the way the field is taught and studied in the same way that Rochester has transformed the study of political science. We anticipate that this development will engage the faculty in the activities of the center, generate enthusiasm and research ideas among graduate students, and attract a new generation of students and scholars to Rochester to study this important region.

The center’s primary activities to this point have had the goal of enriching the undergraduate curriculum; the Skalny Center of the future will play an expanded role in undergraduate education. Indeed, we believe that developing a robust research program will significantly enrich undergraduate education, because excellent undergraduate teaching grows out of a serious engagement with academic research. In turn, it is impossible for us to train the kind of future faculty members we seek to produce in our graduate programs without involving them significantly in undergraduate teaching.

The College is providing a substantial infusion of new support for the center and an expanded University commitment to development, which will allow us to enrich our undergraduate offerings while simultaneously expanding our programs to include graduate and postgraduate initiatives. The thematic focus of the center will remain connected to Poland, but will strengthen and engage more deeply the issues in political science in which Poland figures prominently, particularly international relations, the politics of economic reform, and consolidating democratic institutions. The center will play an important role in one of the most significant curricular innovations in the College’s strategic plan, which is to develop a new major in international relations. The new major will include coursework in political science, history and economics, foreign language, and study abroad.

During the academic year 2006-2007, we continued a number of programs that have come to be favorites in the Rochester community—lunchtime talks, evening lectures, a Polish Film Festival, and concerts—in addition to sponsoring a few new ones.

Dr. Anna Niedzwiedz of Jagiellonian University, Krakow, and a Kosciuszko Foundation Visiting Professor gave two lectures on religious and national myths and symbols in Poland. (See her article in this issue.)

By Randall Stone

It has been my pleasure to serve as the acting director of the Skalny Center this spring, and I am pleased to announce that I will become the new director as of July 1. The former director of the Skalny Center, Professor Ewa Hauser, was on leave this spring at Petro Mohyla Mykolayiv State Humanities University, Ukraine, as a senior Fulbright Fellow. I would like to congratulate her on this honor, and on receiving an extension of her Fulbright grant for the academic year 2007-2008. Professor Hauser conceived of the idea for the Skalny Center, wrote the first grant proposal, forged an enduring partnership between the University of Rochester and Jagiellonian University in Krakow, and built the center into an important part of the undergraduate curriculum at the University of Rochester.

During the coming years, I plan to build upon and expand the existing programs of the Skalny Center. The objective is to build a strong scholarly presence here in the field of Polish and Central European studies, which can play an important role in transforming the United States into a regionally strong scholarly presence here in the field of Polish and Central European studies.

By M. Gajda-Kaszewska

The night was dark and long, yet, neither so long nor so dark as the present day tends to believe blinded by the pride of one’s own innocence.

Tomasz Burek

America has always lived in the minds of the Polish people. Either as the land of the free and the brave, or at least as the country of abundance offering limitless opportunity to all those who were willing to work hard. Reinforced by the accounts of numerous emigrants, idealized by the heroic stories of Poles involved in various wars over the emernt. The agency responsible for production and dissemination of messages called the Ministry of Information and Propaganda (Ministerstwo Informacji i Propagandy) had been created in 1944, by the decree of the Polish Committee of National Liberation (Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego). It was supposed to oversee daily press, periodicals, press and information agencies, radio and film, and deal with the issues of propaganda publications and mass propaganda actions within the country and work on propaganda messages disseminated abroad. On the one hand, the ministry worked “to strengthen the ideas of democracy in Poland and raise the level of political and social consciousness of wide masses of society”. Yet, on the other, it was entrusted with a much more serious task, that of fighting the reactionary elements and enemy propaganda. Numerous resources were provided for the special “propaganda brigades” created for that matter. At this point, it needs to be stressed that propaganda of the Stalinist period in Poland was of a much different nature than the one carried out, for example, in America during the world wars. Rather than being pragmatic, aimed at achieving particular behavior and triggering desired actions on the part of citizens, it was concerned to change the entire system of values and thought and conversion of people to the new ideology. Since the United States of America was considered the embodiment of exploitive capitalism, imperialism and moral degeneracy, the number one enemy on the road to communism, it is not surprising that Polish propaganda messages portraying the United States constituted quite extensive materials. Posters as well as newspaper articles, two most common and pervasive propaganda vehicles, dealt with almost all aspects of American reality as seen through the communist party perspective and with a party commentary, from politics through social life, economy, culture, moral values, or children’s upbringing. We can say they covered American reality A to Z. They aimed at rendering this rotten bastard of capitalism, its politics and lifestyle repugnant to the Polish people, yet more frequently than not they miscalculated badly as to the effect they wanted to achieve.

