

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Over the years the Copernicus Endowment has taken great pride in organizing cultural and academic events that promote Polish culture and explore the complexity of Polish politics and society. This year is no exception, as you will see from the list of events we held last year and have planned for the future. We were particularly delighted to host the artist Zbigniew Libera last January, and we are looking forward with special anticipation to an extended visit by the former President of Poland, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, this fall. But as exciting as such events are, we should never lose sight of our primary mission as an educational institution: training the next generation of Polish specialists in history, language, literature, and the social sciences. Please take a moment to read about the path-breaking work of our current students, and I think you'll agree with me that they are redefining the field of Polish studies in thrilling new ways. Currently 11 graduate students in anthropology, comparative literature, history, and sociology are working on doctoral dissertations on Polish topics; since 1990, 19 graduate students have completed Polish studies dissertations and I'm confident in saying that the University of Michigan remains the place to be for anyone committed to the study of Poland.

BRIAN PORTER
Program Director

On April 28, 2006, Annette Christine Arendt received the Annual "Excellence in Polish Language Award" from U-M Polish language instructor, Piotr Westwalewicz.



ACADEMIC NEWS & NOTABLE EVENTS

U-M Graduate Students in Polish Studies and their Research

Wojciech Beltkiewicz (history) is in the preliminary stage of research on his thesis, "War, Famine, Pestilence and Death: Cataclysmic Crises, Popular Devotion, and the Creation of Interconfessionally Shared Sacred Spaces in the Kresy of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth." The thesis will provide insight into the religious lives of the lower classes where Latin, Uniate, and Orthodox Christians shared common geography and a unique brand of ecclesiastical culture.

Sylvia Ejmont (comparative literature) is writing a dissertation entitled "The Troubadour Takes the Tram: Polish Poetry, Embodied Reading, and Music Performance." It examines the genre of poezja śpiewana ("sung poetry"), a popular phenomenon of 1960s to the 1990s, where poetry performed live to the accompaniment of music is viewed as an instrument of Polish social and political critique.

Anna Cichopek (history) studies modern Jewish and East European history, focusing on theories of nationalism, ethnicity, and citizenship. In her dissertation, "Poles, Slovaks, Jews: The Story of an Encounter, 1944–1948," she compares the experiences of Polish and Slovak Jews upon their return to Poland and Slovakia after the Holocaust, examining the encounters of the Jewish survivors with postwar "realities" and their negotiation of terms of belonging in a new postwar society and state.

Alexandra Gerber (anthropology) concentrates her research on democratic institution-building in post-socialist Poland, particularly how rights and obligations are bundled into "citizenship," and how this new status has particular implications for women in Poland. She is also interested in the role that supranational organizations—specifically the European Union—play in the democratization process in post-socialist states.

Brian Grodsky (political science) recently defended his Ph.D. dissertation, "Human Rights Accountability: Exploring Determinants of Transitional Justice," in which he used the cases of four democratizing states (Poland, Croatia, Serbia, and Uzbekistan) to examine elite motivations for institutionalizing various forms of punishment for past rights abusers.

Alicja Kusiak (history) is pursuing questions of gender and nationalism in modern Poland during the nineteenth century for her dissertation topic. She is exploring the various ways that gender and nationalism intersect in different areas of culture.

Jessica Lowen (anthropology) intends to focus her dissertation research on Polish evangelical Christian missionaries who work with women survivors of international sex-trafficking and abuse. This work has important social implications in the areas of European integration, reproductive rights, and United States foreign policy.

Justyna Pas (American culture) is currently in Toruń researching her dissertation, "Relocating Babel: Translating the Holocaust and American Immigrant Literature." It examines narratives authored by Holocaust survivors and immigrants in the United States and focuses on three American scholars and authors of Polish-Jewish heritage, Jadwiga Maurer, Irena Klepfisz, and Ewa Hoffman.

Ray Patton (history) will examine the struggle of the state, the press, musicians, and fans to determine rock music's social and political function in Poland. By casting it alternately as a challenge to state power, a purely aesthetic phenomenon, an alternative way of life, or a senseless and raucous rebellion, rock and roll played an important part in contesting the hegemony of the Communist state in Poland. Ray's research reveals that the state's efforts to incorporate and neutralize resistant meanings often succeeded in undermining rock bands and alienating their fan base.

