now is to bring Poland back to the path of fast growth," the finance minister has said. But the role of finance minister in Poland "is a difficult task at the best of times," wrote Italian economist D. Mario Nuti recently. "In European Union candidate countries today, the challenges for a minister of finance are even more daunting in view of EU strictures and the fiscal shock" placed on public finances, said Nuti in *Rzeczpospolita* (Republic), Warsaw's main newspaper.

At Rochester, Kolodko taught in the Skalny Center for Polish and Central European Studies and the Department of Political Science. He also traveled widely and wrote articles for Polish and Polish-American journals about economic issues.

In this expansion of the European Union, Poland stands as the largest country. Almost half of the 75 million more people to be added to the union live in Poland. Others invited to join at the same time are the Czech Republic; Hungary; Slovakia; Lithuania; Latvia; Estonia; Slovenia; Cyprus; and Malta.

Each country must hold a public referendum on joining, but opinion polls indicate that support is strong in all 10 countries. This explosion of Europe's boundaries is seen as an historic move, which will become official in May 2004.

In his years away from government service, Kolodko taught at universities and advised European governments and international organizations on monetary issues. He also is director of TIGER (Transformation, Integration and Globalization Economic Research), a center that pursues efficiency and economic equity for post-socialist countries in transition.

Kolodko, who has a doctorate from the Warsaw School of Economics, was appointed first deputy premier and minister of finance for the second time in July. He is the author of a number of books, including *Post-Communist Transition: The Thorny Road* (University of Rochester Press, 2000); *From Shock to Therapy: The Political Economy of Postsocialist Transformations* (Oxford University Press, 2000); and *Globalization and Catching-Up in Transition Economies* (University of Rochester Press, 2002).



Ewa Hauser and Grzegorz Kolodko, just as he took the office of Deputy Prime Minister.



## Poland and Islam



By Dorota Kolodziejczyk

Dorota Kolodziejczyk  
Kosciuszko Foundation Visiting Professor  
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Professor Kolodziejczyk presented her remarks at the Skalny Lecture and Artist Series in December 2002.

Covering a wide range of themes, the intent of my lecture was to trace the emergence and development of a key concept for Polish national historiography, namely that of the *ante murale*, protecting Christian Europe against the Muslim East. My historical overview contextualized this concept and deconstructed it through a closer examination of the specifics of the Polish/Tartar/Turkish relations.

Polish contact with the broadly understood Orient, and, specifically, with the culture of Islam, started as early as in the 13<sup>th</sup> century with the Mongol raids, which left Europe bewildered and shattered. The consecutive developments of the Golden Horde and of the Ottoman state of the High Porte had an important influence on the direction of the Polish-Lithuanian, as a joint Republic and international politics. The lecture covered the most important historical events highlighting these relationships, and turned to the analysis of cultural influences of the world of Islam, in that part of Europe known mainly through the mediation of the Ottoman Empire, on Polish lifestyles.

It is sufficient to say that in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Polish-Turkish relations were marked by an outburst of several wars, but also, and more importantly, by a development of a lively trade whose routes ran from as far east as China, via India and Persia, through the Ottoman state to Poland, and farther north and west. The effect was that of an enormous consumption of oriental goods in what was then the Polish-Lithuanian Republic (covering, apart

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Ewa Hauser in her new office.

In August 2002, following my year as a Fulbright professor at my alma mater, the University of Warsaw, I arrived back in Rochester to enter the new beautiful offices of the Skalny Center on the first floor of Harkness Hall. My own office now has two windows – a visible sign of success.

Professor Kathleen Parthé had worked as the Skalny Center's director during my absence, and I wish to extend to her my sincere and deep gratitude for her dedicated and selfless work. Since she is the director of the Russian Studies Program, I am very happy to see and to continue the fine tradition in Rochester of Polish and Russian friendship.

During my last semester in Warsaw, I taught courses about ethnic and racial diversity in the United States. I also gave a seminar for faculty to discuss work in progress: my review article of books on the gender issue in post-socialist countries. (The article just appeared in the June 2003 issue of the *American Anthropologist*). In February, I conducted a weeklong review of the Study Abroad program in Prague for the Council on International Educational Exchange. I met three Rochester students who were participants in this very good program.

In March 2002, I had the privilege of participating in the gala celebration in Berlin of the 50 years of the Fulbright Fellowship. Six hundred junior and senior Fulbright winners gathered in the old East German Alexander Platz Hotel, all guests of the German Fulbright Commission through the generosity of the hosting government. We met with the Bundestag members, and Foreign Minister Joshka Fischer addressed our group, as did the President of the Bundes-republik and the mayor of Berlin, the latter attempting to open the door for possible future fundraising possibilities. We also visited old and new museums, including the Postmodern Museum of Film and the breathtakingly beautiful and architecturally stunning new Jewish Museum.

Soon after my return from Berlin, I served as a reviewer for the Kosciuszko Foundation Teaching Fellowship selection committee. Among other candidates was Dorota Kolodziejczyk, who was headed for SUNY Buffalo as a Kosciuszko Foundation Fellow. I whispered to her as she was leaving: Please give me a call when you arrive in Buffalo. Dorota gave an interesting lecture on Poland and Islam for the Skalny Center on Dec. 9 (a synopsis of her presentation is included here).

