

# connections



THE UNIVERSITY  
of NORTH CAROLINA  
at CHAPEL HILL

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## Polish Essayist Adam Michnik Discusses Identity, Role of Intellectuals

Adam Michnik, prominent Polish essayist, intellectual, and former dissident against communist rule, spent the month of April at the National Humanities Center in RTP. On April 21, he held an informal discussion with UNC faculty and students.

Michnik has been editor in chief of one of Eastern Europe's most respected dailies, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, since its inception in 1989. A life-long activist for human rights, he was detained many times between 1965 and 1986, spending a total of six years in prison for his opposition to the



From left to right, Ryszard Kole (Pharmacology), Robert Jenkins (CSEEEES), Madeline Levine (Slavic Languages and Literatures), Hugon Karwowski (Physics and Astronomy), and Adam Michnik

communist regime. An adviser to the Solidarity trade union federa-

tion during the 1980s, he was a negotiator for the Solidarity team during the Round Table negotiations of 1989 between representatives of the government, Solidarity, and other groups that brought an end to communist rule in Poland. The author of *Letters from Prison and Other Essays*, Michnik has recently been awarded the 2006 Dan David Prize for being the journalist most associated with the collapse of the Soviet bloc and the rise of freedom in Eastern Europe.

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## Graduating MA Students Present Thesis Research at Annual Piedmont Colloquium

On May 3, the five graduating MA students presented their thesis research to the UNC community at the Piedmont Colloquium.

Ginny Muller spoke on Russian "humanitarian" intervention in Georgia and Moldova and how the action was anything but humanitarian in intention. The Russian

government initially declared neutrality in both cases but soon changed course, instead supporting Abkhaz and Transdniestrian separatists. Several months later, the Russian government changed course and announced the installment of Russian peacekeeping troops in Georgia and Moldova. The intent of

these peacekeeping missions was ostensibly to support the cessation of armed fighting and promote resolution of the disputes, but Russia's involvement in both cases was never as neutral or conflict-resolution based as peacekeeping missions should be. She exam-

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## Announcements

**Madeline G. Levine**, Kenan Professor of Slavic Literatures, became interim dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, effective July 1, 2006. She has taught at Carolina since 1974, published numerous scholarly articles and book-length literary translations, won more than a dozen fellowships and awards, and contributed richly to the life of the University, serving in multiple administrative and advisory capacities. Levine succeeds former Dean **Bernadette Gray-Little**, who assumed the position of Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost on July 1.

**Milada Vachudova**, Political Science, presented papers during March and April at the International Studies Association annual conference in San Diego, at the Council for European Studies biennial conference in Chicago, in the Department of Political Science at Yale University, and at the Center for European Studies at Harvard University.

**Laura Janda**, Slavic Languages and Literatures, presented papers in June at the Kognitivt sommarseminar in Norway, the second bi-annual Russian Conference on Cognitive Science in St. Petersburg, and the Slavic and East European Languages Summer Institute for Instructions at UNC.

**Sharon A Kowalsky**, History, has accepted a tenure-track job in Modern European History at Texas A&M University Commerce.

**Dr. Gordana Stokić** was at the School of Information and Library Science for three months as a Fulbright Scholar. She is from the Library and Information Science Department, Department of Philology, Belgrade University, Serbia.

The Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures held its annual extravaganza, **SPEKTAKL'**, on Thursday, April 27th, in Toy Lounge. The students recited poetry and performed sketches and musical numbers in Czech, Hungarian, Polish, Russian, and Serbian/Croatian.

## *Michnik-from Page 1*

He answered a variety of questions from the audience, beginning with a look at class distinctions in Poland today. Michnik believes that class distinctions have shifted since the end of communism to be formed around business men, the employed, and unemployed. Because of the high level of unemployment in the country (18%), the differences between the groups are growing. Business leaders are still learning how to manage and function within a market economy, plus they have to contend with labor laws that make it difficult for them to respond to the needs to the market. Workers tend to favor populist policies, making it difficult to attract foreign investment in the country, which may help resolve some of the labor issues.

On the comparison of the role of the intellectual in Polish society today versus 20 or 30 years ago, Michnik believes the prestige once attached to this label has diminished over time. During communism, only the Church and intellectuals were the voice of the nation; but now anyone can speak. Intellectuals today tend to be divided on their views of the state. Michnik also

worries that nationalism could fill a gap left by communism.

Commenting on the role of intellectuals in identity creation, Michnik doesn't believe that "Europeanism" is something Poles are familiar with yet. He sees a beginning of a united European identity in protests against American involvement in Iraq, but points out that such a view is not acceptable in Poland. He believes that European identity is a project in progress, and has still to define what the boundaries of Europe are. For instance, he cannot imagine a definition of European intellectualism that would exclude Russian contributions.

Michnik also commented on Polish relations with two of its neighbors: Germany and Belarus. The Polish government, in its relations with Germany, has taken a stance of moral superiority based on Germany's role in World War II, which Michnik believes to be inappropriate. Regarding Belarus, Michnik pointed out that Poland has always supported Belarus initiatives for democracy. He argued that the EU and US must monitor the situation and raise awareness of existing problems, but the solutions lie within Belarus.

