



SOLIDARITY

25 YEARS LATER

By David Ost

It was what everyone is saying it was. One of the great social movements of the 20th century. Probably the most democratic of the mass movements of the century. Incredibly wide in its scope, innovative in its organizational practices, with an openness of communication stunning for a movement of such size. Here was a movement founded on an innovative theory equating democracy with an active civil society, which understood that meaningful social change takes place every day in the lives of each person, and not just when new leaders take power.

And had there ever been a movement with such broad participation? The terms today seem archaic, for social categories were simpler then, but the alliance of workers and intellectuals within a single organization was real, powerful, and unprecedented. Each group saw that the other took genuine risks and invested real effort in the common project, and it was this that made it impossible for the *wladza* to divide them. The Party had succeeded in uniting society—against itself—and the result was a new world being created every day.

An intoxicating ethos of participation lies at the root of this movement. I first experienced it during a visit in March 1981, my third time to the country. Whether at the celebrations in Warsaw University of the 13th anniversary of the 1968 events, or in Bydgoszcz during the farmers' protest that almost led to a nationwide general strike, everyone wanted to have their voice heard. Some had their doubts. A farmer apologized to me that their meeting that day had lasted nine hours, worried that this was not the "real" democracy of which I apparently was an expert, and then explained: "But everyone needed finally to speak!" All I could say is that this was in the

great tradition of democracy that had been absent for a long time.

A powerful social movement bringing together virtually the entire population on a program of democratic rights against an unpopular dictatorial state: it was this that excited the world's imagination and, perhaps paradoxically, caused the global left to support it far more than the right, which valued stability and feared mass movements. Poles were teaching the world a great deal about democracy, and it seemed likely they would go on doing so for a long time to come.

And yet something happened along the way, and by 1989 things were quite different. The world watched with wonder as Solidarity and government elites peacefully dismantled the system, first with the Round Table accords and then through a newly elected parliament. But it was already evident: working people seemed to be absent through all this. They had appeared briefly in 1988, making the strikes that forced the government to the negotiating table. And then Solidarity, its leadership dominated by intellectuals far more than in 1981, asked them to recede. Workers were asked to leave politics, management, and even the workplace to others, and to accept the sacrifices that their leaders determined necessary. The Solidarity leadership had decided that a narrow meaning of citizenship was better suited to the tasks at hand than the expansive one they had articulated in 1980. So they asked people to go to the polls, but not to do much more than that. Workers did not know it yet, but the organization they had built now feared them, more than it feared the remnants of the old regime. The union's official journal, *Solidarity Weekly*, instructed workers to respect their managers and to "actively participate in (or at least silently accept) a policy of reductions, belt-tighten-

ing, and heightened on-the-job discipline." Solidarity even cautioned workers against building up trade unions. As Solidarity founder Lech Walesa put it, "We will not catch up to Europe if we build a strong trade union."

The result was a 1989 without celebration. No wonder the world mistakenly came to believe that communism came to an end only with the fall of the Berlin Wall. The people of 1980 were missing nine years later.

This was quite an about-face! In 1980, intellectuals veritably gushed about workers, proclaiming for all to hear what they were learning *from* them. In the first place, of course, they learned that independent trade unions were possible, which the "experts" in Gdansk, as well as Adam Michnik and Jacek Kuron who were arrested before they got there, believed was *impossible*. Intellectuals were impressed by the determination of workers in waging a strike, winning a strike, maintaining cohesion despite the government's efforts to split society apart. Some even felt embarrassed in comparison. Compare Wajda's 1977 *Man of Marble* to the 1981 *Man of Iron* and we get the picture: the intellectual filmmaker hero of the first film abandons her profession to become the wife of the proletarian icon of the second.

In 1980, then, labor was golden. Yet 10 years later, workers and trade unions had become so associated with a dangerous conservatism that any time any group protested or went on strike, they were condemned in the press as if they were obstructing the goals of progress and democracy—almost as if, to use the language of a different era, they were "objectively" serving the interests of "reaction." The history of this reinterpretation of labor over the course of the 1980s is too complex to go into here. The rethinking, in fact, began soon after martial law, when intellectuals on the right started claiming that Solidarity's adherents were "too socialistic," and some on the left argued that workers were not really as democratically-minded as had been thought. By 1990, in any case, unions had clearly become less stylish, less fashionable, associated not with heroic struggle but with danger. This is a key reason why, when it finally became possible to join unions again, in 1989, professionals generally declined. (Or if they did join, they joined as leaders—and within a year

Continued on page 2

Ceremony of awarding Professor Hauser with the Cavalier Cross of Merit. From right to left: Agnieszka Miszewska, Polish Consul General, Krysia Hauser-Michael, Ewa Hauser, Director of the Skalny Center, Marta Hauser-Michael, Wojtek Smole.

Message from the Director



By Ewa Hauser

This academic year started and ended with significant events underlying the close cooperation between the current Polish diplomatic corps in the United States and the Skalny Center. In July 2005, just before she left her post, Agnieszka Miszewska, the Polish Consul General from New York, visited Rochester to award me, as the director of Skalny Center, a very high recognition. The only others who have received the same medal in Rochester are the trustees of the Skalny Foundation: Joseph, Anna, Frederic, and the late Stasia Skalny.

Continued on page 3



SOLIDARITY: 25 YEARS LATER



By David Ost

Continued from page 1

had catapulted into positions as company managers, government officials, or private entrepreneurs.) The new symbolic hero was the young entrepreneur, not the descendants of Wajda's Birkut.

The point is not that intellectuals "betrayed" workers. These were of course different times than in 1980. Yes, intellectuals had abandoned solidarity with a small 's': those with higher education tried to get ahead on their own, now that they finally could. But was there anything wrong with that? Hadn't the abolition of the *nomenklatura* system been one of Solidarity's major demands? No doubt intellectuals genuinely believed that what they were doing was crucial to a successful democracy, in which everyone would eventually be able to prosper. Moreover, the labor-intellectual alliance could not have lasted forever. Even the very categories are part of the old system, no longer appropriate to the diverse occupations of a modern capitalist economy.