Elzbieta Tarkowska, a Polish Academy of Science sociologist, invited me in June to participate in a conference on the dimensions of poverty as a side effect of the transition from socialism to capitalism in Poland and

Eastern Europe. The conference was held in a retreat facility of the Polish Academy of Science, in the woods about an hour from Warsaw. One of my rediscovered college friends, now a professor of archeology, Andrzej Buko, graciously drove me there by car. The retreat is so well hidden that without a car or a specially hired bus, it is almost impossible to find.

In July, I visited with some of the UR students in Krakow as well as my daughter, who was also participating in the Jagiellonian University Summer School of Polish Language and Culture. I was one of the proud moms when she received her diplomas for both courses in Art and Archeology and in Polish language. Then it was time to pack and return to Rochester in August.

Significant accomplishments of the Skalny Center in fall 2002 included strengthening collaborative efforts with three main institutions from the point of view of the center's teaching and community-based activities. The first partner is our sister university, the Jagiellonian. The second is the major Polish-American cultural and educational foundation named after the Polish and American hero, the Kosciuszko Foundation. The third one is relatively new and certainly the youngest organization – the Polish Institute for Culture, an institution supported by the Republic of Poland's Foreign Ministry. Thanks to this collaboration, the Skalny Center hosted the wonderful Klezmer Band from Krakow on Oct. 2. Our collaboration with the Jagiellonian University continues to flourish.

Back in November 2001, Dean William Scott Green and I visited the Jagiellonian University and Rektor Andrzej Ziejka. As a result of this visit, a young assistant professor of political science, Artur Gruszczak, was chosen as the next Skalny visiting professor. His choice proved providential. He was perfectly suited to take over the courses originally planned by Professor Grzegorz Kolodko, who was called to serve as a minister of Finance and Deputy Prime Minister of Poland in July 2002. After his nomination, Prime Minister Kolodko contacted Dean Green and myself with apologies for not being able to teach UR undergraduates during this past year. He promised to return to UR as soon as his government service ends. We intend to take him at his word.

During this spring semester, we hosted a Jagiellonian historian, Jan Lencznarowicz, who taught our standard course on the history of Poland. While on campus, he also attended a seminar on immigration history led by Professors Celia Applegate and Lynn Gordon, who, in turn, visited Jagiellonian University in May (after our own commencement). They presented a short course on the history of American women.

Finally, a distinguished professor of history and political science, Andrzej Mania, accepted our invitation to come to Rochester in 2004. He came in for a few days just before Thanksgiving. In the elegant Wells-Brown Room, more than 50 students, faculty, and Skalny Center friends from the community heard our distinguished guest share with us the results of his long-standing research on the policies of the U.S. government toward Poland and Eastern Europe between 1945 and 1989. Based on his painstaking work in all of the presidential libraries as well as in the National Archives, Professor Mania delivered a lively and most interesting presentation. Next year, Professor Mania will teach a course on Cold War and U.S. foreign policy toward Poland. We are very much looking forward to his stay with us.

Our annual film festival in the Little Theatre brought an interesting array of recent Polish films. Students in my undergraduate course on political film attended some of the showings and were required to see the purely political rendition of the Stalinist years in Poland titled *Back and Forth*. We are very thankful to Bill Coppard and his staff at the Little for working with the Skalny Center to assure a smooth and flawless running of the complicated schedule of bringing in and send-

ing out prints of the films, which were entered in the North American Polish Film Festival.

The final events of the fall semester included a holiday celebration by the students of the Polish Club. Sara Korol, who is the club's president, stayed with me in Warsaw for part of the semester last year. The holiday dinner organized by her and hosted by Dean Jacqueline Levine was a great success. Sara will study again in Krakow this summer. She will no doubt qualify for at least a minor in Polish studies when she graduates next spring.

In this past spring semester, we put a strong emphasis on cross-departmental co-sponsoring of events. Thus our first event, co-sponsored by the Department of Music, was a recital by Elena Letnanova from Bratislava, Slovakia. She gave a beautiful piano performance featuring many Central European masters and lesser-known young composers. The second event, co-sponsored by the Department of History, was a lecture by the current Skalny Visiting Professor, Jan Lencznarowicz, on the Polish Diaspora. The third was an interesting lecture given by Amila Buturovic from York University about the poetry of Mak Dizdar and his inspiration from the Bosnian medieval tombstones. This event was co-sponsored by the Department of Religion and Classics.

The screening of *Zemsta*, the latest Andrzej Wajda's film, was very well attended. Besides *Zemsta*, we brought to campus a documentary film, *Shtetl*, which was introduced by Marian Marzynski, the internationally known documentary filmmaker. His visit to campus was co-sponsored by five departments: History, Political Science, Religion, Russian Studies, and, the initiator of the visit, Film Studies Program. The last Skalny luncheon talk by an old friend of the University's, Professor Kazimierz Rzazewski, a physicist from the Polish Academy of Science and Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, was co-sponsored by the Department of Physics and Astronomy. Finally, the annual Youth Concert organized again by our most dedicated volunteers, Bozena Sobolewska and Sabina Slepceki, will be co-sponsored next year by the Department of Music, which is very eager to continue collaborating with us.

