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Polish Political Activist at UNC

Pawel Kowal of the Poland Together Party lectured at UNC



Pawel Kowal Photo: Jakub Symczuk

In February, Polish opposition politician and member of the Institute of Political Studies at the Polish Academy of Science, Pawel Kowal visited UNC Chapel Hill for a week. While here, Mr. Kowal gave three lectures and participated in a discussion session with students and faculty. His first lecture, "*Warsaw Uprising Museum in Warsaw*" was delivered in Polish. Two following lectures, "*Eastern Policy of the European Union After the 2004 Enlargement*," and "*Ukraine One Year After the Maidan: Variations in Developments*," were in English and covered the European Union's evolving policy regarding Russia and Eastern Europe and the ongoing crisis in Ukraine. He also participated in an informal

discussion with students and faculty in which a wide variety of topics were discussed, including deeper analysis of the crisis in Ukraine. Mr. Kowal offered unique and interesting perspectives at his lectures.

Regarding the European Union and its Eastern Policy, Kowal traced the changing dynamics of the EU's relationship with its eastern neighbors. To Kowal, the fundamental tension is the relationship between the EU's desire for regional stability on one hand and friendly relations with Russia on the other. Kowal argued that Russia's actions have led to instability in Eastern Europe especially with regard to Ukraine, placing the EU in a difficult position. Kowal also pointed out that these difficulties are exacerbated by the fact that there are a number of different opinions within the EU itself.

Mr. Kowal characterized the Ukrainian crisis as a regional conflict, not an ethnic one. Oligarchs in Ukraine's different regions created the conflict, he argued, and even the Maidan protests were part of this struggle between oligarchs. Russian involvement complicated the problem because Russian President Vladimir Putin wants a federal Ukraine with an independent Donbass region. Poland's role in the crisis has been minimal, especially after the Maidan protests.

Mr. Kowal offered several possible outcomes for the crisis. To him, the optimal outcome is Russia pulling out of Ukraine. However, he admitted that a frozen conflict similar to other frozen conflicts in the region, such as Transnistria, Nagorno-Karabakh, or Ossetia, is more likely. A third possibility, the government in Kiev could win the war and reestablish control over all of Ukraine. Finally, the least appealing outcome would be further deterioration into chaos.

At an informal discussion session with students and faculty, Kowal elaborated on many points from his lectures. Ukraine was a major theme of the conversation. Kowal described the Ukrainian government as similar to the Russian government in

Senior Associate Dean of the UNC College of Arts and Sciences, Jonathan Hartlyn, announced in May that Professor **Donald Raleigh** (History) agreed to serve as Director of the Center for Slavic, Eurasian & East European Studies for a five year term, beginning on July 1, 2015. Look for more information in the next issue of *Connections*.

Emily Baran (PhD, History 2011) won the award for Best First Book at the Southern Conference on Slavic Studies for her *Dissent on the Margins: How Soviet Jehovah's Witnesses Defied Communism and Lived to Preach About It* (Oxford University Press, 2014).

Aaron Hale-Dorall (PhD, History 2014) received the Dean's Award for Best Dissertation in the Humanities and Fine Arts for his "Khrushchev's Corn Crusade: The Industrial Ideal and Agricultural Practice in the Era of Post-Stalin Reform, 1953–1964," in which he examined Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev's passion for corn, the process of adapting the USSR to the mass cultivation of corn, and the causes behind Khrushchev's failure to reach his ambitions goals.

Cassandra Hartblay (PhD, Anthropology 2015) and **Michele Rivkin-Fish** (Associate Professor, Anthropology) published their article "When Global LGBTQ Advocacy Became Entangled with New Cold War Sentiment: A Call For Examining Russian Queer Experience" in the *Brown Journal of World Affairs*.

Adrianne K. Jacobs (PhD, History 2015) received the award for Best Essay by a Graduate Student at the Southern Conference on Slavic Studies for her paper, "An Edible Empire: Soviet National Cuisines between Tradition and Modernity, 1965-85."

