



2009

Kopernikana

The University of Michigan
Copernicus Endowment



Brian Porter-Szűcs

From the Director

BRIAN PORTER-SZŰCS

The highlight of the past year was a visit by the world-famous graphic artist and book illustrator, Stasys Eidrigevičius. Stasys embodies the ideals of cultural diversity and cutting-edge innovation that we strive to highlight in our programming. He is a wonderful example of someone who reflects the disappearing world of the borderlands where Polish, Lithuanian, Belarusian, Ukrainian, and Jewish cultures intermingle and mutually reinforce each other. In the 1970s and 1980s, Stasys was among the creators of what came to be known as the Polish school of graphic art, which offered a vibrant surrealism that broke dramatically with the simplistic socialist realism of a previous generation.

In Fall 2009, the Weiser Center for Europe and Eurasia, along with other partnering units at the University of Michigan, will present “The Nines: Brinks, Cusps, and Perceptions of Possibility—from 1789–2009,” a series of programs exploring the relationship between world historic events and the alternative futures they inspired. From the explosion of alternatives in 1919 to the normalization of democratic destinies in 1989, from the crisis of 1929 to the anxieties of 2009, this series will delve into the many iconic “nines” of the past century.

On October 29, 2009, as part of this series, the Annual Copernicus Lecture will be a symposium entitled “Poland since 1989: A Critical Appraisal,” featuring Magdalena Środa, philosopher and publicist who has played a leading role in the revitalized women’s movement in Poland; Sławomir Sierakowski, the editor of *Krytyka Polityczna*, a prominent Polish journal that gives voice to a new generation of political, social, and cultural activists; and David Ost, an American scholar who specializes in Solidarity and the workers’ movement. The symposium will provide a critical view of the past 20 years in Poland from a perspective that has begun to embrace a worldview more suitable for the issues of the 21st century.

As always, we continue to support education in Polish studies across the University, sponsoring fellowships for undergraduate and graduate students, and offering a prize for the best student of the Polish language. Since Fall 2008, undergraduates have been able to sign up for a concentration in Polish in the Slavic Department, one of the few such programs in the U.S. Our faculty associates teach a wide variety of undergraduate classes in the Departments of History, Sociology, Political Science, Anthropology, Slavic Languages, and more. The University of Michigan now boasts more faculty specialists in Polish Studies than any of our peer institutions in North America, and no other school offers such a range of course offerings in this area.

The Annual Copernicus Lecture



Thursday, October 29, 2009

7:00 p.m.

Founder’s Room, Alumni Center
200 Fletcher St., Ann Arbor

David Ost

Hobart & William Smith Colleges

Magdalena Środa

Gazeta Wyborcza

Sławomir Sierakowski

Krytyka Polityczna

Three prominent observers of life in post-communist Poland will offer an assessment of the accomplishments and disappointments of the past 20 years. The discussion will deal with a wide range of issues, including the impact of *laissez faire* economic policies, the growth of radical-right nationalism and populist extremism, the plight of workers and the unemployed, the ongoing struggles against gender discrimination, and more. Our guests are all participants in the process of formulating a perspective on Polish affairs that goes beyond many old debates, formulating a worldview more suited to the 21st century.

Related Events

New Mini Course
**Eastern Europe between
the Soviet Union and the
European Union**

This course, to be taught in Fall 2009 focuses on the past 20 years of political and economic transformation in the region. Lectures will touch on political, cultural, and social changes, including two by former President Kwaśniewski. Instructors for the course are Piotr Westwalewicz (Slavic Languages & Literatures) and Anna Grzymala-Busse (Political Science).

Interdisciplinary Conference: 2010
**Polish Studies for the 21st Century:
An Interdisciplinary Conference**

This conference will take place at U-M from September 16–18, 2010. The field of Polish studies in North America has been utterly transformed over the past decade and there are now more people than ever studying Polish language, literature, culture, history, society, and politics. The overwhelming majority of them entered the profession after the fall of communism and with this new generation of scholars come new forms of scholarship. The goal of the conference is to highlight all that is new and innovative in the field of Polish studies, regardless of academic discipline, time period, theme, or approach. Participants will be encouraged to present their research in ways that force us to reconsider the many unexamined verities about Poland that transcend subfield and academic discipline.



The Year in Programs

September 11, 2008

Stasys, a gifted artist acclaimed across the world for his work as a painter, illustrator, sculptor, and photographer, stepped from behind a red curtain and delivered the University of Michigan School of Art & Design's Penny W. Stamps Distinguished Visitors Series and the Annual Copernicus Lecture entitled "My Road." A display of his works adorned U-M's Institute for the Humanities Gallery until November 7. Stasys's stay in Ann Arbor was sponsored by the Copernicus Endowment, the Center for Russian and East European Studies (CREES), the Institute for the Humanities, and the U-M School of Art & Design.