In February 2003, the Skalny Center became the depository for the collection of one of the most dedicated Polonia leaders and a professor of neurology at the UR Medical School, the late Dr. Ryszard Brzustowicz. We received 673 hardcover volumes, 953 paperbacks, 1,625 issues of journals, numerous pamphlets, and audiotapes as well as eight boxes of archival material of Polish American organizations. Two librarians, Helen Anderson and Barbara Alvarez (who is Polish), worked several Fridays at the Skalny Center to categorize and receive the fabulous collection of Polonica for Rush Rhees Library.

Five graduating seniors qualified for the Polish and Central European Certificate (Ben Wolarsky, Ben Infeld, Paul Linczak, Amanda Goff, and John Vermitzky). Three of them had been students in Krakow and Ben Infeld is applying to go there this summer. As a graduating senior, he does not qualify for the Skalny Summer Grant and had to find funding elsewhere. Sara Korol, Michael Wieckowski, and Sierra Zacharias will attend the four-week program of the Summer School of Polish Language and Culture at the Jagiellonian as Skalny summer grant recipients.

Thus we have completed our first year in the new Skalny Center. The light and sun stream in as students take their Polish classes and hold Polish Club meetings. We even hosted the famous actress, Katarzyna Figura, meeting with Polish club students. We are very grateful to the Skalny Foundation for its wisdom in pledging to endow the center, and to Bob and Jill Klimasewski for their generous contribution, which has made our offices some of the most attractive suites on campus.



# Skalny Summer School Experience at Jagiellonian University

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By Jennifer Hoberer

Living and studying in Krakow for the summer was not only an introduction to the language and landscape of Poland, but also to the wide variety of cultures existing in Europe. As my first travel experience on the continent, Poland taught me that Europe is much more than the Western European portrait so often painted by history books and the media. It is also the land of an ancient and multifaceted Slavic culture, which has continued to develop over the centuries despite many challenges. From the people I met in my language class to the sightseeing tours I took, my experience in the summer school left me with a picture of Europe much richer than that I might have gained from attending a program in any other country.

I realized from the first moment I stepped into the airport terminal in Krakow that I had signed up for a truly unique experience. All the directional signs were in Polish, and I found myself a bit frightened that my only means of communication was the Polish phrasebook I had packed in my carry-on bag. A few minutes later, after giving a taxi driver the address of the student dorm, I found myself zooming through the countryside toward Krakow, the city where I would spend not only the summer, but also the upcoming year while I pursued a master's degree at Jagiellonian University. I remember being amazed at the simple beauty of the landscape and its houses, but I also was convinced that I would never be able to learn such a complicated language so very different from my own.

After a few days of settling into the dorm and meeting new people, I attended my first beginner's Polish class for the six-week intensive program. There were only 10 people in my class, but we were from seven different countries: Israel, the Philippines, Germany, Japan, England, Iceland, and the United States. The instructors spoke in Polish only, and by the second day, most of us were convinced that Polish is impossible to learn as a second or third language. By the fifth day, we were all determined, and by the fifth week, we were speaking almost solely in Polish during our class. At the end of just six weeks, I, who had known no Polish upon my arrival in Krakow, advanced from "Czesc! Jak sie masz?" to being able to call a hotel in Gdansk and make reservations for my upcoming vacation. The patience of our instructors combined with the teaching methods used in the summer program were so effective that I am sometimes still surprised when I speak my beginner's Polish and am understood in post offices and at the local market.

In addition to taking language classes, we went on several sightseeing tours around Krakow and southern Poland. One of the most enjoyable trips was a raft ride down the Dunajec River through the Pieniny Mountains. The raft was guided by two "gorali" who were dressed in traditional clothing and spoke a very different dialect of Polish than we were accustomed to hearing. I think they had as much fun trying to understand us as we had in trying to communicate with them. It was one of the most insightful experiences I had during the entire six weeks because it showed just how many subcultures are contained within the whole of Polish culture.

I feel that the combination of language classes, optional lectures, and sightseeing tours taught me enough about the country to make me both excited and confident about living in Poland for the next

year while I study at Jagiellonian University. I am truly grateful for the experience, and would recommend the program to anyone who wants a challenging but unparalleled Study Abroad experience.



Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland.



By Melinda Fountain

The six weeks I spent studying at the Summer School for Polish Language and Culture of the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland, gave me wonderful introductions to the Polish language and culture and to the beautiful royal capital of Krakow. The classes were quite intense. We studied for five hours every weekday and covered all seven grammatical cases and vocabulary ranging from everyday items to the names of countries and languages.

One of the greatest strengths of the program is its diversity, and in my class alone there were students from Japan, Germany, Israel, the Philippines, Iceland and England as well as the United States. Not only could we discuss different cultures in Polish, but we could hear about what daily life is like in places all over the world from our classmates. The instructors took advantage of the interesting diversity of the class by helping us create presentations in Polish about our countries, in addition to all of the information they shared with us about life in Poland and in Krakow specifically. Our teachers told us the best places to have a coffee at the same time that they taught us how to order it in correct Polish!