Instead of being accepted and believed, they were laughed at and ridiculed by the public. Moreover, they triggered a counter-reading on the part of the citizens and engaged Poles in the constant pursuit of forbidden fruit. Rather than removing America from view, these posters made it present and an object of dreams, of the young generation in particular. The planned and carefully employed anti-Americanization brought the side effect of the unplanned, unexpected and, worst of all, uncontrollable Americanization, which must have infuriated the party leaders and made them experience the feeling of futility and inefficiency only at the outset of the road to implementing their apparently ideal scheme of the state.

There were a number of reasons responsible for this situation. The first, and probably one of the main among them, was the crudeness and primitiveness of the messages, especially visual and artistic ones, executed along the requirements of social realism. According to the guidelines of social realism, or socrealism, the one and only rightful way of artistic expression...
The Splendor of Teaching Joseph Conrad

By Wiesław Krajka

In spring 2007, I once again had the pleasure of teaching a course on Joseph Conrad at the University of Rochester. I had taught similar courses twice before in the 1997-98 and 2001-02 academic years.

None of the students was of Polish-American origin so the course was outside the milieu of American Polonia. Special emphasis was given to Conrad’s Polish and East-Central European aspects and contexts, which constituted about 20 percent of this course. The purpose of the course was to draw general conclusions about Conrad’s literary output: his place in the history of English and world literature; the artistic, ideological, philosophical and psychological mastery of his works; the international context of his works, including Polish and East-Central European contexts; and the importance of Joseph Conrad’s literary output to American culture and literature. The course applied mainly the method of students’ class discussions guided, elaborated and augmented by the instructor’s commentary and occasionally supplemented by his lectures. Five screenings of film adaptations of Conrad’s works and educational films on Conrad took place outside of class time.

The course provided an in-depth study of this great and complex writer; it hopefully made the students appreciate the mastery of the artistic organization of Conrad’s literary texts studied as well as their ideological complexities, ambiguities and penetrating and prophetic visions of humanity. It provided both an overview of Conrad’s entire literary output and penetrating insights into some of its outstanding, focal specimens. The films used in this course both facilitated students’ perception of the literary works of this complex writer and served as a very significant foundation of his literary output. Teaching this course was outside of the milieu of American Polonia. Special emphasis was given to Conrad’s Polish and East-Central European aspects and contexts, which constituted about 20 percent of this course.

My students’ response to Conrad reflected their previous education and immersion in American life and culture. Therefore, they responded especially imaginatively, sensitively and competently also because some of them easily related it to their own multilingual experiences in America). They nourished people’s hope among the people in their communities or work places. They presented the picture of a very affluent (despite social disparities) and powerful country pulling the strings on the international scene. Such presentation incited attraction to the demonic power, shed the aura of allure of the villain, and made it way more fascinating than the boring positive worker hero.

Besides, it was exactly the image emerging from the counter-reading of the Stalinist posters that tied more smoothly with the people’s memories of the times past than the aggressive and primitive simplifications, clichés and outright lies concerning America provided by the regime. People were living in the gray world of low-quality products and were constantly urged to work hard with the people’s memories of the times past than the aggressive and primitive simplifications, clichés and outright lies concerning America provided by the regime.