September 19, 2008

Aleksander Kwaśniewski returned to U-M to inaugurate the Ronald and Eileen Weiser Center for Europe and Eurasia. The Weisers \$10 million dollar gift created the umbrella organization for the Weiser Center for Emerging Democracies, the Center for Russian and European Studies, and the Center for European Studies-European Union Center. Ronald Weiser was U.S. Ambassador to Slovakia from 2001 to 2004. The former president of Poland spoke openly about developments in Russia, Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova, Trans-Dniester, and Poland. To critics who say that expansion of the European Union has led to "enlargement fatigue," Kwaśniewski said, "I don't agree. It is a success story. After the 2nd World War no one expected this could happen, that we could have a common market, 50 years of peace and 27 member states with 500,000,000 people." President Kwaśniewski will return to the University in the fall of 2009 to teach "Eastern Europe between the Soviet Union and the European Union," a special course that is part of a semester-long series of events commemorating the 20th anniversary of the end of communism in Europe.



Stasys

Stasys portrays seemingly demonic figures that "confirm the meaning of the world and look upon us in benevolence." — Ryszard Kapuściński

October 8, 2008

Michael Bernhard, who currently holds the Raymond and Miriam Ehrlich Eminent Scholar Chair in the Department of Political Science at the University of Florida and is a specialist on Poland, lectured on "Communist Legacies and Democratic Survival: Liability or Advantage?"

Thursday, December 4, 2008

The poet **Adam Zagajewski** made his second official visit to U-M at the request of the students in the MFA Program in Creative Writing and the Copernicus Endowment to speak in the Zell Visiting Writers Series. His poetry reading included several poems in his native Polish which left many of his Polish listeners wishing for more.

Michael Bernhard



Adam Zagajewski



Aleksander Kwaśniewski



Faculty News

Anna Grzymala-Busse (political science) received the APSA Greg Luebbert Award for Best Article in Comparative Politics, 2008; the AAASS Ed A. Hewett Prize for Best Publication on the Political Economy of the former Soviet Union and East Central Europe for *Rebuilding Leviathan: Party Competition and State Exploitation in Post-Communist Democracies* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 2008; and the Henry Russel Award, U-M, 2009.

John Jackson (political science) and Polish partner, Bogdan Mach (Institute of Political Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences, and Collegium Civitas), received an award from U-M's European Union Center of Excellence to examine if recent changes in attitudes towards the EU reflect the long-term views of the Polish public and its government which during the 1990s was one of the most enthusiastic aspirants for EU membership. Their research examines evolving attitudes with respect to EU membership, the role that EU opinions played in various elections and in the recent parliamentary election that voted in the Civic Platform government. The results of this analysis have implications for future Polish elections, including the upcoming elections to the European Parliament.

Ewa Malachowska-Pasek (Slavic languages & literatures) redesigned the 3rd year Polish language course shifting the focal point towards cultural competency. The new course is based on the Polish TV series "Poezja łączy ludzi" (Poetry Unites), a series of 5-minute films each narrated by a different person who speaks about his or her life through the prism of a favorite poem. The films are thought-provoking, facilitating discussions on mainstream cultural phenomena and poetry.

Christian Matjias (School of Music, Theatre & Dance), released a CD titled *Na Razie Bez Ciebie*, a work he composed for contemporary dance. Matjias, in a solo piano performance with the help of occasional cello, vocals, and electronic treatments, creates a melancholy tone which evokes a personal relationship. The music is available on CD or downloadable files on iTunes and his website, <http://www.christian.org>.

Benjamin Paloff (Slavic languages and literatures, comparative literature, Michigan Society of Fellows), was awarded a 2009 Literature Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, and wrote several essays and reviews on Polish topics for *The Nation* and the *Times Literary Supplement*. He also published new translations of poems by Andrzej Sosnowski in *The Literary Review*, and two of his translations of plays were staged in New York.

Brian Porter-Szűcs (history) has had a busy year. His article "Beyond the Study of Nationalism," appeared in *Nationalism Today*, edited by Krzysztof Jaskułowski and Tomasz Kamusella (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009); his forthcoming book, *For God and Fatherland: Poland, Catholicism, and Modernity* will be published by Oxford University Press later this year, as will a co-edited volume (with Bruce Berglund), *Christianity and Modernity in Eastern Europe* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2009). Porter-Szűcs was named a research fellow at the U-M Eisenberg Institute for Historical Studies for the 2009-10 academic year.