On the weekends, we had the opportunity to participate in trips to places near Krakow significant to Polish history and culture. I went to the salt mines at Wileczka and saw a life-size carving of the Pope, completely of salt! I also had the chance to travel to the historical town of Zakopane, south of Krakow, where we learned about the Highlander culture and dialect and were able to hike in the beautiful mountains.

At the end of the six weeks, I had reached the "waystage" of Polish language learning, and was able to travel with ease to other historical cities in Poland, including Gdansk and Wroclaw. More importantly, I am living and studying in Poland for the next year and will earn my master's degree in European studies, while also continuing my Polish studies. Thanks to my summer study, I was able to place into the Lower Intermediate level of Polish and find my everyday life to be immensely easier, making learning easier, than it would have been had I not had the opportunity to participate in the Summer School for Polish Language and Culture.

I would recommend the experience to anyone interested in learning a beautiful language and visiting a country rich in culture and history that is undergoing exciting changes today.



By Paul Linczak

Pope John Paul II in a kiosk window, his fragile smile glossy on magazine covers. A statue of Copernicus in front of the Collegium Novum of the Jagiellonian University. Adam Mickiewicz keeping guard over the central square, a handful of pigeons resting on his shoulders, a group of tourists at his feet.

Somewhere, perhaps in expensive apartments near the Old City, Czeslaw Milosz and Wislawa Szymborska quietly reading and writing. The sarcophagi of kings in Wawel Cathedral, intricately carved with the splendor of their reigns and the glory of their afterlives.

There are more examples to prove that Krakow is a city of heroes, as I found in my three-week stay there. There are legends in abundance, and statues and commemorations on every church façade, reminding visitors of the history—some true and some not—in which the city is steeped.

My professors reminded me, too. They loved to tout the accomplishments of their city and its famous inhabitants, and were excited that their students had chosen Krakow as their place of study. While classes were long and hard, my professors brought enthusiasm for our willingness to learn, and an understanding of our situation as non-native speakers. They encouraged us to visit museums and restaurants in the city so that we might really experience Polish culture. And they insisted that we speak Polish, which I did every time I ordered something in a restaurant or café, even when the server answered me in English, which they invariably did. It seems I was not the only one eager to try a new language.

We also had a taste of culture through weekend excursions organized by the school. Even though I was not allowed to take pictures of it, I will always remember the ceiling of heads in the throne room of Wawel Castle; one of the heads was gagged because a king had sworn he heard it talking to him. I will also remember my failed attempt to scale one of the Kasprowy Peaks in the Tatra Mountains; my friends and I were overcome by bad weather only minutes from the summit, but the view, while we had it, was amazing. So, too, was the view while rafting on the Dunajec Gorge, the river drifting for an hour or so into Slovakia. Auschwitz provided the most indelible memories, and a bitter reminder of what, exactly, comprises Polish culture.

I left Krakow with a store of legends and histories, and the memories of friends and places. I left feeling as though I had, oddly enough, become an American for the first time, as every statue and sign, every conversation with a European student served as a reminder that I was the foreigner, with my own set of stories and legends, my own heroes. I left with rolls of pictures and a diploma that now hangs on my wall. These will serve as my own commemorations now, and the seeds for new stories to pass down.



Krakow, Poland.



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Professor Kazimierz Rzażewski, talking about his Rochester experience, at the UR Gamble Room.

## Polish Physicist at the University of Rochester



By Kazimierz Rzażewski

*Kazimierz Rzażewski, Visiting Professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy and The Institute of Optics UR, and Professor at the Center for Theoretical Physics, Polish Academy of Science and Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University*

After the Second World War, a number of prominent Polish physicists returned to Poland although, as a rule, they had a much better chance of survival outside than inside of the war-torn country. They started teaching and building research groups in several major universities in Poland. However, the Stalinist freeze and terror prevented them from opening vital links to the international physics community.

The leading theoretician at Warsaw University was Leopold Infeld. A prewar coworker of Albert Einstein, he was chased away from the University of Toronto in 1948 after accusations in the press that he was a Soviet spy. Upon his return to Warsaw, his pedagogical talents and his broad knowledge of physics helped to build a strong postwar group of theoretical physicists at the University of Warsaw. Infeld's students were my teachers. As soon as Stalin's era ended, physics in War-

saw opened up to the world. In 1958 the first Polish physicist, Iwo Białynicki-Birula, came to Rochester to work with Robert Marshak. Soon his wife Zofia, also a physicist, joined him. Others followed. In fact, the University of Rochester served as a gracious host to a particularly large group of Polish physicists. One of them, Adam Kujawski, became a friend of a young assistant professor, Joe Eberly. Soon Joe visited Poland for the first time and became an untiring sponsor of visitors from Poland at UR.

At this point, it is worth noting that geopolitics played a large role in this scholarly collaboration. In 1956, supporting the promising political changes in Poland, the U.S. government sold grain to Poland and accepted the payment in (non-convertible) Polish zlotys. After several years, the decision was made to use these funds in zlotys on carefully selected projects in Poland. Among others, the Marie Curie Fund was created to run the science programs. My initial postdoctoral work at Syracuse University was sponsored by this grain money. From Syracuse, I moved to the University of Rochester as a Joe Eberly postdoc on April 1, 1975. Greeting the whole family was a typical Rochester blizzard. It kept us snowed-in in our small house for three days.