On the whole, my course aroused my students’ strong, lively and profound interest. Joseph Conrad certainly deserves such study. I regard him as the second greatest master of English literature after Shakespeare; he is studied and read worldwide by academics, students and lovers of literature.—by people of various degrees of literary and cultural competence. Conrad is widely studied and taught at American universities.

Joseph Conrad constituted a uniquely successful transmission of the Polish ethos, mentality and culture on an international scale, a particularly strong bridge between Poland and the English-speaking world. Although he wrote in English, Joseph Conrad is also the greatest Polish writer in world literature. The input of the Polish historical-cultural tradition, ethos, mentality and literature constitutes a very significant foundation of his literary output. Teaching Conrad illuminates crucial elements of Polish history and culture that were connected with Conrad.

I wish to express my profound gratitude to the Skalny Center for Polish and Central European Studies at the University of Rochester, directed by Professors Eva Hauser and Randall Stone, and to the chair of the English Department, Professor Frank Shuffelton, and its Director of Undergraduate Studies, Professor Ken Gross, for their wonderful cooperation and assistance.

Our study of Conrad’s Polish and East-Central European aspects and contexts was more difficult: my students saw them as the positivism of his maternal uncle; the Polish Romanticism in Lord

INSIDE OUT AND UPSIDE DOWN

Continued from page 1

at the time, the presentation was supposed to be “typical,” which is expressing the heart of the matter rather than capturing what was most common or most often recurring. This led to exaggerations, very limited repertoire of symbols and finally to enormous literalness. Such outrightness of the message, very much congenial to primitive, was tiresome.

Despite numerous assurances of the opposite being true, it undermined the mental capabilities of simple people and made them fed up with the message. This may have also contributed to venturing a contrariwise reading of the propaganda works. Surely, posters presented the enemies of the socialist people, but did it in such a way that could actually trigger imagination, which was not the case with contrariwise reading of the posters. They themselves contained the grains which planted in the minds of the more inquisitive receivers could result in a series of questions not so easy and obvious to answer. Even overtly negative images, while read against the grain, presented the picture of a very affluent (despite social disparities) and powerful country pulling the strings on the international scene. Such presentation incited attraction to the demonic power, shed the aura of allure of the villain, and made it way more fascinating than the boring positive worker hero.

Besides, it was exactly the image emerging from the counter-reading of the Stalinist posters that tied more smoothly with the people’s memories of the times past than the aggressive and primitive simplifications, clichés and outright lies concerning America provided by the regime. People were living in the gray world of low-quality products and were constantly urged to work hard with the people’s memories of the times past than the aggressive and primitive simplifications, clichés and outright lies concerning America provided by the regime.

The idealistic vision of the communist heaven on earth (certainly in its secular version) was, for some reasons, so distant and not based on any identifiable premises that the rotten capitalist hell constituted a tempting alternative. Another reason was the fierce and persuasive state propaganda of anti-Americanization resulted in the increased interest and eager pursuit of any information connected with the United States and idealization of the country, that is, ultimately, in the unplanned Americanization, was the fact that the communist government never managed to effectively harness the realm of the folk culture in Poland. Favorable, anti-establishment opinions about America functioned in jokes and rumors passed among the people in their communities or work places. They executed comparative freedom due to their immutable character and low-identifiability of authorship. They were simply disseminated in certain circles and provided relief from the duty of homogenized thinking. They nourished people’s hope and strengthened to survive under the government perceived as illegal, only usurping power and people’s mandate to gov-
er in Poland. They created a form of “spoken resistance” against the authorities and constituted a form of “national self-defense.”