Jessica Robbins (anthropology) studies aging, health, memory, and memory loss in Poland, the ways in which categories of normal and problematic aging are constructed and lived, and how these intersect with larger social, political, and economic conditions in Poland.

Lenny Urena (history) is writing on "The Stakes of Empire: Colonial Fantasies, Civilizing Agendas, and Biopolitics in the Prussian-Polish Provinces, 1860–1922," analyzing Polish-German cultural and political relations in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries from the perspectives that Europeans gained from overseas colonies. She focuses on debates about medicine, hygiene, race, and population control among both German and Polish physicians, and examines German medical discourses, colonial ambitions towards the East, and Poles' responses to such ideas.

Fellowships and Awards

Copernicus endowment summer research fellowships to Poland were awarded to **Wojciech Beltkiewicz** (doctoral student, history), **Marta Galecki** (undergraduate in anthropology/zoology), **Justyna Pas** (doctoral student in American culture), and **Jessica Robbins** (doctoral student in CREES and

anthropology). The 2006 Amelia Kulesa Konopka fellowship recipient is **Monica Sendor**, an undergraduate student in REES/psychology, and the Annual Excellence in Polish Language Award went to **Annette Christine Arendt**.

Faculty News

Bogdana Carpenter (Slavic) reports that the new edition of Zbigniew Herbert's bilingual anthology *Poezje wybrane*, [*Selected Poems*] translated by John and Bogdana Carpenter, Czesław Miłosz and P. Dale Scott, was published in Kraków in 2005. **John E. Jackson** (political science) has co-authored a new book on *The Political Economy of Poland's Transition: New Firms and Reform Governments*, published by Cambridge University Press in 2005. **Anna Grzymala-Busse** (political science) is the author of *Redeeming the Communist Past: The Regeneration of the Communist Successor Parties in East Central Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 2002); her new book manuscript investigating the role of political parties and party competition in the reconstruction of the post-communist state has been accepted for publication by Cambridge University Press. **Brian Porter** (history) was awarded the 2006 *LSA Excellence in Education Award* by the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts. His article,

"Hetmanka and Mother: Representing the Virgin Mary in Modern Poland," appeared in *Contemporary European History* in May 2005. He is working on a new book entitled *For God and Fatherland: Roman Catholicism, Poland, and Modernity*, which explores how religious faith and national ideology developed together over the past century in Poland. In *The Crosses of Auschwitz: Nationalism and Religion in Post-Communist Poland* (University of Chicago, 2006), **Geneviève Zubrzycki** (sociology) examines the complex

relationship between Polish national identity and Catholicism through the analysis of the War of the Crosses, during which self-defined "Poles-Catholics" erected hundreds of crosses outside Auschwitz. This controversial event had ramifications far beyond Poland's borders and crystallized social conflicts about the significance of Catholicism in defining "Polishness," as well as the role of anti-Semitism in the construction of Polish identity.



Aleksander Kwaśniewski to Visit U-M in October

Aleksander Kwaśniewski, the president of the Republic of Poland from 1995 to 2005, will visit the University of Michigan in late October 2006. During his visit, President Kwaśniewski will deliver a public lecture, "Democratic Revolutions, International Conflict, and Global Citizenship," on Wednesday, October 25 at 7:30 pm in the Rackham Auditorium. In addition, he will meet with students and faculty in the University's various schools and programs.

Born in 1954, Aleksander Kwaśniewski studied foreign trade at Gdańsk University in the 1970s. A member of the Polish United Workers' Party from 1977 to 1990, he was active in the party's youth movements. He first entered government in 1985 as Minister for Youth Affairs, subsequently serving as chairman of the government's Social-Political Committee from 1988 to 1989. Following the collapse of communist rule in 1989, Kwaśniewski co-founded the Social Democratic Party (1990) and the Democratic Left Alliance (1991). He was a deputy to the Sejm for the Democratic Left Alliance from 1991 until his election as president of Poland in 1995. During his presidency, Kwaśniewski co-authored the constitution of the Third Republic of Poland, which he signed into law in 1997. He piloted his country to membership in NATO and has been an active supporter of further alliance enlargement. A strong proponent of regional cooperation, Kwaśniewski campaigned for approval of the European Union accession treaty in 2003 and saw Poland become a member on May 1, 2004.