## Alumni Updates

**Stockton Butler** (MA '01) continues as Senior Analyst for Nonproliferation Issues at the Government Accounting Office (GAO). He recently was Analyst-in-Charge for a GAO team reviewing U.S. efforts to install

radiation detecting equipment in other countries. He also participated in a "sting" attempt to smuggle dirty bomb" materials into the United States. For details on reports on which Stockton has worked, visit our alumni link at the Center web site...**Bill**

## Colloquium-from Page 1

ined Russia's rationale for intervening in the Abkhaz/Georgia and Transdniestrian/Moldovan conflicts in order to better understand Russia's justification for getting involved.

Doug Buchacek's thesis examined the mobilization apparatus of Nashi, a pro-Putin Russian youth social movement organization, from its formation in March 2005 to the present. He explained how the organization orients itself within the socio-political field of contemporary Russia and how these orientations allow it to mobilize youths towards the achievement of its goals, namely, the support of the political modernization program of Russian President Vladimir Putin and the training of the next generation of the Russian "elite." He analyzed three

components of Nashi's mobilization: the formation of an effective collective identity and ideology; orientations to other actors within the socio-political field, with special emphasis

placed on its relationship to the administration of Vladimir Putin; and interactions with the Russian media.

Wenjie Zhang explored the post-Soviet Russian media reform from Mikhail Gorbachev's glasnost in 1986 to Vladimir Putin's control of the media in 2005. She traced the trajectory of the Russian media reform after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, followed several typical trends in various periods of transition, analyzed the main

Europe, the nature of trafficking networks, and the efforts Germany, Poland, and Ukraine have made to stop trafficking within their borders. She used a supply chain model to explain how organized crime groups structure their trafficking networks; how the groups operate through the networks; and why these networks make trafficking a profitable and successful enterprise. Although many factors explain the ease of "recruitment" of women in Eastern Europe, trafficking remains a demand-driven market due to the desire of West European men for sexual services. Thus, in order for states to decrease trafficking, they must actively work to end the demand for prostitution. She hypothesized that this can be accomplished by adopting an abolitionist law regarding prostitution, while also strengthening anti-trafficking legislation.

Sara Slye examined the root causes of the Russo-Chechen war as characterized in three phases: the first military campaign (1994-96), the second military campaign (1999-2000) and "Normalization" (2000-present). She argued that, the war erupted in 1994 and reignited in 1999 because Russian leaders chose to resolve political disputes and socio-economic problems in Chechnya through force not negotiation with Chechen leadership. The conflict continues today for the same reason.



From left to right, Wenjie Zhang, Doug Buchacek, Jennifer Pcylik, and Ginny Muller (Sara Slye not pictured)

actors in the transition and their different strategies, and finally tried to answer the question: why was the Russian media reform a failure?

Jennifer Pcylik explained why sex trafficking occurs in

## Alumni-from Page 2

**Hein** (MA '02) is Program Officer for the American Serbia & Montenegro Youth Leadership Exchange Program at American Councils in Washington, D.C...Lieutenant Colonel **Joe King** (MA RUES '00) is De-

fense Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Vilnius, Lithuania...**Li Ma** (MA '05) finished a Masters of Accounting degree at UNC's Kenan-Flagler School of Business in May 2006 and will begin working for Deloitte in September.

# Slobin examines Klezmer experience in U.S. and Eastern Europe

On March 23, Mark Slobin, professor of music at Wesleyan University, offered a multi-media presentation "Fiddler on the Move: Exploring the Klezmer World." The event was co-sponsored by the CSEEEES, the Department of Music, and the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, and the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies.

Klezmer, a type of Jewish music, has its roots in Eastern Europe, primarily in Ukraine and Poland. Immigrants brought the music with them to the U.S. where it was typically performed at weddings. Despite

a revival in the 1920s, Klezmer began to die out in the 1940s and 1950s. According to Slobin, the decline was related to the end of mass immigration, the Holocaust, and the younger generation's interest in more "American" music.

Slobin argues that within the context of the wedding ceremony, Klezmer is genuinely American music. Each tune is unique to the city in which it is played, while at the same time rooted in its East European history. Traditionally, only men were permitted to play Klezmer, but this too has changed with a contemporary renaissance in the music.

Slobin presented different "snapshots" of the klezmer world to the audience, each focused on a different era. He utilized video to show klezmer bands performing at weddings. He first looked at klezmer in Philadelphia, where the music was indispensable to the Jewish community identity. He also showed footage of Itzhak Perlman, in Krakow in the 1990s, when he recorded Klezmer music.

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UNC at Chapel Hill Center  
223 E. Franklin St. CB# 5125  
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-5125

[www.unc.edu/depts/slavic](http://www.unc.edu/depts/slavic)  
tel: (919) 962-0910; fax (919) 962-2494  
Email: [slavic@email.unc.edu](mailto:slavic@email.unc.edu)

Duke University Center  
302 Languages Box 90260  
Durham, NC 27708-0290

[www.duke.edu/web/CSEEEES](http://www.duke.edu/web/CSEEEES)  
tel: (919) 660-3157  
fax: (919) 660-3188

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Center for Slavic, Eurasian, and East European Studies  
223 E. Franklin Street  
Campus Box 5125  
UNC-Chapel Hill  
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-5125