All in all, with fascination with America and yearning for it moved to the realm of folk culture and found a good and safe shelter there in practically ineradicable, though persecuted, rumors, gossips, jokes and sayings. Right after the war, for example, people heartened with another story with the other names of prominent American invasion which was to liberate the country and, during the Korean War, when the rumor was spreading that a Polish corps was to be sent to Asia to fight MacArthur and young people were volunteering massively for the army. The rumor was also the justification for the communist survival, and was supposed to ridicule the western world leaders (favorites among them were Churchill, Truman, Eisenhower but also Tito, and Adenauer), prior to their degradation, war-mon- gering and servile attitude toward the U.S., which was pulling the strings in the world using its dollars. One of the negotiated papers so commented on the performance in 1949: “A group of students performed in an extremely witty way prom- ises of the authors of the Atlantic Pact: powdered eggs, bubble gum, etc., and the final result of their war plots — a coffin for war, a watch, and the belle of the ball.”

These performances featured huge, grotesque figures with heads made of paper-maché, walking on stilts and making their movements more artificial and equipped with comic attributes. Each year they had a different title and a leading theme, yet they opened up similarly with the announcement that carried the title banner and signaled the entry of a different reality. These announcers were usually students disguised as Ku-Klux-Klan members in their hoods. In the year 1949, they carried a title “Churchilia” while the play included a lion train- ing, where a cacophonous suite was performed by American musi- cians in SS uniforms. It featured also “atomic marriage” of Eisenhower and Adenauer with a headline “Newlyweds of the old war-mongers.” Moreover, it also had a duck repre- senting radio’s “Voice of America” (reporter’s duck – hoax, canard).

It is very difficult to get sincere assessment of these performances as there are very scarce sources to rely on. The first of May performances were definitely a clever way to prevent any unrest and possible tension during the parade. They engaged students, the most explosive element anyhow, and kept them busy apparently allowing them freedom of ex- pression on the issues of very delicate and risky matters. Yet, for the same reason it seems hard to believe that these per- formances were thoroughly seriously developed propaganda actions. No matter how radical and even radicalized some of these performances were, they rather provided a painful reminder of the other reality out there, while for some could even work like ads, as in the case of “Voice of America.”

All in all, despite relentless efforts to do so, “the USA was perceived as the country of liberty and abundance. Nobody believed in the official slogan about the misery and ex- ploitation. This was perceived as the country of liberty and abundance. Nobody believed in the official slogan about the misery and ex- ploitation.”

The most spectacular example of such a misfired propaganda event which strengthened fascination and longing for the United States, rather than undermined it, was the exhi- bition This is America opened in the Arsenal in Warsaw in De- cember 1952. The very circumstances I learned about the en- terprise leave much space for speculation. I have come across can goods and clothes; popular fashion was appropriating them and turning them into the expression of elegance and chic. The best example of such popular fashion, which emerged as an unwelcome side effect of the anti-American campaigns, was saved success. It ventured a few suicidal bloops itself and incited people to sharpen his facial features to make him look like a vulture and stressed his typical dark glasses.” Very soon they become enormously popular and got the name “MacArthur” sunglasses. They constituted “one of the most chic el- ements completing one’s attire. Private initiative took up the challenge and soon the glasses being faithful copies of those worn by MacArthur were sold in the open air markets all over the country.” In this way, the regime authored the new trend and, during the Korean War, when the rumor was spreading that a Polish corps was to be sent to Asia to fight MacArthur and young people were volunteering massively for the army. They engaged students, the most explosive element anyhow, and kept them busy apparently allowing them freedom of ex- pression on the issues of very delicate and risky matters. Yet, for the same reason it seems hard to believe that these per- formances were thoroughly seriously developed propaganda actions. No matter how radical and even radicalized some of these performances were, they rather provided a painful reminder of the other reality out there, while for some could even work like ads, as in the case of “Voice of America.”

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According to the organizers, the exhibition was supposed to reveal “the true image of the ruling clique of imperialists, heirs to slave traders.” Supposedly, “in the entire history of
A Poet in the Promised Land: Adam Lizakowski’s American Experience

By Ania Kowalik

Born in Dzierzoniów, Lower Silesia, in 1956, Adam Lizakowski is considered to be one of the most interesting poets currently living and composing in the United States. Lizakowski left Poland in 1981 for Austria, where he was staying when martial law was declared in his home country. He then arrived in the United States as a political refugee. In June 1982, he emigrated to San Francisco, where he resided for nearly two years, to finally settle down in Chicago in 1983. In 1986, the poet was invited to Berkeley to visit Czeslaw Milosz, the Polish poet and Nobel Prize winner who had migrated to America in 1960 and taught Slavic languages at the University of California at Berkeley. It is to Milosz that I owe the hyphen. The hybridized consciousness that emerges in Adam Lizakowski’s poetry is the vehicle for expressing Lizakowski’s ambivalent feelings about the United States.