And yet there was a big problem with what they were doing. It was in the *condescending* way it broke with labor that Solidarity's post-1989 intellectual leadership ended up causing irrevocable damage, squandering the great legacy of August. For this leadership seemed to espouse three central convictions: that workers were now an obstruction to progress, that their own program of marketization was the only way forward, and that anyone who disagreed was a "populist." The problem, in other words, was not so much that intellectuals broke with labor, but that they sought to prevent labor breaking from them. Workers were denied the right to have *legitimate* dissenting views. Although they were experiencing deep suffering—their workplaces disappearing, wages plummeting, unemployment threatening—they were supposed to accept existing policies as the only ones possible.

Indeed, this was a sentiment expressed by market reformers throughout the region. I vividly remember a conference held at Rutgers University in 1992, titled "Intellectuals and Social Change in Central and Eastern Europe," at which intellectuals from all over the region lamented how the people had disappointed them. Why are they voting against us? asked the august scholars and politicians. Don't they understand that the reforms that are hurting them today are in their true long-term interest? Charges of "irrationality" and "populism" abounded. It was all disturbingly reminiscent of another chapter in modern history. I was reminded of Bertolt Brecht's sardonic remarks to the leaders of the GDR after the workers uprising of 1953: "Would it not be easier," he asks in his poem "The Solution," simply "To dissolve the people/ And elect another?"

Their old labor allies sensed this growing condescension toward them, and resented it. I traveled to many small industrial towns myself over the course of the 1990s, such as Mielec, Stalowa Wola, Starachowice, Rzeszow, Bytom. All the local union officials I met genuinely *wanted* to maintain good connections with their erstwhile intellectual allies. They accepted most of the provisions of the Balcerowicz Plan, and carried out the pro-reform instructions of the *Solidarity Weekly* of 1989. Occasionally, however, they disagreed, and put forth different ideas about how reform should be carried out. These were legitimate disagreements. They found the charge of being "irrational populists" both puzzling and insulting.

So the problem was not just that upwardly-

mobile intellectuals broke with the old Solidarity. It was that they expected the "losers" of the transformation to do so as well.

Perhaps the surprising thing is how many did. That's why there were so few protests. On some issues, of course, unionists did reject official government policies. When they did, however, they often tended to be right. Look at privatization policy. The Solidarity government in 1990 wanted authority to privatize everything quickly, and thus tried to get rid of firm-based workers councils, which, according to laws in place at the time—laws passed during the first Solidarity period—had to approve all transfers of assets. When unionists resisted, reformers complained about Solidarity's "irrational" obstruction. As it turned out, however, it was precisely because privatization could *not* be pushed through so quickly that Poland avoided the disasters that befell its neighbors. Privatization in Poland took more time to carry out, but ended up less corrupt than in the Czech Republic, with less foreign ownership than in Hungary, and without the total managerial takeover as happened in Russia.

Workers, in other words, were not so irrational after all. Nevertheless, the attacks took their toll. Over time, workers began to *feel* betrayed. Most had done what their intellectual leaders had urged them to do: recede to the background, accept the "necessary" hardships. But whenever they offered what they saw as corrective suggestions, they were berated, insulted, told they were stuck in the past and that "there is no alternative." With their suggestions and complaints never taken seriously, many now got angry. Angry at the way their former allies had cut them off, angry at bearing the brunt of all the cutbacks, and then angry at being charged with "populism" when they had the temerity to raise questions.

Anger itself was not the problem. Societies split by class inequalities always contain a great deal of anger. In the west, trade unions arose precisely in order to capture that anger, and channel it toward inclusive reforms that stabilized the system. In Poland after 1989, however, even Solidarity leaders were wary of trade unions. The anger was a problem precisely because it was *available*—to savvy politicians who might want to capture it for their own illiberal ends. Like Stanislaw Tyminski, the shady émigré businessman, first showed in the 1990 presidential elections, when he surprisingly came in second-place.

The liberals' problem was trying to suppress the anger, or ignore it. For just like liberals everywhere, they were afraid of emotions. They wanted decisions to be taken "rationally," meaning by people like themselves, and wished people would simply accept the "rigors of the market" and wait for things to get better in the future.

Conservatives were smarter than that. Like conservatives everywhere, they understood that reason is not enough, that emotional attachment is not a by-product of political success but a condition of it. If market reform was going to create so many economic losers, all of whom had democratic rights, they wanted to be the ones discontented people would turn to. They were successful at it, too. While working class support for liberals withered away, for conservatives it blossomed.

Thus it happened that many people who were angry over being economically excluded ended up being politically mobilized around right-wing identity politics instead. And thus Solidarity, in the mid-1990s, moved even further away from what it had once been. Instead of seeking the inclusion of all, Solidarity, under Marian Krzaklewski, offered perpetual anti-communism and religious extremism as substitute satisfactions for workers' economic woes.

Of course, after winning elections on a platform claiming abortion, atheism, and communism as the country's main evils, his party delivered only more painful economic reforms, which stoked economic anger even more. No wonder more extreme right-wing parties like *Self-Defense* and *League of Polish Families* gained strength afterwards, setting the stage for the recent triumph of the Kaczyński brothers and their *Law and Justice* party, now governing Poland in an increasingly illiberal, anti-democratic way (such as by banning demonstrations of organizations they don't like). This is the same dynamic that has enabled the radical right to take over the Republican Party in the USA: winning the support of downwardly mobile white workers by claiming to represent "values," and delivering, in office, even more neoliberalism that leaves people more disillusioned than before, and clinging even more to substitute satisfactions that solve nothing.

By not trying to win over workers on economic grounds, Polish liberals ended up pushing workers precisely toward the kind of populism it always feared. So insistent were liberal Solidarity leaders that shock therapy was mandated by "freedom," "democracy," "reason" and other good things that the only way many unionists could break free of liberal economics was to break free of liberal politics, too. Liberals followed the wrong western example: instead of seeking to win workers over, which is how liberal and moderate social democratic parties consolidated democracy in the west, they broke the alliance with labor and drove labor voters to the right.

Solidarity sent Krzaklewski into retirement in 2001 and has tried to be a meaningful trade union again, though not yet with great success. As far as the old vision of Solidarity is concerned, it is already too late. That has been defeated long ago. Defeated, primarily, by upwardly mobile intellectuals who applauded, too enthusiastically, as people's old ways of life went extinct, as factory towns fell apart, leaving human tragedy in its wake. And anytime workers protested, they were either warned (by liberals) against being populists, or urged (by conservatives) to be angry at atheists and communists instead.