Philip Kiffer (MA RUES '15) presented the paper, "Actors in a 'Cheap Comedy': Dissidents in Soviet Psychiatric Institutions, 1968-1973," at the Southern Conference on Slavic Studies. His paper was a shortened version of his MA thesis that explored the experience of institutionalized Soviet dissidents through memoirs of prominent dissidents.

Carissa Landes (MA RUES '15) accepted a Fulbright Teaching Assistant grant for 2015-16 in Tajikistan. She also received a Boren Fellowship for research in Tajikistan, but declined the award.

Don Raleigh (Distinguished Professor, History) received the award for Best Overall Book from the Southern Conference on Slavic Studies for his *Soviet Baby Boomers: An Oral History of Russia's Cold War Generation* (Oxford University Press, 2011).

Eren Tasar (Assistant Professor, History), along with Kevin Schwartz of the University of Maryland, organized a workshop entitled "Interrogating Change: Central Asia between Timelessness and Mutability." The workshop brought together a wide range of scholars from history, literary studies, Islamic studies, and folklore to discuss prevailing themes and paradigms in the field of Central Asian Studies, as well as present their own research. The workshop received a grant from the InterAsia Program of the Social Science Research Council.

Mary Elizabeth Walters (PhD Candidate, History) received a Boren Fellowship to conduct dissertation research in Albania. She will research NATO humanitarianism during the 1999 Kosovo refugee crisis. She will examine how NATO interacted with the Albanian government and Albanian civilians and how both responded to the influx of refugees from Kosovo.

Oleh Wolowyna (CSEEEES Fellow) is doing research on the 1932-33 famine in Ukraine and other republics of the former Soviet Union, in collaboration with the Institute of Demography and Social Studies of the Ukrainian National Academy of Sciences. The research is conducted under his second Fulbright Scholar grant. He also made several presentations about the brain drain from Ukraine to the US, as part of the collaboration between the Shevchenko University in Kyiv and the Center for Demographic and Socio-economic Research on Ukrainians in the US, located in New York City. The topic attracted significant media attention, with interviews in the magazine *Ukrainian Week*, newspaper *Dzerkalo Tyzhnia* and a national TV station.

Austin Yost (MA RUES '15) presented the paper, "Exposiciones Soviéticas: Selling Socialist Modernity in the US's Backyard," at the Southern Conference on Slavic Studies. His paper was an abridged version of his MA thesis that explored how the Soviet Union presented itself as a model for Third World development through exhibitions in Mexico City, Havana, and Rio de Janeiro.

UNC Global Studies and CSEEEES hosted a roundtable on "Promoting Reform in Ukraine" in March. **Tsveta Petrova** (Columbia University) planned to deliver the lecture "Making a Difference? Polish Democracy Promotion in Ukraine," but was unable to attend. **Greg Nizhnikau** (University of Tartu) presented his paper "Promoting Institutional Change in the EU's Eastern Neighborhood: Migration and Environment Reforms in Ukraine." **Graeme Robertson, Robert Jenkins, and Milada Anna Vachudova** served as discussants on the roundtable.



From left to right: Dr. Robert Jenkins, Anna Yudina, and James Brennan at the North Carolina Council for the Social Studies Conference

In February 2015, UNC CSEEEES Director **Dr. Robert Jenkins**, **Anna Yudina** (MA RUES '15) and **James Brennan** (MA RUES '15) presented at the session "Beyond the Headlines: Russian Foreign Policy and the Crisis in Ukraine" at North Carolina Council for the Social Studies' 45th Annual State Conference in Greensboro, NC. CSEEEES presents a "Beyond the Headlines" session at NCCSS every year.

Dr. Jenkins gave a geopolitical overview of the Ukrainian Crisis in which he described the conditions in Ukraine that led up to the crisis and offered his views on the future possibilities of the region. Dr. Jenkins focused on the geopolitical factors of the crisis, but highlighted that economic and political factors existed too, all of which had their own unique roots.

James Brennan's presentation outlined several different perspectives with which to view Russian involvement in the Ukrainian crisis. Using three different frameworks derived from international relations theory (ranging from realism to constructivism), Brennan analyzed how these perspectives would explain Russia's foreign policy decisions regarding Ukraine and assessed the advantages and disadvantages of using each model. He also examined the implications for future policy decisions inherent in each perspective, in particular the prospect of future violence.