Lizakowski describes his poetry as “the gate onto the garden of America,” which comes from the confrontation of dreams with reality. That mythical, imagined America, the hope and the promise of a better life inscribed in the reality of communist Poland. To respect the mythology of the oppressed homeland, one has to respect its symbols which in this case is the idea of opposition. On the other hand, however, in confrontation with the myth, real America disappoints and thus poetry becomes the vehicle for expressing Lizakowski’s ambivalent feelings about the United States.

The Myth of America

America the mythical land on the other side of the ocean—a great dream factory for the unemployed—a huge bakery for the poor—a bottomless piggy bank for the poor—a great circus for the naive children of the world where dreams and desires jump through rings of fire like tigers—in America everything is supposed to be much easier than in the homeland—the grass greener, the usually long way to success is just half that way here, talent is merely there to amaze or to be admired.

God, though as helpless as behind the old ocean, is much stronger here and he’s on the side of those who wind up their clocks in the morning saying: time is money America my myth of the new world humanity like colorful splinters of glass it attracts our attention the myth of many symbols, riches and freedom the immigrant, escaping himself, locked in the cage of old habits struggles, but that too is an old myth and nobody really knows what it really is that America and that love of America is not really love, just the key to a door behind which there are more doors and even more doors, and more and still more doors.

To be forced to cross the Atlantic as a slave in chains, to cross the Mediterranean or the Rio Grande illegally, heading the grass greener, the usually long way to success is just half that way here, talent is merely there to amaze or to be admired.

[431x127]p. 38-39
It was not the majority, but rather the minority voices as a subversive presence in American socio-political life that reveals that the immigrant experience is universalized and their narrative, sometimes hungry, sometimes without hope but always proud and smiling in the picture. I write poems against the cruel empire. I sing the immigrant's song: you can hear me. I am America.

San Francisco, 1987
In Złodzieje czerskiei
(Wyda#wic#awtomadw Adam Marszałęk, Toruń, 2001). p. 174

(Scotty O Rourke, trans. Anna Kowal)
Symbols, Myths and Rituals in Poland

By Anna Niedźwież

(1) The interviews I quote in this text were done during my 2000-2001 field research about the meanings of the image of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Poland. In 2000-2001, I also led a field research in Poland connected with contemporary religiosity, sacred places and devotion.

Norman Davies, the British historian who has dedicated his scientific life to the scholarly research on the history of the Polish state and nation, described the Polish culture as "full of instances where the national imagination triumphs over realism. Polish national mythology is very deeply connected with a popular vision of history. History—or more precisely, its common, popular version—is seen as a means of interpretation of contemporary events. Present events are located by common sense within this mythical vision and as so, they receive immediate, popular interpretation. They are "tamed" and located within a mythical order of common history.

It is very interesting to observe that the popular vision of a nation and its past has a very strong religious dimension in the Polish case. Sacred and profane visions of time, cyclical and linear, mythical and real, are mixed together. Religious symbols are often tied strictly with the national discourse. That makes it difficult to distinguish which symbols are more religious, and which are more national. A good example can be the image of Our Lady of Czestochowa, which is often described and treated as a national emblem. As one interviewee explained: "The image of Our Lady of Czestochowa is worshipped in Poland a lot. For us Poles it is a national symbol, even more important than the eagle [a white eagle is the official national emblem]."

