Rarely in the turbulent, modern history of Europe has a country that was sandwiched in a vulnerable geopolitical location between unfriendly great powers, and undermined by both prolonged economic and political crises, managed to escape to democracy and freedom. With a political system imposed from abroad and military alliances both unwelcome by the nation and dangerous to its existence, Poland has been able during the last 10-15 years to reverse this pitiable state of affairs, without violence, and to the benefit of its neighbors and all of Europe. Rejecting communism in 1989, the Poles helped to end the Cold War that began in East Central Europe after World War II.

Three questions will be briefly discussed here. First, why was the eastward enlargement of the European Union in 2004 possible? Second, what internal challenges confronted the Polish central administration with respect to managing the integration efforts? Third, did the Polish authorities have any vision and any impact on the process of enlargement?

Since the beginning of the post-communist period in 1989-90, Poland almost instinctively oriented itself westward. The first non-communist government drafted, initiated, and coordinated the first efforts that eventually led to future membership in the European Economic Community and in North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The fall of communism raised one essential question: what now? Concerning national security and the well-being of society, two things were clear for the majority of the Polish people from the beginning. First, economic reforms in Poland should be based on the free market principle (although the speed and social aspects of transformation were and still are the subject of internal debate). Secondly, the country’s security problems could not be solved unilaterally and outside existing Western and pan-European security structures. Moreover, Poland’s security could not be achieved without taking into account the specific security needs of other countries in East Central Europe, including Czechoslovakia, Hungary, the three Baltic states, Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia - if the Russians were ready for partner-like relations.

Poland’s foreign policy in the period of 1989-93 was creatively reconfigured and prudently conducted by Professor Krzysztof Skubiszewski, who was able to reconstruct Poland’s external alignment. He also managed to generate political consensus in the country and credibility internationally. Lessons from the past were acknowledged and political attitudes and policies were adjusted accordingly. For example: the two enemies’ doctrine (Germany, Russia) was replaced by a friendly neighborhood approach; the entire treaty system linking Poland with its communist past was carefully converted into a network of treaties and diplomatic agreements securing Poland’s full independence and sovereignty; a strategic community of interests with a reunited Germany was established on the basis of friendship, partnership and the final recognition of the Polish-German border; a dual-track policy toward a dissipating Soviet Union was applied, allowing Poland to build good relations both with the Russian Federation and the emerging post-Soviet states; two triangle axes of pro-integrationist European cooperation were established: 1) the Weimar Triangle of France, Germany and Poland whose goal it was to smooth Poland’s entry to the EU and, 2) the Visegrad Group of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland whose aim was to coordinate their respective EU policies; and finally, diplomatic relations with the European Economic Community were established and negotiations on the association agreement were initiated in December 1990.

In this way, Poland’s foreign policy diminished the country’s security dilemma by implementing a cooperative security approach. This contributed to the democratization and stabilization of East Central Europe (ECE) and created a solid base for Poland’s efforts to join the mainstream of European integration. Inseparable links were made between regional peaceful stabilization, democratic and market reforms, and the eastward extension of European integration (can one imagine an enlargement scenario with Poland and other ECE countries being unstable and contentious, with untransformed economies, closed markets, and
halted democratic reforms?). Poland had been in the forefront of the transition from communism. This had started as early as the 1980s with the ultimate push in 1989. The transformation was conducted with a view toward liberal democracy, a vibrant civic society, a free market, with a cooperative security posture, and a westward orientation. It is easily forgotten that there were other options available: autocratic, nationalistic regimes, a “third way” in economics, ethnic and border tensions, self-help foreign policies, neutrality, or eastward links. All of them became sad realities outside of East Central Europe.

In Western Europe, the initial reactions toward the East Central European countries’ ambitions to join the European Economic Community were not very encouraging and did not promise quick membership but rather in “tens of years.” Many doubts were expressed as to the EEC’s capacity to accept new members, including: a fear of losing the momentum of integration, the applicants’ ability to meet demanding criteria of membership, the costs of enlargement, and the dangers to the functioning of the Single Market. This debate had its own internal dynamic within the EEC and the divisions among member states revealed themselves predictably. Some saw eastern enlargement as a good chance to slow the dynamic of political integration while increasing trade and investments (UK); some believed it would deepen federal trends (Germany); some were politically neutral but saw the dangers as being more economic in nature, flowing from expected trade competition and fearing a reduction in the current levels of financial transfers (Spain, Greece).