Anna Yudina's presentation reflected her current work on public opinion in Russia. She examined the "rally-round-the-flag" effect to explain why Russians who previously opposed President Putin began to support him in the wake of the crisis in Ukraine. Putin's popularity was at some of the lowest levels ever leading up to the annexation of Crimea, but just months after Russia incorporated Crimea and the EU and the US imposed sanctions, the president's popularity reached an impressively high level. To determine who changed their opinion about the president, Yudina examined a number of variables including political awareness, TV watching habits, gender, and Russia's economic situation.

2015 MA THESES PRESENTATION

On April 29th, CSEEEES hosted its annual MA Thesis Presentations in the FedEx Global Education Center. This tradition allows graduating students to celebrate their coursework and research. Current students, faculty, and other CSEEEES friends gathered to watch the graduating MA students present the findings of the theses. Following is a list of the graduating students and the titles of their theses:

Philip Kiffer: "Actors in a 'Cheap Comedy': Soviet Dissidents in Psychiatric Hospitals, 1968-1974"

Anna Yudina: "The rally round the flag effect in Russia: How an international crisis turns regime opponents into regime supporters"

James Brennan: "Evaluating Three Frameworks of Russian Foreign Policy Decision Making"

Carissa Landes: "Islam and State Rhetoric in Tajikistan"

Aya Ovezova: "Managing Water Conflict and Cooperation in Central Asia: The Case of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan"

Geysar Gurbanov: "The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict (1988-1994): From Communal Violence to Civil War: the Role of Democracy and Political Entrepreneurs"

Brendan Daniel: "What Surrounds Us Now: Cultural Animation and the Participatory and Cultural Voids in Poland"

Austin Yost: "Exposiciones Soviéticas: Selling Socialist Modernity in the US's Backyard"



Graduating MA student Brendan Daniel presenting his thesis

Though students at CSEEEES study a specific region of the world, their post-graduate experiences can lead them to areas and career paths that might seem unthinkable. I recently sat down with Jason Czyz, an alumnus of the first ever CSEEEES MA cohort (1999-2001) and Director of Grants and Contracts at the Institute of International Education. He told me about his winding career path and offered up some advice for graduates in the job market.

What was your first post-graduate job?

My first job was with an association called the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC). I started with them as a program officer; we had a cooperative agreement with USAID to help and provide technical assistance to utility regulators in Eastern Europe. I spent a lot of time in the region. I usually traveled there about twice a quarter. Unfortunately in my current position, I don't deal all that heavily with Eastern Europe, but we do have offices in Kiev and Moscow.

How did your career path lead you to where you are now?

I worked on the programs side of USAID for a number of years, starting with NARUC. I also worked in Africa because I spoke French, and I was the director of our Bangladesh office. I did my law degree and went to work at a law firm, working primarily in mergers and acquisitions. When the financial crisis hit, that line of work dried up. So I went to work for the Academy for Educational Development as chief of party in Angola, doing mapping of electricity and water systems in Angola. When we were taken over by Family Health International, I became program director of a project to privatize infrastructure in Ukraine. I spent three weeks in the country every three months. I moved to grants and contracts when I began to settle down with a family. I handled all the Francophone and critical priority countries, and all of our oil company portfolios as well. IIE approached me because their Director of Grants and Contracts was retiring, and I've been with them for about two years.

What do you do as the Director of Grants and Contracts?

My department negotiates the grants and contracts that the organization receives. For instance, the IIE implemented over \$600 million worth of programs. We're a team of twelve people based primarily here in DC, though our headquarters is in New York. We negotiate the contracts, making sure they meet IIE's budgetary

and legal standards, and then we help our program teams ensure compliance with the contract and all the government regulations that go along with it. I occasionally have to [travel] to negotiate a contract.

What would you say has been the biggest result of your work at IIE?

Consistency in our compliance with government regulations, which have become increasingly complex. Keeping our staff trained on what the government requires as well.

What drew you to studying Eastern Europe?