When I say Solidarity was defeated, I mean the democratic vision and the democratic practices that it enacted, every single day, in 1980-81. This is not a matter of idealizing those days—filled as they were with tension, shortages, and the everpresent threat of repression. But there were some incredibly valuable experiments going in those days—such as an extraordinarily open media, a commitment to solving conflicts by consensus, a participatory ethos that made even "the least of my brethren" feel he or she was taken seriously. Not all of these, of course, can be applied today. Unfortunately, however, hardly anyone even studies this period anymore, so we still don't know what might yet be salvaged. Indeed, one of the most startling things, to an outsider, is the almost complete lack of attention devoted in Poland to what actually happened in 1980-81. Much has been written about what the Party and the Soviets were thinking, and recently we've seen a great deal of interest in who the secret police were recruiting. But as to how these 16 months were lived and experienced, how Solidarity's democracy looked concretely in, say, Warsaw or Poznan, or Mielec or Bytom—of this there is barely a word.

Let's hope that changes soon—before another 25 years has elapsed. August 1980 set in motion a movement that inspired Poles and inspired the world. We ought to try to recapture it today. For it might turn out that the intellectuals in 1980 were right all along: we all do have a lot to learn.

Ost is professor in the Department of Political Science at Hobart and William Smith Colleges. He was the guest speaker at the Skalny Center's March 29 luncheon seminar in Wilson Commons on the River Campus.



Message from the Director



By Ewa Hauser

Continued from page 1

For me personally, it was a delightful surprise. I was humbled when receiving the Cavalier Cross of Merit with a document signed by the President of Poland, Aleksander Kwasniewski. Having left Poland in the middle of the communist period when the cooperation with Polish diplomats would not have been welcomed by most of my friends as “collaboration” (in Polish “kolaboracja,” which indicates a treacherous alliance with the enemy), it was also a happy sign of the final victory of democracy and normalization in the relationship between Polish citizens and their government.

At the end of the academic year, the new Consul General from New York, Krzysztof Kasprzyk, visited with University of Rochester President Joel Seligman. Consul Kasprzyk talked about the many important links between his hometown, Kraków, and Rochester. An alumnus of Jagiellonian University (MS in physics, 1971), he invited the UR president to visit his hometown and his alma mater. Now we are hoping to strengthen the alliance and exchange visits by the leaders of the universities, which will follow already established scholarly collaborations and student and faculty exchanges. We hope that after this anticipated visit, a new stage of even closer cooperation between our universities will follow.

Our academic collaborations significantly expanded this past year to include a Jagiellonian doctoral student, Magda Modrzejewska, hosted by the Center and the Department of Political Science. Magda first met our UR delegation and spoke with the chairman of the political science department, Gerald Gamm, when we visited Kraków in March 2005. She works on American political theory and James Johnson, a professor on the Rochester faculty, kindly agreed to meet with her regularly and to talk about her research and writing progress.

Magda’s visit was supported by a Japanese grant given to the best Jagiellonian graduate students. Another doctoral student, Luiza Nader from Warsaw University’s Art History Department, also visited to study Polish conceptual artists—many of whom emigrated to New York City. Luiza’s arrival was made possible by a Fulbright fellowship and an invitation

by art history professor Rachel Haidu. Luiza’s musician husband, Mikolaj Palosz, and a baby son accompanied her. She presented an exceptional talk for a Skalny luncheon in October, and Mikolaj played his cello at a Skalny concert in December.

Radoslaw Rybkowski, the deputy director of the American Studies Center at the Jagiellonian, arrived as another guest in the fall. He taught a short course called “Poland in the New Europe.” It was quite popular and several of his students will meet him again this summer during our study on location in Kraków. Last but not least, we hosted four students from Warsaw University’s American Studies Center whose visit to our College was supported by the Fulbright Alumni Initiative Award I received to advance the UR exchange with Warsaw (see an essay by one of the students who researched Mormonism).



Professor Rybkowski and Ewa Hauser at the UR Rush-Rhees Library

During the spring semester, Michal Galas, visiting professor of Judaic Studies from the Jagiellonian University, taught a course on “Jewish Civilization in Poland” and gave a series of talks at UR and in the community. In March, Gerald Gamm of political science returned to Poland for three weeks, teaching a short course on American political parties at the Jagiellonian American Studies Center. This was a significant development and marked the first teaching visit of a UR faculty member to Jagiellonian University. The first, but not the last!

In May, the Skalny Center showcased Adam Makowicz at the piano in Kilbourn Hall. We all enjoyed his wonderful jazz music during the recital and a reception afterwards (see Krzysztof Polakowski’s article in this issue). We are very grateful to Andrew Green, the director of the Eastman School of Music Concert Operations who helped us enormously to make this event a success. Also in May, we hosted the 13th Annual Polish Youth Concert at the Lower Strong Auditorium, co-sponsored by the Department of Music and the Polish Heritage Society of Rochester (see Bozena Sobolewska’s article).

One of the best attended Skalny lectures this year was given by David Ost, the preeminent social scientist whose research and writings have been devoted entirely to the study of Polish politics. David’s talk, based on his latest book titled (ironically) *The Defeat of Solidarity* (Cornell University Press, 2005), was wittily critiqued by Randall Stone, a UR political science professor specializing in international relations. Randy’s excellent comments were welcomed by Ost and the audience. In this issue, there is a synopsis of Ost’s argument.

Now I am looking forward to directing the first UR study abroad session in Kraków with 10 excellent students whose interests in studying Polish cover a spectrum of issues from linguistic fascination with one of the most complicated of Indo-European languages (see Joyce Fleck’s essay) to historical and contemporary changes (Poland as an ally of the U.S.—see the essay by Chase Hannon) and interest in the students’ ancestral and cultural roots. Professors Rybkowski and Galas will help me teach a course on the historical multiculturalism of Poland. This study on location was made possible thanks to a generous gift from Joseph Skalny to the Center to commemorate his wife, Irena. The students and the Skalny Center are most grateful for this special gift.

Many of you know Dean of the College William S. Green, whose vision and enthusiasm created the Skalny Center for Polish and Central European Studies over a decade ago. I am very sorry to inform you that he is leaving the University of Rochester as of July 1, 2006. We congratulate him on his new position as senior vice provost and dean of undergraduate education at the University of Miami.