All of these expectations and especially fears became very real barriers during the negotiations on the Europe Agreements with the first group of applicants in 1990-91 (Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia). During the first rounds of talks the Visegrad countries were surprised to see the degree of caution with which the European Community responded to the applicants’ demands for faster trade liberalization in all product categories, including agriculture, movement of people and fast-track integration into the structures of the EC. On the applicants’ side it took some time to understand that the EEC’s negotiation of the Europe Agreements was not happening in a vacuum, but was nested within a wider network of domestic and international games in which the EC was engaged during the early 1990s (EFTA, WTO, monetary and political union). “Negotiating while others were watching” was both an informative and tough lesson for the Visegrad countries. They paid a high cost for this education, but ultimately showed themselves to be quite good students. They learned what it means to present and defend their positions. They began to understand that the European Community is a “community of interests” but to make the system workable, interests have to be defined precisely in the language and spirit of European treaties and presented according to existing procedures.

Polish officials took the lesson seriously, conducted analyses and drew conclusions. The Office of the Government Plenipotentiary for European Integration and Foreign Assistance (led by Jacek Saryusz-Wolski) was created in January 1991, and soon found that some problems that the applicant countries experienced during the association negotiations – especially at the level of working groups and while preparing negotiating positions - were, in large part, the result of a “socialist heritage.” The work and negotiation style was inherited from Comecon: one should not let others to know one’s real interests because they are, by definition, contrary and as such, uncompromising. ’Do not be naïve. The negotiations are not “an art of getting others to agree” but a “zero sum game,” where you win or lose, and this is my 30 years experience’—one would hear over again, especially from older officials during the training courses on the EU: its law and institutions, organized by the Government Plenipotentiary in 1992-97. It may seem trivial from today’s perspective but this attitudinal difference in regard to resolving conflicts of interest and the lack of cooperative skills became a barrier in the effective implementation of the Europe Agreement. When this “difference” appeared, the Polish administration quite naturally started to struggle and remained uncompromising in its position instead of concentrating on searching for a solution. Even minor issues blocked the agenda and were sent to the highest levels for decisions. Among other weaknesses one could see a lack of initiative and creativity, a passive waiting for instructions, and generally un-cooperative attitudes among ministries. What was desperately needed was personal initiative, openness in confronting new issues, a spirit of team-work, the ability to approach things horizontally, modern negotiating and administrative skills, and a command of foreign languages. For the Government’s Plenipotentiary and his team it became evident that although the country’s foreign policy had laid the groundwork for integration, in order to obtain decisive results, the internal approach to European integration and its management needed to be revamped and made more efficient, or the whole process might be endangered. This required good governance practices both in the central and local administration, and later on, well programmed efforts, financed largely by PHARE, in order to elevate the skills and efficiency of the Polish administration. It took some time for the Polish administration to accept the fact that, while European negotiations, although a selfish game, may yet lead to a win-win situation, it was not automatic and that work hard was needed to secure even a part of the “win-win”. This upgrading of the central administration’s capacity to manage the demanding process of integration and transformation was a silent “bureaucratic” battle but one that would result its final victory.

Also, other systematic works had been undertaken in the Office of Government’s Plenipotentiary for European Integration and Foreign Assistance to
With an energetic and dedicated board this Spring semester, the Polish Club of Barnard College, Columbia University continues its goal to promote Polish culture on campus through an array of activities and outings.

Last semester the club participated in several successful events, including representation at the Pulaski Day Parade and Polish Students Organization's (PSO) Studia4U at the Polish Consulate. The club hosted a welcome back party, a Tribute to Solidarity and a poetry evening paying tribute to Zbigniew Herbert. The Annual Wigilia Christmas Gathering was yet again a smashing success with the attendance of Polish professors, students and friends from various universities in New York. Oplatek was shared, koloły were sung, and pierogie were eaten. Overall a fun and memorable night of unity.