It was actually an odd thing – I did my senior year of high school in France, where they require two foreign languages. I took English, which was a second language there, and – after a short stint in German – I started taking Russian. I grew up in a Polish neighborhood in Chicago, and my last name is Polish, so I had some affinity for that part of the world. When I returned to the United States, I continued to study Russian.



CSEEEES Alumnus Jason Czyz

What course/experience from your education at UNC has best prepared you for your career?

I'm not sure I could pinpoint a particular course. But I did enjoy the handful of history courses that I took, and then obviously the language courses benefitted me in my work in Eastern Europe.

How have you stayed connected to CSEEEES?

There was a happy hour a couple of years ago that I attended. Unfortunately, I haven't heard of there being another one since, or if there was, I was traveling. I hear from Dr. Robert Jenkins every once in a while.

What advice do you have for graduate students navigating their career paths?

The government is a big employer of people with our skills, so of course there's always that track. If you'd like to do non-profit work, there are quite a few organizations that work in that area. Unfortunately it's gone down a bit because a lot of Central and Eastern European countries have joined the European Union, and because of the numerous problems with Russian non-profits. For those who are tenacious and want to work in that part of the world, there are a lot of opportunities in a variety of different fields.

By **Brendan Daniel** (MA RUES '15)

Collection Development:

After reviewing the results of a two-year pilot project, UNC-Chapel Hill and Duke University Libraries have decided to institutionalize the single-copy cooperative collection development program for Russian literature and literary criticism. The program has virtually eliminated duplication between the two campuses, while greatly improving the quality and scope of the shared print collections, particularly with respect to regional publications. Additionally, publications from selected major publishers are now acquired automatically.

Notable acquisitions:

Davis Library acquired a microfilm collection of scarce Russian language newspapers published in Estonia chiefly during the Russian Civil War. Materials were purchased using the Weatherspoon Library Fund to complement the holdings of the André Savine Collection. The collection includes the following titles: *Вестник Северной армии*, 1919; *Вестник Северо-западной армии*, 1919; *За свободу России*, 1920; *Наше слово*, 1917-1918; *Новая Россия* (Таллин), 1919; *Ревельское обозрение*, 1917-1918; *Ревельское слово*, 1918-1919; *Русский голос* (Нарва), 1925; *Русский голос* (Таллин), 1923-1924; *Свобода России* (Таллин), 1919-1920; *Свободная Россия* (Таллин), 1919; *Свободное слово солдата и матроса*, 1917-1918; *Таллинский русский голос*, 1932-1934; *Телеграммы ежедневной демократической газеты Новая Россия*, 1919.

Davis Library acquired the microfilm of the Polish language Jewish journal *Izraelita*, published in Warsaw 1866-1913. The materials were purchased using the Lucius N. Littauer Judaica Book Fund and the Weatherspoon Library Fund to support the research of Karen Auerbach.

Davis Library acquired the microfilm of the Dmytro Dontsov Archive from the National Library of Poland. The materials were purchased using the Weatherspoon Library Fund to support the research of Trevor Er-lacher.

The Music Library acquired the full catalog of Bolt Records, an experimental music label devoted to Eastern Europe, operating out of Warsaw. Materials were purchased to support the research of Andrea Bohlman.

The Rare Book Collection at Wilson Library acquired *Новинки Запада*, a 1925 literary almanach containing the first appearance of James Joyce's *Ulysses* in Russian, and an anonymous Czech WWI-era manuscript diary (1914-1921), purchased using the the Weatherspoon Library Fund and the Howard Holsenbeck WWI fund.

New or renewed serial subscriptions and/or back file acquisitions:

Czech Republic & Slovakia:

Časopis Matice moravské, Česká zahraniční politika v roce ... , Labyrint revue, Pražský sborník historický, Revolver Revue, Slovenská literatúra.

Hungary:

Fons, Hadtörténelmi közlemények, Helikon, Honismeret, Irodalmi Magazin, Kommentár, Múltunk, Napút, Rubicon, Századok, Tiszatáj, Történelmi szemle, Új forrás.

Izrael (Russian language):

Виноградная долина, Двадцать два, Иерусалимский библиофил, Литературный Иерусалим, Альманах Римон, Альманах Ришон.