The few months' stay in Rochester was incredibly productive. Together with two other Polish physicists, we published our first paper in the prestigious journal *Physical Review Letters*. It was

a true entrance into the world scene for all three of us. During this stay, I decided to choose quantum optics as my major field of research in physics. Years later, I can state that this was a good decision. Observing Joe Eberly's work with students and colleagues, I also learned how to help students and how to run a research group.

I have come back to Rochester many times. My longer stays were in 1980, 1988-89 and this year. Some of my best received scientific publications were written here. Here I met many famous physicists from all over the world. I made a lot of friends, both from within and from outside of academia.

By a stroke of luck, I was here during many historic turns of recent American and Polish history. In 1975, we watched Walter Cronkite announcing live on CBS television the departure of the last helicopter from the American Embassy in Saigon. In 1980, we watched from Rochester the historic strikes in Polish shipyards that gave birth to the Solidarity labor movement. A few months later, there was the hostage taking at the American Embassy in Teheran. In 1989 again from here, we watched communism crumbling in Poland. We drove to New York City to cast our votes in the first free election. Now, years later, I was glued to the TV screen during the Iraq war. And in a few weeks, in another historic moment, Poles will vote in a referendum deciding Poland's entry into the European Union. For me, all this has created a deep sense of participation in the political life of both countries.

Now, Poland has become a normal — although still a relatively poor — country. There are no political barriers in scientific cooperation. And yet, this cooperation has not intensified. A small joint fund, The Marie Curie Fund II, has died quietly because the U.S. government decided it is no longer needed. On the other hand, an understandable drive to join the European Union has turned our attention to countries like Germany, France, UK and so on. Since Poland is a paying member of European science programs, it is vital that by activism in Europe we extract our money back in grants and participation in European science networks.

It was fun to teach again this semester in Rochester. This time my graduate course, Physics of Matter Waves, had good attendance of both students and faculty. I met so many old friends. And during short vacations, it also will be fun to see the Rocky Mountains again.

## Poland and Islam

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from Polish ethnic territories, vast stretches of what is today Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine), as well as the development of unique fashions, much inspired by the Turkish and Tartar styles, and,

also, some early "myths of nationhood," in which the Polish nobility imagined its origins in the ancient legendary nomadic tribe of the Sarmatians of the Asian steppes.

I highlighted a range of interesting contradictions in Polish-Turkish relations. The very concept of Poland as the bulwark of Christendom, willingly embraced toward the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, was

always, in fact, a contested item of Polish international politics, as the chief diplomatic effort since the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century was, rather, to develop a friendly and peaceful relations with the High Porte. Another contradiction refers to the culture of 17<sup>th</sup>-century Polish nobility: despite an immense inspiration with the Oriental (Indian, Persian, and most of all, Turkish) crafts, objects of everyday life and weaponry, even with Oriental literature (some classical Indian fables and Muslim tales seeped into the Polish language as early as the 16<sup>th</sup> century), the world of the Orient, in fact, even of Poland's neighbor, Turkey, did not get much reflection.

Another effect of this state of affairs is that the Ottoman Empire was not really perceived as exotic in the Polish-Lithuanian state. Tartar settlements had a long history on the territory of Lithuania and south-eastern Poland; trade made Turkey less distant; even more, the strains between Poland and

the Habsburg emperors several times made Poland-Lithuania and Turkey virtual allies. It was only toward the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when France started to exert an immense cultural influence on the whole of Europe, and when the world of Islam started to be "orientalized"—perceived as picturesque, mysterious, and, all in all, different from western Europe. My survey of Polish travel writings and literature from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and from the period of Romanticism, shows similarities and differences between the western European and Polish perception and imagining of the East, especially, in Polish travel writing, Turkey and the Arab countries.

In the last part of my lecture, I discussed the emergence of the modern national thought in Poland and Turkey, as Polish political activists seeking refuge in Turkey exerted a remarkable influence on the modernization processes in the Ottoman state.





# How Wonderful Our Kids Are!

## Impressions from Polish Youth Concert and Youth Art Exhibition



By Bozena Sobolewska

It was Sunday, April 6, the weekend of the 2003 Ice Storm. The state of emergency was still in effect in Monroe County and thousands of people did not have power. And yet, the Memorial Art Gallery auditorium was almost full at 1:30 p.m. when the Annual Polish Youth Concert was about to start. All participants, unintimidated by the weather, were

director of the concert. After the guest piano performance by Katherine Slepceki-Nasipak, a graduate of the Eastman School of Music and the Manhattan School of Music, 12 young people of Polish descent played a variety of pieces by such composers as Wieniawski, Fauré, Rachmaninov, Beethoven, Weber, Corelli, and MacDowell on piano, violin, cello, clarinet, guitar, alto sax, French horn, and trumpet. On a lighter note, there was also a performance of a flute duo and the newly created Polish Scouts Jazz Ensemble, under the direction of Ms. Slepceki.

Stefan Styk, who gave a charming performance on piano and guitar.

The Art Exhibition was very impressive this year. Eight young artists submitted their work for the exhibition, and many of the pieces were of excellent quality. The exhibition opened after the concert and a large crowd of people enjoyed the paintings, drawings, photographs, jewelry pieces, and other works. We are looking for volunteers to help with next year's exhibition.