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 the 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 Amelia Kulesa Konopka Endowment

This fund was established in 2001 by the family of Amelia Kulesa Konopka to improve knowledge of Poland's culture and history among undergraduate, graduate, and professional school students at the University of Michigan. In 1913 Mrs. Konopka came to the U.S. where she studied her new language and culture. These fellowships memorialize her quest for knowledge and her Polish heritage.

The John J. Świdorski Fund

This fund was established in 1997 for the support of student research and travel abroad. We are grateful to Suzanne Świdorski Gruhl for her generous gift in honor of her father and support of this important fellowship program; we hope to make many John J. Świdorski awards available to worthy students in the coming years.

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THE UNIVERSITY
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Exhibition *Traces of a Jewish Presence in Poland* March 20–April 7, 2006. The photographs by Piotr Piluk, produced over the last sixteen years, show the preserved architectural fragments of Jewish cultural heritage in Poland. The exhibition was sponsored by the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies and the Copernicus Endowment. (Łódź Cemetery Gate, 1999 photo by Piotr Piluk.)

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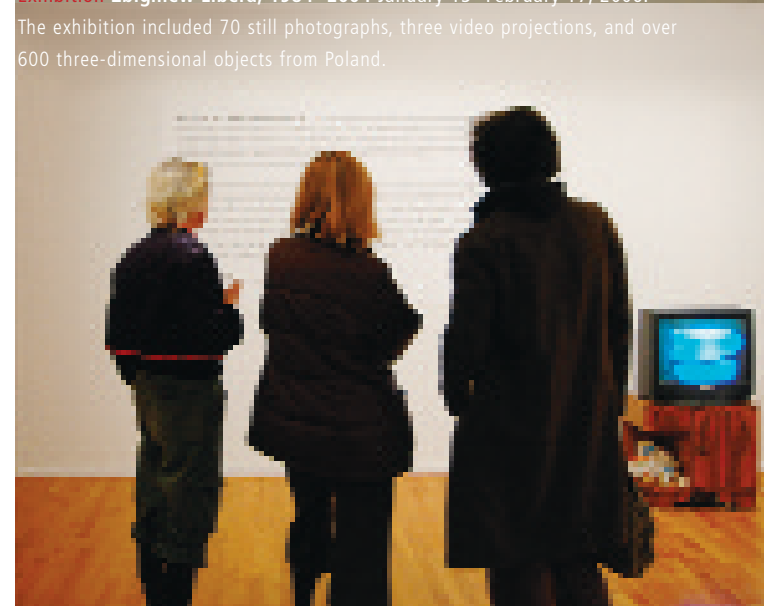
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Symposium "Revolution in the Attic: the Tradition of Polish Counter-Culture" January 20, 2006. Zbigniew Libera (Warsaw), Norman Kleeblatt (Jewish Museum, NY), Łukasz Ronduda (Center for Contemporary Art, Warsaw), Hrtza Even (U-M), Michael D. Kennedy (U-M), Piotr Westwalewicz (U-M), Magdalena Zaborowska (U-M).



Exhibition Zbigniew Libera, 1984–2004 January 13–February 17, 2006. The exhibition included 70 still photographs, three video projections, and over 600 three-dimensional objects from Poland.



Penny W. Stamps Distinguished Visitors Series Presentation and Annual Copernicus Lecture "How Artists Are Tamed: Zbigniew Libera and the Polish Press, 1980-2005" January 19, 2006. Zbigniew Libera (b. 1959) is one of Poland's most recognized contemporary visual artists.



"we look at images of
traumatic events and there
is something that prevents
us from seeing them as
they are. perhaps because
those pictures are so very
cruel, we soften the images
and make them more
palatable...I believe my
versions of these pictures
are more real than the
originals." Zbigniew Libera

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 Kwasniewski, Krzysztof Wodiczko, Kora Jackowska, Adam Zagajewski, Zbigniew Libera and many more. A complete list is available on the website.

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