Poland:

Ruch muzyczny.

Russia:

Белый бор, Альманах Камчатка, The New Times (Новое время), Пушкинский альманах (Новосибирск), Альманах Сыктывкар, Альманах Х.Д.К.

Gifts:

- Carroll B. 'Buddy' Spencer of Stanardsville, VA, donated 239 volumes of Hungarian materials, chiefly classic Hungarian literature, and the diaries and papers of Rev. Alexander Toth of the Hungarian Reformed Church in Cleveland, OH.
- Jason Vuic of High Point, NC, donated 206 volumes of Yugoslav Studies materials, in Serbo-Croatian and English, including a variety of 1950s and 60s propaganda pamphlets.
- Columbia University Libraries donated 216 volumes of Ukrainian publications, chiefly émigré materials.
- University of Kansas Libraries donated a variety of books in Polish, Russian and Ukrainian.
- Duke University donated Moderna, a scarce Serbian serial from early 2000s devoted to modernism and Serbian identity (with parallel Serbian and English text).
- Davis Library acquired a variety of new publications related to WWI published in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Russia, and Serbia. Materials were purchased using the Howard Holsenbeck WWI fund.

By **Kirill Tolpygo**, Slavic and East European Studies Librarian

Continued from page 1

terms of corruption, but without the imperial legacy. He described some of the structural reasons for the Ukrainian crisis, such as the deep political divisions in Ukraine that make political compromise nearly impossible and a dispersed system of ownership that created oligarchs who lacked the resources to outright defeat one another.

I had the opportunity to sit down and talk to Mr. Kowal about his experiences as a politician. Mr. Kowal is currently the leader of the Poland Together party, which he co-founded. It is a small party in the center of the political spectrum, currently working in coalition with the Law and Justice Party. Before founding the party, Kowal served two terms in the Polish Sejm in the early 2000s. There he focused mainly on policy of cultural institutions, such as the Warsaw Uprising Museum, which he helped found.

After his time in the Sejm, Mr. Kowal represented Poland in the European Parliament, where he chaired the delegation that worked with the Ukrainian Rada. He was also a member of the energy committee. He has no current plans to run for office again but hasn't ruled it out in the future.

When not in the political arena, Mr. Kowal's other passion is cooking. He previously owned a restaurant and at one time joined his love of politics and food by hosting a cooking show in which he also discussed politics.

By **Ben Midas** (MA REES '16)

DUKE-UNC ANNUAL ROTARY SPRING CONFERENCE



Geysar Gurbanov at the Rotary Peace Conference

On April 11, 2015, ten graduating Rotary Peace Fellows at the Duke-UNC Rotary Peace Center hosted Rotarians, faculty, staff, students, and local participants as they presented their research on a wide range of issues affecting peace around the world. The theme this year was "People-Centered Approaches to Conflict Resolution and Sustainable Peace."

Geysar Gurbanov (MA RUES '15) presented about the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (1988-1994) and talked about the role of political entrepreneurs in escalating the conflict from communal violence to civil war. He argued that Azerbaijan, during the conflict, was not democratic, i.e. fundamental elements of democracy (e.g. free elections, equal human rights, and a rule of law) were absent. In such an environment, Armenian and Azerbaijani political entrepreneurs

came to power by escalating the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict to civil war. By showing how communal violence transitions to civil war because of political entrepreneurs, his research showed the importance of preventing their emergence in conflict-prone regions by promoting democratic political systems.

Aya Ovezova (MA RUES '15) presented her work on water conflict and cooperation in Central Asia with a focus on Turkmen-Uzbek relations over sharing their transboundary river. She described conflicts at the village level caused by poor water management and cooperation and argued that despite existing legal frameworks, governments of both countries ignore water conflicts. Moreover, they continue using the international water intensively for cotton production without considering negative impacts on the environment, such as the desiccating Aral Sea. She concluded that without effective water management and cooperation between the countries across Central Asia, water resources are a potential threat to economic and social gains as well as a potential driver for conflicts and wars in the future.



Aya Ovezova presenting at the Rotary Peace Conference

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