The Skalny Center for Polish and Central European Studies is pleased to announce that in our effort to raise interest in our talented youth and to increase the rank and prestige of both the concert and the exhibition, we will begin cooperation with the University of Rochester's Department of Music. As a result, next year's events will take place at



Polish Scouts Jazz Ensemble and Katherine Slepceki - Nasipak, at the Tenth Annual Polish Youth Concert.

present, enjoying warmth and light at the MAG. About the same time in the MAG Bausch & Lomb Parlor, Jarek Kudaj and Krzysztof Polakowski were setting up the Art Exhibition.

The Youth Concert, now in its 10<sup>th</sup> year, was opened by Professor Ewa Hauser, director of the Skalny Center for Polish and Central European Studies, with brief history of the event. Next, Sabina Slepceki, first violinist with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra and faculty member of the Hochstein School of Music, took over as the artistic

The Polish Heritage Society presented two awards of \$500 each for the best young musicians of Polish descent. This year the winners were both pianists: Sara Czernikowski, 7th grade student at the Allendale Columbia School, and Steven Smith, student of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade at McQuaid Jesuit High School. Both of them have performed at the Polish Youth Concert for many years and we were very pleased to watch their progress. Their performances were stunningly good, almost at the professional level. The honorable mention went to 8-year-old

Strong Auditorium on the University of Rochester's River Campus, on Sunday, May 2, 2004. The concert will be co-sponsored by the Department of Music and the exhibition will be located in the beautiful lobby of Strong Auditorium, hopefully together with a reception.

The Polish Youth Concert and Art Exhibition are part of the Skalny Lecture and Artist Series and are sponsored by the Skalny Center for Polish and Central European Studies and by the Polish Heritage Society of Rochester.



Stefan Styk, playing guitar.



Alina Mokrzan and Adam Budz, playing flute duo at the Tenth Annual Polish Youth Concert.



By Jan Lenczarowicz

*Jan Lenczarowicz, Skalny Visiting Professor of History, UR*

Are American students interested in Polish history? For years I have been teaching the history of Poland to foreign students at the Jagiellonian University, both in the Institute of Polish Diaspora and Ethnic Studies (former Polonia Institute) and in the Summer School of Polish Language and Culture. But in January 2003 as a Skalny Visiting Professor, I arrived in Rochester to teach a class on Polish history and I was not sure if the subject would attract students. It did. Twelve participants turned up and they worked hard throughout the semester. Most of them were history majors.

My introductory course provided a panoramic overview of more than 1,000 years – from the formation of the Polish State to the collapse of Communism. Of course, a millennium of Polish history was placed in a broad European context. In fact, the history of Poland is not an isolated phenomenon, but constitutes an integral part of Europe's past and ought to be taught as such. Still, despite remarkable improvements in recent decades, too often American history graduates, even those familiar with the history of France or Germany, are surprised to learn about the Kingdom of Poland in the Middle Ages or the role of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. For them Europe ended in Germany. There had been nothing further east until the 18<sup>th</sup> century when all of a sudden the Russian Empire emerged. Sometimes they believe that "Poland as a nation" was created by the Treaty of Versailles. Their acquaintance with the history of other countries in the region is similar. No wonder that some American politicians and media perceive this part of Europe as a "new Europe."

However, a considerable and, it seems, increasing number of students is eager to develop knowledge of Central European history. Some want to rediscover their ethnic heritage, others motivated by their intellectual curiosity branch out to less-known areas of Europe, while for many the most important factors are the present political and social transformations in the region and its integration with the European Union. Thanks to the activities of the Skalny Center for Polish and Central European Studies, students at the University of Rochester can take courses not only in the history of Poland, but in other fields directly related to this, which are still relatively less popular in the United States.

For the majority of those who took my class, Polish history was a completely new area. "Strange" personal names and intricacies of Central European geography often puzzled them. The very fact that the course spanned more than 1,000 years presented an additional challenge. However, some students had already attended other classes offered by the Skalny Center, most notably Professor Ewa Hauser's courses, and they had a much better insight into Polish culture and historical tradition. The group's overall performance was really very good, as reflected by the final exam and papers.

Some topics attracted special interest. I recall lively discussions on the landed gentry de-

## Elective Kings and Gentry Democracy

Visiting historian's adventures in teaching Polish History on River Campus



Jan Lenczarowicz, Skalny Visiting Professor, giving a lecture for the Polish Heritage Club in Syracuse.

mocracy in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (compared to the American democracy at its beginning), the partitions of Poland, and the policy of the United States toward Poland at the end of the World War II, including the Yalta agreement. I also enjoyed students' penetrating questions and remarks concerning Poland's relations with its neighbors. All in all, meeting Rochester students and discussing with them Polish and Central European history was a unique and entirely satisfying experience.

It was a great privilege to meet historians from the Department of History. Encouraged by its chair, Professor Theodore Brown, I attended departmental meetings and events, and benefited from lectures and seminars. I also participated in the activities of the Skalny Center. In the series of Skalny Luncheon Lectures, I talked about the Polish Diaspora. I presented an overview of the history of emigration from Poland and the formation of Polish communities abroad, their relationship with the homeland and the changing ideology of exile.