Rochester Impressions from Warsaw University Student-Scholar



By Anna Kucharska

Thanks to the cooperation between Warsaw University and the University of Rochester, I had the opportunity this year to take part in a special student exchange program in the United States. It gave me the chance not only to experience student life on campus in Rochester, but also to gather materials for my master’s thesis.

The six-week program was financed by four institutions: the U.S. Embassy in Warsaw, the Fulbright Foundation, and these two universities. Everything was well organized, beginning with my

courses, through housing and ending with travel opportunities.

I could choose from two to four courses. Because I’m writing my master’s thesis on “The Image of Mormons in the USA,” I chose courses connected with religious issues. I selected “The History of Islam” and “Speaking Stones” led by Professor Emil Homerin and “Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism” taught by Professor Anthea Butler. The courses were very interesting, of high quality, and the lecturers were well prepared and helpful. Not only did the courses give me the opportunity to deepen my knowledge of religious life in the United States, but also let me get to know the area in and around Rochester. In order to get a grade at the end of the courses, I wrote informative essays that con-

tributed to the development of my acquaintance with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

It had been almost impossible in Poland to collect materials for my thesis because I could find only two books connected with Mormonism. Moreover, because of the fact that Rochester is located near Palmyra, N.Y.—the birthplace of Mormonism—I was able to visit places directly associated with the origins of that denomination.

My stay in Rochester was the opportunity of lifetime. Without this scholarship opportunity, I would not have been able to visit the U.S. Thanks to it, I managed to travel a bit within the borders of the country as well. The most important result for me, however, is that it convinced me of the possibility of doing my doctoral studies in the United States.

Anna was one of five visiting students in fall 2005 from the American Studies Center at Warsaw University.



The Seven Wonders of Rochester



By Radoslaw Rybkowski

When I was just about to come to Rochester, I checked the Web sites for the University, the Skalny Center for Polish and Central European Studies, and the City of Rochester as well. And I came to the conclusion that I would not find any wonder when I arrived. I felt Rochester was a typical post-industrial American city, with typical problems of crime and not-so-sustainable development. The University of Rochester seemed to be a very good university, but not the ultimate top of American universities. It would be a good place to go, to conduct research, but rather not the place of any wonder.

I was very wrong. Here I found my own personal seven wonders that make my Rochester a wonderful dream. For others, these are good reasons to come to Rochester.

1. **The Lake.** I heard about Lake Ontario a lot. Some of my friends described it as a big lake, even a very big one, with some very nice beaches. I came far too late to enjoy swimming and sun-bathing, but just walking on the shore was a relaxing experience. At the end of my stay in Rochester, when the temperature dropped below freezing, I went to Ontario Beach again and walked the pier. As you can see from this picture—the lake just looked awesome. Ice-covered fences and ice on the pier touched by the light of the sunset created an unforgettable atmosphere.

2. **Sibley Library.** I am not a specialist in music, although I love American musicals and I love to listen to good music. At the Sibley Music Library of the Eastman School of Music, I had the opportunity to listen to shelves full of music: some very fashionable, old and classical (because of the composers and performers); some rather new, experimental and popular. Sitting in the library with ears covered by headphones brought me to the regions of music I have never before explored. Coming to Rochester, I was not thinking about music at all. But being told about the unique chance of using this exceptional collection, I could not resist the temptation. And now I could only wish I had had more time to spend there.

3. **Eastman Theatre.** I did my Ph.D. in the history of American theater, and from time to time I teach courses on the history of American theater and film. Because of that, theater buildings are always points of interest for me. But this particular building, now used mainly for musical concerts, is especially interesting because it can easily evoke the atmosphere of the “glory days” of Rochester. Come here even if you are not interested in music. Keep your eyes open and imagine the booming economy of Rochester, Rochesterian tycoons coming to see new film releases, beautifully dressed ladies with big hats. Wasn't it wonderful?

4. **University of Rochester.** During my previous visits to the United States, I always stayed in New York City, at the very urban campuses of Columbia and New York University. I visited Harvard, Princeton, and Carnegie Mellon—but only as a tourist. So for the first time in my life, I was able to experience the atmosphere of a rather secluded campus. The Eastman Quadrangle is my favorite place: I could see it green, then with colorful leaves and covered with snow at last. The place is wonderful, especially in the late afternoon when the Rush Rhees Library is gently touched by the reddish light of afternoon sun, and the Interfaith Chapel's stained glass can be seen even from the outside. Such a breathtaking view helped me understand why Americans like university campuses so much.

5. **Polish and Central European Club.** This was my most unexpected wonder. Of course, knowing the work of the Skalny Center for Polish and Central European Studies, and having met Professor Ewa Hauser long before my arrival in Rochester, I was sure that Poland would not be *terra incognita* for students of the University. But it was an amazing experience to meet students, from freshmen to Take Five scholars, interested in Poland, devoting their own time and energy during extracurricular activities of this student club. I enjoyed Polish food Wednesday in Wilson Commons and I enjoyed the Polish (and Central European) Wigilia very much. I proudly wear the club's T-shirt when I am back in Poland.

6. **University of Rochester.** This is not a mistake. The University of Rochester is listed once again—this time for its **students**. Those who attended my course were just wonderful. I liked every minute I spent with them during my classes, during my office hours and during our informal encounters at the bus stop, at the library or in Wilson Commons. All the e-mails we exchanged were important feedback for me. I noticed their passion and their interest, and I can only hope that my course helped them to better understand the very recent history of Poland.

7. And last but not least, the seventh wonder: **The People.** The impact of this wonder will surely be long-lasting. (Of course, students are people, too, but they deserved, I think, a separate paragraph.)

Many times, absolutely unexpectedly, I met people who were interested in what I was teaching, what I was investigating, and what were my future academic and not-so-academic plans. All of them left some mark on my life, helping me to find new goals and the energy for reaching them. Generous in their support, clever in their advice, heart-touching in their personal relations—they pushed me to my future life “full of delicious possibilities” (as it is said in my favorite musical, *Ragtime*). During my stay, I met so many people that I could not count them all. Although I am now thousands of miles away from Rochester, I am pretty sure that I could always count on the people I met here, on my friends.

So these are the seven wonders I found in Rochester. Because of all of them, I will never forget the time I spent here.

Rybkowski is associate professor and vice director of the Institute of American Studies and Polish Diaspora, Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland, and the Skalny Visiting Professor in Fall 2005.