Baroque-Romantic mythological vision of national history was present within the Communist period and used by the Catholic Church in the confrontation with the totalitarian regime. I argue that in the Polish case, the official Church hierarchy decided to support popular mass religiosity and even to strengthen it as an opposition and challenge to the mass official events organized by the state regime. Especially Polish Primate Stefan Wyszyński (1901-81, since 1948 the primate of the Polish Catholic Church) introduced the immense, precisely planned program of "mass religious events." In this vision, the idea was to connect the popular, mythical vision of the history of the Polish nation with a national, folk devotion dedicated to Mary, Mother of God.

The key moment chosen by Wyszyński to accumulate those symbolic events was the year 1966 announced the "Polish millennium"—one thousand years of the history of the Polish nation as a millennial anniversary of the official baptizing of Poland (966 is the year when the Polish prince Mieszko I decided to accept Christianity from Rome; this date is symbolically treated as the beginning of Christianity in Poland and the establishment of the Polish statehood). Mass religious events connected to the "Polish millennium" overshadowed the official celebrations of the one thousand years of Polish statehood, showing that the religious-symbological vision of the Polish history combined with Marian devotion can attract crowds and huge emotions even in the general atmosphere of terror of a state regime.

A program of reinforcing mass religiosity and "preparing the nation" for the millennial year was introduced by Wyszyński in 1957 with the one of the most intriguing mass-religious rituals—peregrination of the image of Our Lady of Czestochowa. A special copy of the original image was prepared, blessed and dedicated to travel around the whole of Poland—visiting every single parish church. The whole ritual was called a "peregrination of the copy of the image of Our Lady" and was often interpreted as "a visit of the Queen of Poland" or "a visiting of the Mother of God through the Polish land." During the peregrination, the image was exposed one 24-hour period in each church, where a service was held all day and night accompanied by the saying of prayers. There arose new cut forms and religiousness connected with the image of Our Lady of Czestochowa. The situation of the Jasna Góra image introduced a new custom and constituted a new feast day, one unknown to that date. It was also connected with the huge growth in popularity of the cult of the Jasna Góra image as well as Marian piety and devotion.

The most emotional moment revealing the power of symbols and mass religiosity as well as its involvement into national mythology was the attempt to stop the peregrination of the copy of the image of Our Lady of Czestochowa by the communist authorities. The copy of Our Lady of Czestochowa was held by the Security Services in 1966 and the image was taken back to Jasna Góra. The monastery authorities were informed of the legality of transporting the image beyond the gates of the monastery. The copy of the miraculous picture remained in Jasna Góra for almost five years (until the 16th of June 1972). During this period, however, there was no break in the peregrination. In subsequent churches and locations, there appeared an unusual symbol—an empty frame (together with candles and a lectionary)—which were carried in processions and before which people prayed, in exactly the same way as if to the copy of Our Lady of Czestochowa.

The research conducted in 2000-2001 shows that many interviewees remember those times. In the statements that concern the events of over 30 years ago, one is struck by the lively recollection of events and circumstances that accompanied the peregrination; even people who were only a few years old at that time talk about the peregrination of an empty frame. During interviews on this subject, individuals who were not even born then recall how they had heard about the peregrination of the frame from parents and grandparents. The presence of those events within the collective memory may give evidence that the peregrination of the image without an image constituted an unusually meaningful sign, which aroused a great sense of experience among those who participated. It appears that the symbol of the image of Our Lady of Czestochowa had again resulted in the unity of patriotic-national themes with the world of popular religiosity. The image itself took part in a direct political conflict and the holding of the image by the enemy authorities came to be called the arrest of the Virgin Mary.

The interviewees recall this time:

- People really experienced it deeply (the peregrination of the empty frame—A.N.). They cried secretly because they were afraid of the communists. Only they were capable of imprisoning the Virgin Mary (female, born: 1925).
- When Mary was imprisoned Poles were sad and suffered rather funereal.
- Sorrow reigned (female, born: 1930);
- In 1966 just the frame visited the parish [...] the Secret Police had at that time arrested the Virgin Mary (female, born: 1938);
- Only the frame moved around as if the image had not in fact been removed. There was a ban. The frame was a sign of protest by Poles that they did not agree with this ban (female, born: 1956).