I spoke on the same topic to the Polish Heritage Club of Syracuse and at a May meeting of the Western New York Chapter of the Kosciuszko Foundation in Buffalo. Everywhere audiences showed great interest, and a series of interesting questions and remarks followed. In addition, I attended two conferences. One occurred in New York City where I traveled with financial assistance from the Skalny Center and gave a presentation on the political mythology of Polish post-World War II emigrants. The second one was the Multicultural Conference in San Antonio where I talked on Polish immigrants' experience in Australia.

The Rush Rhees Library, very well organized and equipped, was my natural refuge. I spent many hours there, searching for books and reading old Polish emigrant newspapers on microfilm. Thanks to the interlibrary loan system, I had access to materials from other libraries and collections. All that helped me enormously with my research on the political imagery of World War II Polish emigrants.

Now, as my stay in Rochester draws to an end, I can see how fortunate I was to have this oppor-

tunity to teach Polish history at the University of Rochester. Joining the Rochester academic community was a truly rewarding and extraordinary experience. I will be leaving soon, but our association will continue. In July, as every year, thanks to the Skalny Summer Scholarships, students from the University of Rochester will participate in the summer program of Jagiellonian University's School of Polish Language and Culture in Krakow. I will see you there! Remember "History of Poland" – everyday between 3 and 4:30 p.m.!

## Music from Central Europe

Piano recital by Elena Letnanova



By Timothy Madigan

Elena Letnanova, a noted pianist from Bratislava, Slovakia, gave a special recital on the music of Central Europe from the Romantic period to the present, on Sunday, January 26 at 3:00 PM. She performed pieces from Clara Schumann, Franz Liszt, Roman Berger, Peter Zagar, Frederyk Chopin, and Klement Slavicky. The Berger and Zagar pieces were American premieres.



Elena Letnanova receives flowers from Michael Newmark, President of the UR Polish Students Club.

Letnanova is not only a virtuoso pianist, but also an architect, educator, writer, and translator. She has performed throughout Europe and the United States, and is an Associate Professor at the Slovak Technical University in Bratislava. This was her second visit to Rochester. In January of 2002 she gave a special performance on the musical compositions of the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, for the University of Rochester's Iota Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa. She is a delightful individual, and has become a true friend of the Rochester community.





## Memorable Musical Event: The Cracow Klezmer Band



By Krzysztof Polakowski

Once again this year, Rochesterians enjoyed the opportunity to witness an extraordinary musical event: a thrilling performance given by the Cracow Klezmer Band at the Memorial Art Gallery. We listened to the brilliant quartet of young virtuosi skillfully playing accordions, violin, bass, clari-

net and percussion. The group immediately distinguished itself with the chilling mystical nature of its music. Both the musical content and philosophy behind it were expressed in a richness of improvisation and in a unique mood of concentration that was a welcomed contrast from our traditional understanding of Balkan and Jewish rhythm and melody.

The Cracow Klezmer Band incorporates a number of different musical influences into its music. Embedded in its basic philosophy is the resurrected Balkan and old Jewish folk tunes stylized according to Astor Piazzola. The striking influence of Argentinean esthetics is a hallmark of the Cracow Klezmer Band's sophisticated arrangements. Old



Cracow Klezmer Band performing at the Memorial Art Gallery.



Oleg Dyyak, playing his clarinet.

klezmer tunes beautifully arranged by Jaroslaw Bester also bear echoes of Ravel, Bartok, Messiaen and Stravinsky.

Another unique feature of the Cracow Klezmer Band was the individual virtuosity of each of the performers. Their dexterity in playing a variety of musical instruments and their improvisations were astonishing. This unusual gift produced music that rose above usual klezmer interpretations with its creativity, but also succeeded in conveying the deepest essence of old Jewish melodies. Mixing artistry with their traditional values, they achieved a contemporary breakthrough sound. This memorable event of enchanting klezmer tunes was made possible by a generous grant from the Louis Skalny Foundation.

## Katarzyna Figura Visits the Center for Polish and Central European Studies in Rochester



By Krzysztof Polakowski

Quite unexpectedly, our last Polish Film Festival gained an additional attraction: a visit from a well-known and ambitious Polish actress, Katarzyna Figura. Close family ties brought her to Rochester, where she spent four months. Ms. Figura graciously attended one of our films, a suspense titled *Stacja (Station)*, where she played an important role. Kasia was kind enough to introduce herself to the film audience talking briefly about her career as an actress.

After completion of her theatrical studies at the Wyższa Szkoła Teatralna i Filmowa in Warszawa, Ms. Figura studied in Paris at the Ecole Dramatique. Her film career started in 1979 with a small role in the film *Mysz Jako Uczennica (Mouse as a Student)*. She has been in 49 films, 30 of them foreign, mostly French and German, including the famous feature *Pret-A-Porter (Ready to Wear)* by Robert Altman. After the Rochester Polish Film Festival, she visited the Skalny Center for Polish and Central European



Studies where she talked about her future plans and her experience working with famous directors and actors. Her recent role as Podstolina in *Zemsta (Revenge)* by Andrzej Wajda has been widely acclaimed. Besides film appearances, she is currently performing at Teatr Wybrzeże in Gdynia.