) Rybkowski's vision of Rochester winter, Lake Ontario



Adam Makowicz - Kilbourn Hall recital poster

Poetry in Ivory



By Krzysztof Polakowski

Maestro Adam Makowicz for the second time in Rochester, N.Y.! This long awaited musical event, initiated and organized by the Skalny Center for Polish and Central European Studies at the University of Rochester, took place in Kilbourn Hall on May 12.

Many of his admirers and enthusiasts, still remember his first recital at St. John Fishers College some 14 years ago. For those who attended this first Rochester recital, Makowicz remained loyal to his musical preferences (improvisations on Chopin's themes, best standards of Gershwin, Porter, Ellington); what changed, however, is a number of his own new compositions collected recently on two CDs: “Songs for Manhattan” and “From my Fields.” He played some of them showing his great musical personality as a composer.

Makowicz admits his dedication to the “greatest jazz pianist of all times,” Art Tatum. Tatum's recordings listened to by Makowicz in the late 1950s influenced greatly his switch to jazz as already a mature, well-educated classical pianist. Technical virtuosity developed during his musical studies in Poland contributed significantly to his future performances. Despite his admiration to Tatum, Makowicz does not attempt to imitate his improvisations and their unsurpassed sense of harmony. Unlike Tatum's, Makowicz's creations appear to be more elaborated and musically minded. He plays more creatively using his technical skills in a more restrained manner, with great taste and moderation. It was particularly evident in his improvisations on Chopin's themes.

Adam Makowicz lives in “upper Manhattan,” but visits his native Poland every year, giving both solo recitals as well as playing with the nation's finest symphony orchestras. His Rochester performance was made possible thanks to the generosity of the Louis Skalny Foundation.

Dr. Polakowski teaches Polish language at the Skalny Center



Rabbi Marcus Jastrow

Symbol of Polish-Jewish Relations in the 19th



By Michal Galas

The one thousand years of Jewish history in Poland and Polish-Jewish relations are full of ups and downs, which have caused many common stereotypes, prejudices and misunderstandings. And many contemporary studies are concentrating on these negative aspects of Polish-Jewish relations. That is why I decided in my studies to turn my attention to Rabbi Marcus Jastrow, who can serve as a symbol and model of Polish-Jewish relations and cooperation, and who similarly as Kosciuszko and Pulaski links Poland and the United States.

Unfortunately, Jastrow is forgotten in contemporary historiography. The 100th anniversary of his death in 2003 found almost no response in Poland and the United States. With such motivation, I have started my adventure with Rabbi Marcus Jastrow, "the man of a full stature" to whom I dedicated the last years of my scholarly activities.

Rabbi Marcus M. Jastrow (1829-1903) was born in Rogozno and received his education in Poznan and Berlin. In 1858, with the support and recommendation of Heinrich Graetz, the distinguished historian, Jastrow was appointed a preacher of the so-called "German-Jewish Synagogue" in Warsaw—one of the two progressive synagogues in Warsaw at that time.

Marcus Jastrow as a religious leader and reformer, and continued that direction of reform in his synagogue. In his opinion, his synagogue should be differentiated from other synagogues and places of worship in Warsaw by its cleanliness and order during services. Such undertaking should attract Jews to attend the services, particularly youth who "need religiosity but not confessionalism."

One of the most important parts of the reformed services in this synagogue were sermons, which Marcus Jastrow started to preach on holidays and each second Saturday. The introduction of Polish as a language of sermons was an important event in the history of this congregation. This innovation became very important because the congregation was growing up, and most of the new members did not know German. And it was accepted with more satisfaction as Marcus Jastrow was able to preach in Polish and introduced this custom to the synagogue.

When Jastrow became the preacher in Warsaw, he introduced also some small but meaningful changes; for example, he proposed to pray for the ruler not in Hebrew but in German and later Polish. And this direction of replacing Hebrew with German or Polish could be observed in support that Jastrow gave in the introduction to the prayer book of "Polish women of Mosaic persuasion" (1861). This was a part of his program that we could sum up in his sentence, "the obligation of Jews in Poland is to become Poles of Mosaic persuasion."

Marcus Jastrow receiving good education in Germany adopted also ideas of Enlightenment and Haskala and after arriving to Warsaw he wanted to introduce them among Jews. Jastrow developed numerous activities of self-education and cultural education among Jewish youth in a spirit of patriotism and Polish-Jewish integration. According to his project, a private rabbinical school was founded in Warsaw where Jewish youth from Warsaw could learn Judaic subjects. Jastrow was also a spiritual leader of a Jewish "salon" in Warsaw that attracted youth intelligentsia. Jastrow also supported publishing the Polish language Jewish journal *Jutrzenka*. He also called for the acceptance of Polish culture and,

in a sense, he supported the idea of integration and Polish-Jewish brotherhood.

One can easily find those ideas in his sermons where he wrote: "After my arrival to Warsaw, I have found division where we should find unity, I have found hatred instead of love, only that love could save the nation from the abyss of descent, I found prejudice where only right judgment could tame evil." After such comments, one should not be surprised by the fact that Jastrow aimed his speeches not only toward Jewish communities. He wanted also to turn the attention of Poles toward Jewish issues and Judaism.

As his pupil and friend from Philadelphia, David Amram, wrote: "The period of his ministry in Warsaw was the most stirring and picturesque of his career," particularly because of his involvement in Polish patriotic actions against the Russian occupation. In one of the demonstrations against Russians authorities in Warsaw, five people were killed. Their funeral became a patriotic manifestation of Polish and Jewish inhabitants of Warsaw. In the funeral on Saturday, March 2, 1861, Rabbis Marcus Jastrow; Dov Ber Meisels, chief rabbi of Warsaw; and Izaak Kramstueck, the preacher of the so-called Polish progressive synagogue, took part in the funeral procession, led by a bishop and Catholic as well as Protestant clergy. (See the painting of Aleksander Lesser, where Rabbi Marcus Jastrow is in the foreground.)

During the following months, Jastrow delivered many patriotic sermons, and addresses in the Polish language, emphasizing a need for Polish-Jewish brotherhood. In October 1861, he closed his synagogue in solidarity with the closing of all churches and synagogues in Warsaw. This event caused the arrest of three Warsaw rabbis (Jastrow, Kramstueck and Meisels) and put them into the Citadel. After three months, Jastrow was deported to Prussia, because he was a Prussian citizen, instead of being sent to Siberia.