This semester Columbians came together, dressed in their best suits and ball gowns, to attend the popular PSO's 10th Annual Bal Studencki, held in Greenpoint, NY. Created specifically for the youth of Polonia, the Bal was a highly cultured evening that provided an uncommon elegant experience on a student budget. Proceeds of the bal go towards scholarships given by PSO, as well as for the Polish Studies Program at Columbia.

Future activities on the Polish Club’s calendar for the Spring include a Dinner & Dancing trip to Little Polska (Greenpoint), a workshop on Pisanki Polish Easter Egg Painting, a Jajko Easter Party, and a special tribute our beloved Pope John Paul II.

The Club also hopes to host the Polish Students Leadership conference, an EU members party, a European movie marathon- featuring movies from the EU countries, a lecture on Poland in the EU by visiting Professor Andrzej Harasimowicz, and Polish conversation hours at the Hungarian pastry shop.

To receive more detailed information regarding events listed above, please email Anna Czapliński, the Polish Club president, at ac2162@columbia.edu or visit the events calendar on the Polish Studies website at:

Columbia University's Renwick Professor Emeritus of Civil Engineering, Maciej P. Bieniek, whose groundbreaking work in structural dynamics involved maintaining and rehabilitating many of New York City's bridges, died on Monday, Jan. 23, in Atlanta, Ga.

Bieniek gained an international reputation for his research on the Brooklyn, Williamsburg, Triborough, Bronx-Whitestone, Throgs Neck, Verrazano-Narrows and George Washington bridges. As a professor, he taught many of the department's most advanced courses, including elasticity, plasticity and viscoelasticity.

Born in Poland in 1927, Bieniek began his professional and academic career in that country, graduating from Gdansk Technical University in 1948 with the equivalent of an M.S. in civil engineering, majoring in structures and transportation. He received a Ph.D. in applied mechanics in 1951.

In 1958, he was appointed a visiting scholar at Columbia Engineering's Department of Civil Engineering and Engineering Mechanics, and, the following year, was named visiting associate professor. In 1960, he was named an associate professor of civil engineering.

Three years later, Bieniek became a professor of civil engineering at the University of Southern California, but returned to Columbia in 1969 as a full professor of civil engineering. He continued his academic career at Columbia, chairing the department from 1979 to 1981. In 1989, he was named Renwick Professor and, upon his retirement in 1993, Renwick Professor Emeritus.

Bieniek received the Great Teacher Award of the Society of Columbia Graduates (SOCG) in 1979 and, in 1995, was named an Honorary Member of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), one of the highest honors an engineer can receive.

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http://www.columbia.edu/cu/news/06/02/maciejPBieniek.html

Recent Visitors

Director of the East Central European Center, Professor John S. Micgiel (far left), pictured with the keynote speaker of the “Polish Foreign Policy, Past, Present and Future” Conference Professor Zbigniew Brzeziński (immediate left). Brzeziński is a Polish American political scientist, geostrategist, and statesman, who served as United States National Security Advisor under President Jimmy Carter. View the conference in its entirety at our website: http://www.sipa.columbia.edu/ece
identify challenges of a more substantial nature. Inter-ministerial study groups were created and goal-oriented efforts taken to link membership preparations with the main streams of transformation, to define short-, mid-, and long-term national interests within the European integration process, to elaborate a vision of the EU that Poland wanted to join, and to make the PHARE program and other forms of bilateral external assistance optimal instruments of integration.

Adjustment programs for the Polish economy and legal system were adopted by the Government in 1992-93 in order to streamline the implementation of the Europe Agreement. A National Strategy for European Integration was adopted in 1997, and set the framework for Poland’s membership in the EU. The approximation of Polish legislation to Community law was given priority and few thousand legal acts were scrutinized from the point of view of their compatibility with the acquis communautaire. In the result numerous changes has been introduced to the country’s legal system. Hundreds of new laws and regulations were prepared by the Government and enacted by parliament. The constitutional framework for Poland’s accession to the EU has been established in the new Constitution of 1997.