We are looking forward to her future visits in Rochester and contact with the Skalny Center for Polish and Central European Studies. Good luck in your future endeavors, Kasia!



Polish film star Katarzyna Figura at the UR, talking with Ewa Hauser and Krzysztof Polakowski.



## My Rochester Days



**By Artur Gruszczak**

Adjunct Professor of International Relations  
Jagiellonian University, Krakow

It was a sunny July afternoon. I was walking down the streets of Krakow with my wife and two daughters. Suddenly, my cell began ringing. Professor Ewa Hauser was calling. I had met her earlier that year. She had arrived in Krakow along with Professor William Scott Green, Dean of the College of the University of Rochester, to interview candidates for the Skalny Visiting Fellowship. Later, it turned out that I was the lucky winner, and I was invited to come to Rochester to teach a short module course on Poland's international role.

She began the phone conversation asking me if I would be in a position to come to Rochester earlier than agreed and teach a course on the politics and economics of the post-communist transformation for students of political science and economics. The course instructor, Professor Grzegorz Kolodko, was nominated Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister in the Government of Poland and would not be available. I was surprised by that proposal and, above all, I felt somewhat dubious about arranging in such a short span of time all matters concerning my visit to Rochester, like my U.S. visa, and to get the consent from the authorities of Jagiellonian University where I had tenure. Luckily enough, I managed to do all the required things and on the first day of September 2002, I arrived in Rochester.



Artur Gruszczak, Skalny Visiting Professor, touring Washington D.C.

### Department of Political Science

I had heard about the University of Rochester not only as a partner institution for Jagiellonian University. As a political scientist, I read a lot about the Rochester School of Political Science led by William H. Riker, who pioneered the new method of positive political theory, founded and established the Rochester School of Political Science with the aid of his colleagues and students. The Rochester school, synonymous to a large extent with the name of Riker, played almost the same role in the United States as the Frankfurt school, identified with Jürgen Habermas, in Europe. *The Theory of Political Coalitions*, the most relevant of Riker's numerous works, was one of my readings when I was graduate student of political science and afterwards doctoral student at Jagiellonian University. At that time, I was also a careful reader of books and papers of another outstanding representative of the Rochester school—G. Bingham Powell. All in all, I was really proud to be invited to teach in such an important academic center and anxious to meet present members of the faculty, who are inheritors of that rich scientific tradition. I was really happy to have an opportunity to meet such renowned political scientists as William T. Bluhm, G. Bingham Powell, and Richard Niemi, as well as young brilliant scholars like Gerald Gamm, Randall Stone and Fredrick Harris. I will hold in my memory stimulating conversations with Gerald Gamm about his book, *Urban Exodus*, and discussions with Randy Stone about political and economic aspects of the transformation in Eastern Europe.

### The Course I Taught

The course I taught dealt with the principal features of post-communist transformation twelve years after the fall of communism. Post-communist states and societies experience a great number of problems, dilemmas and shortcomings, stemming from a gap between the perception of de-

mocracy and the market as an ideal and practical aspects of democratic capitalism. Therefore, one of the biggest dilemmas and doubts troubling post-communist societies is why democracy does not satisfy many social expectations and aspirations, does not prevent conflicts and cleavages, is not identified with judicious, responsible, just rule and enjoying popular support and legitimacy.

### The Students and the Rochester Experience

I discussed with the students the viability of a new term coined by the second generation of "transitologists": post-post-communism. Is it a new stage in post-communist developments or is it just another "emerging enigma"? I was really satisfied with students' overall performance during the classes: their contributions to discussion on various aspects of post-communist transformation, excellent oral presentations and interesting and mature final papers. I did particularly enjoy Ilir Rudi's questions and comments that usually came to the point, Marcin Truszkowski's deep knowledge about peculiarities of communism and post-communism, and Matt Wolfe's excellent final paper and inspiring conversations during my office hours.

As Skalny Visiting Professor, I was invited to deliver a lecture in the series of Skalny Luncheon Lectures. I decided to talk about Poland's membership in the European Union given the importance of the topic and the stage of the negotiations between the Polish government and the European Union. Moreover, in mid-September, I attended a conference organized by Columbia University in New York City on perspectives of Polish accession to the EU and was stimulated by the discussion and issues raised by the participants and the audience. I went to New York with Professor Ewa Hauser, thanks to financial assistance from the Skalny Center and a travel grant from the Council for European Studies.

To be a part of the Rochester academic community and a member of the Skalny Center was not only a great honor but it was also a privilege to take part in wonderful events. I will never forget the Meliora Weekend. I was really impressed by the enthusiasm, joy and feeling of brotherhood among the participants of various generations, walks of life and career paths, coming from all regions of the United States. The fabulous concert of the Cracow Klezmer Band and the opportunity to talk with talented musicians were other unforgettable events in my Rochester days. Finally, the Polish Film Festival provided me with the opportunity to watch a selection of the latest Polish movies, hear an interesting lecture by Marek Haltoff, the author of the only English-language monograph of the Polish contemporary cinema, and meet Katarzyna Figura, the Polish film star.

Living and teaching in Rochester was a truly great personal experience!



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