After his banishment from Warsaw and the Polish Kingdom in 1862, Marcus Jastrow received the invitation for the position of rabbi of the city of Mannheim. Not seeing any chances for his return to Warsaw, he accepted the offered position. But when the political situation had changed, Jews in Warsaw managed to get approval for his return from the authorities. Jastrow had a dilemma about whether he should stay in Mannheim or return to Warsaw. The motives behind his final decision to return to Warsaw were presented by Jastrow in his Open Letter addressed to the Council of the Congregation in Mannheim.

The text of the letter shows his great attachment to his community in Warsaw. He writes: "After hearing the verdict [of the court of conciliation], my inner spiritual light became stronger, that led me to the conviction that I was in the process of a dangerous self-deception believing that I can cut so many threads that bound me with my brothers in faith in the country that through its sufferings became more dear to me. I understood that I would do my family, for whose good I wanted myself with a bleeding heart to detached from my beloved community, the biggest harm by that sacrifice because I sacrificed myself I understood and I understand that my heart has to bleed, my strength has to be weakened; only after the seemingly done separation I realized where is the homeland of my spiritual strength and where is the land of its roots."

After his return to Warsaw, Jastrow spent several months there. He took part in preparations for the January Uprising in 1863, against the Russians. He was one of the people who knew about conspira-

torial activities, which we can learn from his letter to Rabbi Jacob Raisen: "I, being a perfect stranger in Poland at that time (...), had to get the advice of natives, and from week to week we had meetings to that effect, and for similar purposes, all this in secret, at the risk of liberty if not life, for a sojourn in some fortress or in Siberia is not conducive to health."

Jastrow's return to Warsaw and his patriotic activities got a very favorable reception in Polish circles. Articles about him appeared in the press and even poetry was written. After the defeat of the uprising, Jastrow was invited to take part in the works of various branches of Polish government, which were active on immigration, but he declined from taking part in strictly political activities. Jastrow described events that took place in Warsaw and the Kingdom of Poland in two books published anonymously, in 1859 and 1864, and in many articles published already in the United States.

When at the beginning of 1863 Jastrow left the Kingdom of Poland and went to Berlin, Prussian authorities did not agree to issue once again his passport. After insistent efforts of his friends in Warsaw and Berlin, Jastrow had to resign from his plans to return to Warsaw. Since that time, he was under constant invigilation by police. Not seeing any possibility of return to Warsaw, Jastrow happily accepted the invitation to work as a rabbi in a respectable community in Worms, where he served from 1864 to 1866. But when a proposal from Philadelphia arrived, he gladly accepted it.

From 1866, he served as the rabbi of the Hebrew German Congregation Rodeph Shalom in Philadelphia. Jastrow was also one of the leading personalities of American Judaism of that time, and was involved in the most important debates, conflicts and took part in the creation of Reform as well as Conservative Movements. Jastrow also had an important impact on the development of Jewish studies in the United States.

Galas is adjunct professor/lecturer at the Department of Jewish Studies at Jagiellonian University and was a Skalny visiting professor. He spoke at a Skalny luncheon seminar on March 20 about Rabbi Jastrow.

A Student's Past and Future Are Tied to Poland



By Chase Hannon

As an international studies major, I have the benefit of studying several different cultures from every part of the world. I am interested in studying Polish history and culture, however, for several reasons.

One such reason is the possibility of operating with the Polish military in my future. I am a Navy ROTC midshipman, due to be commissioned as an ensign in May 2007. I will then report to my ship to begin training as a surface warfare officer. Because Poland is one of America's newest and closest allies, I may find myself in a situation operating with Polish military forces. The United States is currently strengthening ties with post-communist Eastern European nations, and Poland is perhaps the lead nation in this process.

Polish forces maintain the third-highest troop levels in Iraq, right behind the United States and Great Britain. As of early 2006, the Polish forces have

Continued on page 6



Compiling the Brzustowicz Polish-American Collection

Exploring the life of Polonia in the United States



By Eric Glowacki

For all immigrants to the United States, the discovery and assertion of identity is at the heart of any immigrant experience. Diverse groups populated the United States and created vibrant ethnic communities, from Little Italys to Chinatowns. Maintaining cultural identity was a complex issue faced by all. However, the dynamics that affected Polish-American communities and Poles growing up in America are some of the most involved, complex, and difficult to understand.

The search for establishing identity and the place of Polonia in the United States is illuminated in the Brzustowicz Polish-American collection, compiled from the lifelong work of John Brzustowicz by his son, Richard, a longtime professor of neurology at the University of Rochester Medical School. His father, John, was a highly respected and prolific community activist in South Brooklyn who emigrated from Poland in 1925. He left behind this collection of correspondence, manuscripts, and other primary documents, which reveal the many aspects of Polonia from the 1920s through 1980.

The Brzustowicz name is synonymous with Polish-American intelligentsia, a family that has produced physicians, lawyers, and academics. John Brzustowicz's son, Richard, settled in Rochester, becoming an eminent neurologist at Strong Memorial Hospital. In 2005, nearly 20 years after his father's death, Dr. Brzustowicz died and his widow donated these documents and a large Polish and Polish-American library to Rush Rhees Library.

It was daunting when I first confronted the collection. It existed as a mass of several dozen stacked boxes, and there seemed to be only the most minimal order of their contents. A student intern had begun organizing during the prior semester. I decided to focus on three separate categories: One concerned documents detailing a Polish language school that John Brzustowicz founded in South Brooklyn in 1928. I planned to organize all documents concerning curricu-

lum, events, and history surrounding the school thematically and roughly chronologically as well. The next was a prodigious quantity of original printings and manuscripts of *Plomyk*, a youth magazine modeled after a Warsaw-based periodical. After searching records from other libraries, it appears that this collection of *Plomyk* is the most complete in existence, and certainly the only one featuring the original manuscripts. Finally, John Brzustowicz had collected, over the span of 30 years, newspaper clippings detailing matters concerning Poland and Polonia. Carefully archiving these clippings while preserving the original organization was the third aspect of my project.

The material categorized with "Polonia Schooling" spans the years 1928 to 1988. It details Jan Brzustowicz's efforts of organizing and networking in the South Brooklyn Polish community. In addition, there are numerous documents—pamphlets, letters, speeches—that provide insight into the life of Polonia throughout America and the rest of the world.