To God and Motherland, underground poster from 1984; Stanisław Kuc’s private archive.

DURING THE PEREGRINATION OF THE IMAGE WITHOUT AN IMAGE, PEOPLE PRAYED TO AN EMPTY FRAME, HUNG VOTIVE OFFERINGS ON IT, DECORATED IT WITH FLOWERS AND MAINTAINED THE USUAL CEREMONY. THE INTERVIEWEES POINT TO THE CONTRIVANCE AS TO THE PRESENT ACTUAL PRESENCE OF THE IMAGE-Figure:

- When I was a child the image of Our Lady of Czestochowa was blocked. But it traveled on with the frame itself. The communists lost out immensely on this detention, because the empty frame caused greater agitation and the significance of this empty frame was all the greater (male, born: 1957);
- Only the frame moved around as if the image had not in fact been removed. Everyone saw it and all were sorrowful... (male, born: 1957);
- The picture always overcomes aliens. It spiritually triumphed when in 1966 the empty frame with a lit candle wandered (male, born: 1948).

[all bold—A.N.]

Underground Easter card from the 1980s, Stanisław Kuc’s private archive.

[Underground poster from 1984 with the face of Our Lady of Czestochowa with wounds shaped like the number 13, Jagiellonian Library, Fundacja Centrum.]
What Republican America Can Teach Republic Poland
Continued from page 5

project, it was given the name of the IV Republic, as opposed to the existing Third. The program, concerning deep structural reforms of the country’s institutions and restoration of the national pride, calls for a new social contract, reminding us of the Contract with America. The Law and Justice presented itself as a force defending traditional Polish values, labeled as “the Poland of solidarity” and opposed to the “Poland of liberal-aim” projected by the Civic Platform. Through repeated use of the word “liberal” in a negative context, the leaders of the Law and Justice managed to make an insult out of the very term “liberal.”

Bringing back values was presented as a task requiring a vast coalition, consisting of the circles not present in mainstream politics thus far. For the first time a major political party coalesced with the radical Christian right, represented by a charismatic yet controversial Father Tadeusz Rydzyk, a Redemptorist Catholic monk who created a media empire consisting of a nationwide radio station, Radio St. Mary, a daily newspaper Our Daily, and ultimately, a TV station, P. Persig. Disregarded as a representative of marginal groups of elderly, devout people, he emerged as the most dynamic player on the political scene, disposing of a priceless fraction of disciplined voters who would decide the outcome of election. Father Rydzyk’s followers are well-known throughout the entire country, where they maintain a network of local Bureaus of Radio St. Mary, as well as a grassroots organization of the Families of Radio St. Mary. However, strictly political initiatives surrounding Father Rydzyk, like the League of the Polish Families, had not met his expectations in previous elections, as they were unable to advance among the general voting public and had no prospects for participating in the government. The Law and Justice, created autonomously and aiming at modernization as well as at conservatives, was on its way to power-sharing, and therefore it was a much more desirable partner to Father Rydzyk’s ambitions. The attraction was reciprocated, as the media controlled by Rydzyk were much less critical of Kaczyński brothers’ party than mainstream media, considered a liberal stronghold and accused of bias against PIS.

The dislike for media did not prevent the Law and Justice from skillfully using them to promote its ideas. The campaign set off early with a spectacular convention and a series of costly TV commercials, broadcasted long before the official start of the campaign stimulated by the electoral law. Some of these commercials bear a striking similarity with those used in Ronald Reagan’s campaign in 1984 (see pictures).

But it was only after Donald Tusk started his equally massive outdoor and TV campaign that the confrontational line of PiS became clear. In his first advertisement, Donald Tusk presented himself as a “man of honor,” showing pictures from his youth, when, as a persecuted member of Solidarity, he had to work in the shipyard, repairing cranes. Very quickly, the footage was contested by his former colleague and also by his former boss, who ran for the Senate for the Law and Justice, in a manner that reminded us of the way in which John Kerry’s war record was attacked by the “concerned veterans.”