Magdalena Zaborowska (American culture) was awarded a Weiser Faculty Fellowship for research on the Borderland Foundation of Arts, Cultures, and Nations, a collaborative community-based project in Sejny, Poland. This research for her next book, *Racing Borderlands*, will explore the ways in which today's Eastern Europe offers insights on immigrant, racialized, and ethnic identities; on key notions of citizenship, local culture, activism; and on the international dialogue on democracy. In 2009-10 she will be a Faculty Fellow at U-M Institute for the Humanities.

Geneviève Zubrzycki (sociology) was promoted to associate professor and received a third award for *The Crosses of Auschwitz: Nationalism and Religion in Post-Communist Poland*, the Biennial Kulczycki award from the Polish Studies Association.

GIFTS

Josef and Ewa Schaff-Blass Establish Endowment to Honor U-M Professor

We are pleased to announce the establishment of the endowed Marjorie and Maxwell Reade Graduate Fellowship thanks to a \$50,000 gift from Josef Blass and Ewa Schaff-Blass, MD. It is named to honor Professor Emeritus Maxwell Reade, of the U-M's Department of Mathematics, and recognizes his tireless commitment to furthering scholarship and cooperation with faculty and students in Poland and Central Europe. The Marjorie and Maxwell Reade fund will provide support for one or more graduate students each year in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, whose work and/or research focuses on Poland or Central Europe. The gift was matched with \$25,000 from the U-M President's matching fund.

Josef Blass (MA '69, PhD '71) came to the University of Michigan from Poland in 1968 to study mathematics. Josef and his brother Piotr, who also received a PhD in mathematics from U-M, were brought to the department by Maxwell Reade. From 1970-99, Josef Blass was a professor of mathematics at Bowling Green State University and founded Pension Research Institute, Inc., a company created to bring academic research to the investment field. Since high school, Josef was involved in the dissident movement in Poland, generously helping to fund the Solidarity movement during the difficult period of martial law. Josef Blass has worked with all the post-communist Polish governments, offering advice and support on issues dealing with pension reforms and privatization. He was instrumental in helping CREES organize a 1999 conference, "Communism's

Negotiated Collapse: The Polish Round Table, Ten Years Later." For these contributions he received the Knight's Cross of Merit from the Polish government in 1999.

Ewa Schaff-Blass holds an MA from Warsaw University in Sociology ('67). She graduated from the U-M Medical School (MD '73), completing a pediatric residency ('76) and an MPH in Health Policy and Administration ('93). Ewa worked for 20 years as a pediatrician, pediatric endocrinologist, and a public health consultant in Bowling Green, Ohio. She was an associate professor of pediatrics at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and subsequently a professor of pediatrics at Indiana University. In 2007 she accepted the position of Medical Director of Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina.

Maxwell Reade



Josef Blass (top) and Ewa Schaff-Blass

All in the family

Faculty pictured from top: Ewa Malachowska-Pasek with her sons Jerzy and Antoni. Benjamin Paloff with Breina. Brian Porter-Szűcs with Stefi. Magdalena Zaborowska with Caz. Geneviève Zubrzycki with Anaïs.

Student News

Graduate Student & Alumnae Update

Danielle Czarnecki (sociology) is interested in Polish citizenship, and the relationship between the European Union and Polish villagers and how EU integration and the imposition of EU standards in food production has affected village farmers.

Anna Cichopek-Gajraj (PhD history '08) is on a postdoctoral Max Weber Fellowship at the European University Institute in Florence.

Meagan Elliott (sociology) is researching traditionally marginalized identity and alternate visions of social membership. She just received an NSF Graduate Student Research Fellowship to study conditions of the present-day burgeoning of philo-Semitism, and is the author of a forthcoming publication in *Sociological Inquiry* about identity construction and architectural history in the Jewish community in Poland.

Alexandra Gerber (sociology) is writing her dissertation on a fellowship at the Freie Universität in Berlin as a Completion Fellow and has contributed a publication to *Women's Studies International Forum*.

Alicja Kusiak-Brownstein (history) received the Aleksander and Alicja Hertz Memorial Fellowship at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York City in 2009–10 for dissertation research on the topic of “Jewish Polishness at the Turn of the Century.”

Justyna Pas (Ph.D. American culture '08) is starting her second year as visiting assistant professor of comparative literature at Oberlin College.

Raymond Patton (history) is in Warsaw doing dissertation research on Polish rock at the Archiwum Akt Nowych, looking through party and state documents, dealing mainly with youth, culture, and music.