The word Polonia, from the Latin name of Poland, refers to Poles living abroad who are the Polish diaspora. The difficulty of the task of preserving Polish culture among emigrants is apparent from the documents in this collection. Jan Brzustowicz and his family engaged themselves in perhaps the most difficult aspect of maintaining Polonia—educating children of emigrants in "The Polish spirit (W Polskim Duchu)." His efforts in upholding Polish education for young people growing up in America covered a full spectrum of undertakings to fulfill this end.

Originally the organizer of a Polish weekend school in 1928, he created in 1932 a community organization that would work to maintain the Henryk Sienkiewicz School financially, and to oversee other efforts concerned with educating young people. In 1938, he helped the youth group associated with the school to begin putting out a periodical. He held high positions in the Polish National Council of New York and the National Polish Supplementary School Council and attended national conferences on Polish supplementary education. The proceedings of these various councils are included in documents of the collection. The majority of the material directly concerns the school. Looking at speeches, outlines for commencement ceremonies, curriculum outlines and other items, one gets a unique view into the perspectives of Polish immigrants in New York and what they considered integral to teaching their children. This collection also features the minutes of various nationwide councils concerning Polish education. One appreciates the vast scope that the *Szkoła i Polska* once had.

In the fall of 1938, the Youth Circle of the Henryk Sienkiewicz Polish School in South Brooklyn began to issue a quarterly magazine under the title *Plomyk*. The name was taken from a similar publication for Polish youth printed in Warsaw, enjoying popularity throughout the 1930s. *Plomyk* means "flame" and the title's meaning was more poignant for the Brooklyn-based publication. In the introduction to the winter 1941 issue, *Plomyk*'s publishers stated that their intention in maintaining the quarterly was to provide a voice for Polish-American youth, an outlet that would uphold Polish values and culture, and ultimately keep the Polonia "flame" alive.

One box of the organized collection contains issues of *Plomyk* dating from 1939 to 1948. The publication of the quarterly in the years 1944 to 1948 was sporadic, however. Along with the issues themselves, this collection contains the corresponding manuscripts, rough drafts, and source materials used in preparing many of the magazines. Issues up to 1941 are composed of mimeographed pages, which are in deteriorating condition. After 1941, all pages were printed, and the physical quality of the magazine itself im-

proved substantially. This collection is not only the most complete available, but is unique in its supporting manuscripts and rough drafts. While only a handful of other libraries have any printed *Plomyk* material at all, only this collection features original editorial work.

The *Plomyk* collection provides a lively and insightful look into contemporary Polish-American culture. Since the articles and anecdotes are directed at young Polish-Americans, the didactic intent of the writing provides the modern reader with a direct understanding of what contemporary Polish values were, and allows one to understand Polish culture from the bottom up. Each issue was composed half in English and half in Polish. The difference in subject matter between articles in the two languages is substantial, and reveals much about the audience who was reading them. Examining both the issues themselves and the supporting material provides a very complete view of Polish-American culture from a unique perspective.

John Brzustowicz made a tremendous effort to document carefully elements of Polish history that would become controversial. In particular, he collected a prodigious quantity of sources documenting Soviet politics in relation to Poland throughout the inter-war period and the post-World War II era. He also collected worldwide articles concerning the Warsaw Uprising, the fate of the Jewish minority in Poland, and the Polish Soviet War—historical events that even in Brzustowicz's time were being distorted in the popular mindset as well as among academics. Along with the articles are copies of editorial letters that he wrote to newspapers about these issues.

From the way the clippings are arranged, it is clear that Brzustowicz was collecting and presenting this information in order to further an agenda. His collection embodies a particular perspective of 20th-century Polish history that today is overlooked by laymen and historians alike. Many of the issues apparent in this collection are today the subject of debate, as many Western historians begin to revise their views on Poland and Central Europe.

For instance, Brzustowicz amassed articles and transcripts from all over the world concerning the Katyn Massacre. He carefully organized them chronologically from the 1940s to 1960s, documenting initial reactions and discussions on the West, Soviet response, lack of action during the Nuremberg Trials, and continuing debate throughout the Cold War. He also sought to document the activities of the early PRL, from the UB operation against former AK members to the forced relocation of Poland's Lemko population. This unique collection of contemporary sources makes it particularly interesting to those analyzing the perspectives of Polonia on events occurring in Poland.

In working with this collection, I've been privileged to be enlightened by these unique perspectives on Polonia. I cannot overestimate how the thoroughness of this collection completely envelopes one into another time period. Historical events that are important to Polonia come alive through actual letters, anecdotes, photographs. The experiences of Poles leaving for the West during the Second World War are vibrantly represented. I grew up surrounded by Polonia of the New York City area, and can associate with many similarities between my experiences and those of the young Poles writing in *Plomyk*; in fact I was surprised to discover far more parallels than differences. Overall, I feel my work with this collection not only furthered the interest of preserving and presenting an invaluable resource, but personally fostered a deeper understanding of my own identity as a Polish-American.

Eric is a University of Rochester freshman who plans to study medicine and history.

A Student's Past and Future Are Tied to Poland

Continued from page 5

been placed in command of a Multinational Force in Iraq, consisting of 112 nations. Poland is also planning on increasing its military commitment to operations in Afghanistan as part of an expanded NATO contribution next year.

Knowledge of the Polish language and culture would prepare me for the possibility of serving alongside Polish forces in coalition operations in several locations. It would also give me a distinct advantage in my desire to become an intelligence officer and work with allied foreign governments.

On a more personal level, a first-hand experience of learning Polish language and culture would provide an understanding of my family background. My grandmother escaped from Poland at the outbreak of the Second World War, via Sweden and Canada to Rochester, and she was the only member of her family to make it out of the country. I regret never talking with her about her experiences in Poland before her death two years ago, and I would like to see where she spent the first 20 years of her life. I want to learn more about the culture of my ancestors.

Chase is a junior at UR, majoring in international studies. He is a recipient of a Skalny scholarship for summer study at Jagiellonian University in Kraków



Polish Youth Concert Celebrates Exceptional Talent



By Bozena Sobolewska

It was a beautiful, sunny afternoon of Sunday, May 7, when the Polish community of Rochester gathered to listen to music played by Polish youth at the University of Rochester. This annual showcase of young musicians of Polish descent was again organized by the Skalny Center for Polish and Central European Studies in cooperation with the University of Rochester Department of Music and the Polish Heritage Society of Rochester. Now in its 13th year, the concert is thriving. The number of players was a record high and the level of their performances was excellent.