Incidentally, the Law and Justice started running Lech Kaczyński’s commercial, in which his past as a member of Solidarity was underlined. Lech Kaczyński’s image proved to be a decisive asset. Serving as mayor of Warsaw, and former Prosecutor General, he adopted an attitude often referred to as “sheriff-like,” characterized by the tough declarations concerning the fight against crime and corruption, but also on questions of public morality. His position was confirmed by his refusal to authorize the Equality Parade, a Gay Pride-type manifestation, which took him to the Supreme Administrative Court, which overturned it. If the decision did not win him points in Warsaw, it certainly did in the country, where the majority of voters shared his viewpoint. In Warsaw, Kaczyński was given a chance to recuperate in Rudy Giuliani-style during the false bombing alert in the metro on July 12, 2005, when he decided to evacuate all stations.

The election of 2005 was unusual for Poland, because the presidential race coincided with the parliamentary one. It gave the winning party a rare opportunity to take hold of the whole government and form what in America is called an administration. The calendar favored a party with strong leadership and grand vision, since the double election instilled hope for a new beginning after the collapse of the once-dominating left. The Law and Justice, with its “IV Republic” battle cry, gave the impression of being more determined than the change.

The course on moral sanation continued after the double victory. The Law and Justice indeed rejected the logic of majority coalition and tried to pursue one-party politics, having assured a vote of confidence from minor parties. The President’s twin brother, who was a natural choice for the PM, stepped aside and promoted a second-row politician, Kazimierz Mazurkiewicz, to the post, signaling that the President acquired a new significance in the institutional order. If not — so far — in terms of constitutional law, surely in terms of political climate and partisan tactics Poland was drifting toward American solutions.

1 The image of Our Lady of Częstochowa is also known as image of Our Lady of Jasna Góra. The first name refers to the name of the mountain where the icon is located, while the second name of the mountain is Jasna Góra = The Bright Mountain where the image is located since the 1382/83. It is the most famous and the most worshipped Marian image in Poland connected with the symbol of the “Queen of Poland”

2 On 3rd May 1791, before the French Revolutionary Constitution.
Greetings from Ukraine in spring 2007 while I am on sab- batical in southeastern Ukraine by the Black Sea. I am teaching courses at Petro Mohyla University for Humanities on political speech, comparative ethnicity in the United States and Ukraine, and on political cinema from Hollywood. My ethnicity class was very interesting as the students in their papers and class discussions compared the multiethnic composition of their new independent state with that of the United States.

Mykolayiv is a bit like Rochester. It has a proud past as a major industrial center and the school where I teach is ranked the best of six schools in this old Black Sea port. The impressive shipbuilding industry began when the town was first established in 1789 by Prince Potiomkin as an imperial tsarist sea outpost. Mykolayiv shared its mission with such other Black Sea ports as Kherson, Odessa and Sevastopol. During the Soviet times, the core of the city kept four major docks where Soviet battle ships and aircraft carriers were built or brought for repair and renovation. It also housed a polytechnic institute specializing in various shipbuilding crafts.

During the Soviet period, the city was off-limits to foreigners. The main shipyard employed more than 50,000 workers. Since independence, Mykolayiv has lost its prominence along with Ukraine, giving up to Russia most of its Black Sea Fleet stationed in Sevastopol. The city’s ethnic makeup has shifted from majority Russian to Ukrainian, and the docks stand idle while the number of employees dwindle down to less than 3,000. I am now researching the history of the city and its changing ethnic composition and national identities in the public libraries and through interviews. I hope to finish my research when I return here in the fall, thanks to my Fulbright grant that has been renewed for Mykolayiv. This research will provide valuable examples for my courses on geopolitical concerns and challenges in the border of the European Union.

Ewa Hauser at the May 9 Victory Parade on Sovietskaya Street in Mikolayiv.