During the intensive consultations conducted with the member states’ governments, EU institutions, academic and business communities, NGOs and others, it was found that “size and numbers do matter” and that the future position and representation of Poland in the EU institutions is of utmost importance and should not be left for last moment decisions but should be pronounced, mildly but clearly, and agreed earlier. Most applicants, mostly small countries, considered it rational, and probably rightly so, to accept the role of “the best pupil in the class.” Poland, having the largest population and territory among the applicants combined, sought to influence, if not lead, the process of accession and to shape it in a way conforming to its own needs, those of other applicants and the EU. Although it was not always accepted with great enthusiasm by other applicants, even within the Visegrad group, one could not deny that the Polish Government at least tried to play this role with a dose of tact and empathy for other interests and was a relentless proponent of consultations with the aim of stronger bargaining position and better final results on behalf of all candidates. This was not just a case of “our taking our own gains and sharing burdens with everyone else,” and it was credible, it seems. It needs to be stressed that in taking this role, the Poles were in no case motivated by big power illusions, but rather by geopolitical and economic realities, such as: Poland’s strategic location between Germany and Russia, which necessitated a strong say in the domain of Common Foreign and Security Policy and Home and Justice Affairs; the size of Poland’s agriculture making it one of the main players within Common Agriculture Policy and European Community budgetary planning; Poland’s geographical location makes transit and transport issues of utmost importance: most of the East-West and North-South European Transport Networks, including energy, cross Poland’s territory.

Taking all these elements into consideration, between 1992-95, the Office of the Plenipotentiary formulated a comprehensive set of postulates that shaped Poland’s positions on the main issues connected with its entry into the EU. One may summarize them in the following way: 1) Timing: membership in the EU was for Poland a natural and optimal choice in general and should

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**Note About the Polish Studies Program**

A very important feature of Polish Studies at Columbia University is its impressive Graduate Program in **POLISH LITERATURE**. Several Universities, including Ivy League schools, advertise Ph.D. programs in this area but Columbia has a large number of active courses to sustain its respectable program. Moreover, many of our graduate students in Comparative Literature defend their M.A. in Polish Literature, and a handful of our Ph.D. candidates are interested in Polish literature. Many of them have continued their studies in Polish literature, and a few have completed their M.A. in Polish Literature.

The courses in Polish Literature offered by the Slavic Department are as follows:

- **David A. Goldfarb**, Assistant Professor: Renaissance Poetry in Poland; From Latin to Polish; The Polish Novel, Poland, Romanticism, and Polish Romanticism; Polish Avantgardism; Bruno Schulz; Directed Research in Literary Translation

- **Anna Frajlich-Zając**, Sr. Lecturer: Advanced Polish; Intermediate Polish; Polish Short Story in Comparative Context; Mickiewicz; Bestsellers of Polish Prose; and North America in the Mirror of Polish Literature

Also, Individual, Independent, Supervised Directed Research under tutelage of each professor is available and taken advantage of by students from many other Departments.

Elementary Polish is taught at present by **Thomas Starky**.

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be forced with all energy at all forums, with the year 2000 as the proposed date for accession, especially that this Central European widening is not just the next wave of enlargement but unification of Europe. 2) Method: the transformation of the Polish economy and its institutional/legal system should be linked with the association/integration process as closely as possible. Streamlining modernization and integration are one policy, not two.

3) The EU we want: the dilemma of “widening or deepening” the EU was a false one and continued the Cold War division of Europe; Poland should promote the “widen in order to deepen” concept which seemed to be the best guarantee to overcome divides within the EU, to promote a strong EU with a growing international identity, efficient, developing new policies and acting in a spirit of solidarity. This clearly meant a bigger role for the European Commission and for the European Parliament. 4) Costs: the eastward enlargement, if well prepared, would be politically and economically advantageous for both sides. The widening should not be seen as a budgetary burden for the EU (“the bookkeeper’s view”) as the costs would be borne by both sides. Moreover, the balance to date was clearly to the EU’s advantage, and the costs of not expanding the EU would be much greater (“costs of non-Europe”).

5) Principles: both integrating entities, the EU and applicant countries, are equal although they vary in size and wealth. Therefore, the partnership principle should be the guiding directive during the process of accession and that required an early involvement of the acceding countries into the EU decision making machinery, as observers.