The organizers express deep thanks to the artistic director of the concert, Ms. Sabina Slepceki, first violinist with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra and a faculty member at the Hochstein School of Music, who again acted as a master of ceremony with verve and enthusiasm. We also wish to thank Olexandra Yurchenko, who provided an excellent piano accompaniment to all players who needed it.

The concert was opened by Waldemar Wojdak, a member of Polish Literary Club, who read "Wojski's concert," a fragment of Mickiewicz's famous poem "Pan Tadeusz." Another piece of "Pan Tadeusz," "Jankiel's concert," was read after the intermission by Witold Lawrynowicz, also a member of the Polish Literary Club.

Fifteen young people of Polish descent, from preschoolers to high-school juniors, played on piano, violin, cello, guitar, alto saxophone, French horn, accordion, and trumpet. A variety of pieces were performed, written by such composers as Chopin, Bach, Beethoven, Schuman, Vivaldi, Liszt, Veracini, Hummel, Seitz, and Vieuxtemps.

We were very pleased to welcome for the first time several very talented students: Christopher

Wojdak, who gave a great performance on accordion, Jack Piotrowski and Zachary Denysenko, violinists, Rachel Winsberg and Brian Podosek, trumpet, we hope to see them at future concerts.

For the fifth year, performers at the concert competed for the Polish Heritage Society of Rochester Award for Musically Talented Youth of Polish Descent. The Polish Heritage Society of Rochester presented four awards for the best young musicians of Polish descent. This year the winners were: Alex Styk, violin; Rachel Winsberg, trumpet; Paul Watrobski, cello; and Dyzio Guzierowicz, French horn.

Alex Styk is 13 years old and a third-time winner of a competition. He is currently a student of Mikhail Kopelman, professor at the Eastman School of Music. In 2003, Alex won first prize in the Fortissimo! Competition, and in 2004 won second prize in the WOKR13 Most Talented Kids Contest. In 2005 he played as a violin soloist with the RPO. His performance was stunningly good, almost at the professional level. We were pleasantly surprised by the performance of Rachel Winsberg, an eighth-grade student, who played at this venue for the first time. On the other hand, Paul Watrobski (14 years old) and Dyzio Guzierowicz (15 years old) performed for us many times and we are very pleased with the great progress they are systematically making.

In addition, two members of the jury funded four honorable mentions. They went to Zachary Denysenko, violin; Kaia Megiel, violin; Anna Stolarczyk, piano; and Hannah Watrobski, violin.

This was the final youth concert sponsored by the Skalny Center. The Polish Heritage Society of Rochester is taking over its sponsorship and organizing the event. The next concert is expected to take place in October 2007, and the venue will be announced later.

Sobolewska is administrative assistant at the Skalny Center for Polish and Central European Studies.



Dyzio Guzierowicz



Hannah Watrobski



Paul Watrobski



Zachary Denysenko



Kaia Megiel



Alexander Styk



Rachel Winsberg



Anna Stolarczyk



By Joyce Fleck

My Reasons to Go to Poland

I want to go on the Skalny Center's summer trip to Jagiellonian University to learn the Polish language, experience Polish culture, and learn Polish history. All these things can be studied outside of Poland, but I believe it is most effective to be immersed in the language and culture, and to see the influences of history firsthand.

Polish is a unique language, and it has interested me in particular since freshman year. In my linguistics course, we studied the International Phonetic Alphabet. Although the purpose of the IPA is to have characters or symbols to represent every sound of all the world's languages, new sounds are still being discovered and added. What I thought strange, however, is that there are a few sounds that Polish speakers use and distinguish, but which are not differentiated in the IPA. Therefore, although these sounds are natural and distinct to native speakers, they must be extremely similar and pose quite a challenge to non-native speakers.

This challenge intrigues me, and one of the reasons why I want to study Polish is because it is a difficult language. I know several people who study Polish, and although they are all very successful, they all affirm this. The little I know of the language linguistically indicates this as well. Not only are there sounds that are difficult to distinguish and produce, but there are also seven cases plus formal/informal difference. Polish has few cognates with English, or

with French or German, both of which I study. I have never found a language I did not like or would not enjoy studying. For years I have wanted to study a more obscure language further removed from English, which would be especially challenging.

The people I know who study Polish have also motivated me. My roommate, Christine Kenison, went on the program last year as her introduction to Polish, and liked it so well that she is returning this year. She has told me great things about the program and has shown me many photos of Poland. Now she hopes to do more with Slavic studies, and a lot of her enthusiasm has rubbed off on me. I see Polish books and papers all over the room, plus the ever-present flashcards, as constant reminders of how much fun it would be to learn Polish.

I know a few people who are older and who have lived or are living in Poland, and are doing Slavic studies. One spent one of his undergraduate years at Jagiellonian University and is back now doing his Fulbright there. He has told me great things about Poland: the people, the culture, and the university. He believes that the language program in Kraków is the best place to learn Polish, and says that Jagiellonian's language faculty is top-notch. Getting to study at Jagiellonian University and learning by immersion in Poland, I feel, is the ideal way to learn Polish.

Besides studying the language, I really want to experience the culture. Eastern Europe is incredibly different from here, from Western Europe, and from

everything to which I am accustomed. I love to travel, see new places, discover new things, and really live in the culture. I've been to Eastern Europe once, further north on tour with my orchestra. It was a short trip, but it was enough to make me want to go back, see more of Eastern Europe, and get a chance to experience it more fully.

Learning Polish history also is a pull for me. I enjoy European history, and studying it in the country where it took place, getting to see its effects on Poland, and seeing art and architecture from different eras makes it even more interesting, memorable, and meaningful. From this aspect, too, studying at Jagiellonian University will be a real treat, as it is the third oldest university in Europe.

From various sources, I am convinced that the Polish language program at Jagiellonian University is very strong. I wish to go this summer and hope to continue Polish studies afterward and be able to return to Poland sometime. I am also excited that I know people with whom I will be able to practice my Polish at the University of Rochester after I return. That way, I will be better able to retain what I have learned.

Joyce is a freshman at the University of Rochester, majoring in French and in bassoon performance at the Eastman School of Music. She is a recipient of a Skalny scholarship for participation in the study program on location at Jagiellonian University in Krakow.

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