Jessica Robbins (anthropology) reports that she is currently in Wrocław (moving to Poznań in the fall), conducting 18 months of ethnographic fieldwork on aging and memory in Poland funded primarily by grants from the Wenner-Gren Foundation and NSF.

Jessica Zychowicz (Slavic) is using her Copernicus Summer Fellowship to study Polish in Kraków during July and continue her research on the “Lviv Dzyga Art Collective” in Lviv, Ukraine.

Undergraduate Student News

Recipients of the recently-established BA in Polish are **Rachel Enoch** and **Adriana Rewald**; a BS in Polish was earned by **Natalia Maska**. **Caitlin Gdowski**, **April Lehman**, and **Adam Pindral** received minors in Polish Language, Literature, and Culture. The Excellence in Polish Language Studies Award went to **Ashley Nichole Bieniek**.

Farewells

Eleanor Hubert Ostafin, d. March 31, 2009. The daughter of immigrants from Poland, Eleanor came to Ann Arbor from Massachusetts in 1942 to marry Peter A. Ostafin and began to work at the University of Michigan, first to help admit students under the G.I. Bill after the war, and later at the Rackham Graduate School. Fluent in the Polish language, she took pains to reconnect with family in Poland, forging a warm kinship and extending a generous hand during difficult times in her parents' homeland. She championed the Polish cause in Ann Arbor giving freely of both time and talent in founding and shaping two organizations, the Polish American Congress of Ann Arbor, and the Copernicus Endowment Committee to which she contributed generously.

Daniel Stepnewski, d. December 19, 2008. Originally from Manistee, Michigan, Daniel received a BS degree in engineering from U-M in 1950 and an MA from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He was employed as an engineer with General Electric in New York and Washington states and ended his career with Westinghouse Hanford Company in Richland, Washington. He was a member of technical societies and outdoor clubs, and enjoyed skiing, mountain climbing, fly fishing, and travel. Dan contributed yearly and generously, leaving a large part of his estate to the Copernicus Endowment as a tribute to his heritage and his Alma Mater.

Robert B. Zajonc, a distinguished psychologist who illuminated the mental processes that underpin social behavior and in so doing helped create the modern field of social psychology, died on December 3, 2008 at his home in Stanford, Calif. He was 85. At his death, Professor Zajonc was an emeritus professor of psychology at Stanford University, where he had taught since 1994. Robert Boleslaw Zajonc, an only child, was born in Łódź, Poland, on November 23, 1923. In 1939, after the Nazis invaded Poland and headed toward Łódź, he and his parents fled to Warsaw. He attended an underground university in Warsaw before being dispatched to a labor camp in Germany from which he escaped and, recaptured, was sent to a political prison in France. Professor Zajonc came to the U.S. after the war and earned a PhD in psychology from U-M in 1955. He remained on the faculty for the next four decades, directing the Research Center for Group Dynamics and the Institute for Social Research.



Robert Zajonc (center) with Adam Michnik and U-M President James Duderstadt, November, 1989.

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The Nicolaus Copernicus Endowment

The Nicolaus Copernicus Endowment was established in 1973 to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the great Polish astronomer's multifaceted genius. Initially created with the cooperation of students, faculty, and Polish-Americans of Michigan, the Copernicus Endowment is sustained today by the energy and financial assistance of hundreds of individual supporters. The principal goal of the Endowment is to enable faculty appointments, programming, and student fellowships in Polish studies. Income from the Endowment makes the Annual Copernicus Lecture possible, and ensures the continued scheduling of public events dedicated to advancing a deeper understanding of the people, culture, and politics of Poland. The Nicolaus Copernicus Endowment resides in the Center for Russian and East European Studies at the University of Michigan and is an affiliate of the European Union Center for Excellence. CREES and EUCE work in common association with the newly-named Weiser Center for Europe and Eurasia at the International Institute.

The Annual Copernicus Lectures

Since 1980, the University of Michigan has hosted prominent political, cultural, and academic figures from Poland as part of the Annual Copernicus Lecture series. Prominent presenters in this series include Leszek Kołakowski, Czesław Miłosz, Stanisław Barańczak, Timothy Garton-Ash, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Adam Michnik, Jacek Kuroń, Krzysztof Penderecki, Henryk Górecki, Krzysztof Zanussi, Ryszard Kapuściński, President Aleksander Kwaśniewski, Krzysztof Wodiczko, Kora Jackowska, Adam Zagajewski, Zbigniew Libera, Krzysztof Cyżewski, Stasys, and many more. A complete list is available on the Copernicus website.

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See inside for details.