6) Formula of accession: in the case of Poland, the so-called “Spanish formula of accession” should be applied, which meant: full adjustment to the acquis communautaire should be allowed after (not prior to) joining, in the first, hopefully short, period after accession; the full opening of the big Polish market - Poland had experienced huge trade deficits with the EU until then - should be compensated by generous cohesion and structural policies, along with other new members; the number of votes allocated in the Council of Ministers and representation in EU institutions should be comparable to that of Spain. 7) “Better trade than aid”: EU market access liberalization would be the best incentive to restructure and modernise acceding countries’ economies. Aid is important but of secondary importance. 8) Criteria of accession: before the Copenhagen criteria were formulated and accepted in 1993, the Polish Government proposed in 1992 that “economy healthy, not necessarily wealthy” should be the guiding criterion in the assessment of applicants' readiness to join. 9) Assistance/PARE: EU funds and other forms of bilateral assistance should be focused on supporting the association/integration process. Simple forms of technical assistance should be replaced by quasi-structural assistance in order to promote regional development, entrepreneurship and small-medium size enterprises, modernization of agriculture, environmental planning, legal adjustments and training for central and local government officials, support for European Studies. PHARE procedures should be made shorter and less bureaucratic, and recipients should become more involved in early planning.

These postulates, although not always Heartily welcomed at the time, had some positive impact on the association/integration process and they constitute an original contribution of an acceding country to the success of 2004 Enlargement of the EU. When we compare them with the terms of accession we can see that its costs are bearable, the Single Market is functioning, the decision making process is not in gridlock etc.

To answer our opening queries, one may say that Poland opened the door to eastward enlargement in 1989, making possible the process of transformation in East Central Europe by setting a cooperative, peaceful tone and introducing democratic processes. Also, Poland’s great internal effort to streamline its internal transformation and to link it to European integration had a positive impact on the enlargement process and has contributed to the success of the 2004 Enlargement of the EU.

Selected bibliography:
2. J. Saryusz – Wolski, The Reintegration of
January 17
“Polish Intelligence During World War Two.” Rafal Wnuk and Jan Ciechanowksi, IPN and Warsaw University. 10:00am-11:15am, 1510 International Affairs Building (IAB). 420 West 118th St (corner of Amsterdam Ave.)

March I
“From the Baltic to the Black to the Caspian: Building a ‘Community of Democratic Choice.’” Featuring Vyacheslav Kyrylenko, Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine, Ambassador of Georgia to the United States Levan Mikeladze, and Polish American Ukrainian Cooperative Initiative Director Jan Pieklo. NYU Torch Club, 18 Waverley Place. Cosponsored by the Polish and Ukrainian Studies Programs at Columbia.

March 2
“Poetics in Translation: Gombrowicz’s Ferdydurke (in Spanish, French and English).” A lecture by Magdalena Miecznicka of the Polish Institute of Literary Research (IBL) in Warsaw. Sponsored by the Barnard Slavic Department. 6 pm, Ella Weed Room Milbank Hall, Second Floor, Barnard College. 117th St. & Broadway.

March 2
Visegrad-Ukraine: A Multi-Regional Perspective. A conference featuring among others, Adam Towpik, Permanent Representative of Poland to the UN; Elzbieta Dzirba, Vice President, Polish Oil and Gas Company; and Jan Pieklo, Director, Polish American Ukrainian Cooperation Initiative. Cosponsored by the Polish and Ukrainian Studies Programs at Columbia. 9:30 am-5pm, I501 IAB.

April
A Spring Polish Recruitment Day aimed at potential students, and organized by Columbia’s Polish Studies Program, the Polish Students Organization, the Barnard Polish Club, and the Polish Slavic Federal Credit Union. Representatives of Columbia and Barnard Colleges will be there to answer questions. Information will be provided on our website shortly.

May 22-24
Certification Exams in Polish offered by the Polish Supplementary School Council (PSSC), 5-8 pm, 15th Floor IAB. For registration and other information, please contact Mrs. Dorota Andraka, President, PSSC, at: andraka@aol.com.

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Ms. Alicja Malecka, Chief Executive Officer of the Polish Slavic Federal Credit Union, presents Dr. John S. Miegei with the PSFCU’s most recent donation of $100,000 on behalf of the Polish Studies Professorship.