

KOSCIUSZKO CHAIR IN 2019-2020

by Dr. Marek Chodakiewicz and Maria Juczewska

Introduction

In the academic year 2019-2020, The Kościuszko Chair of Polish Studies focused on commemorating two meaningful anniversaries in the history of Poland, namely, the 80th anniversary of the German aggression on Poland in September 1939 followed by the Soviet attack on September 17, 1939, and the 80th anniversary of the mass deportations of Poles to Siberia and the subsequent Katyń Forest Massacre. Apart from his usual academic activities, Dr. Marek Chodakiewicz continued his service on advisory boards of several prestigious institutions and periodicals in the U.S. and in Poland. He was also invited as a guest speaker to numerous American and Polish-American events. In the summer of 2019, Dr. Chodakiewicz published his next book in Polish, *On the Civilization of Death: How to stop the anti-culture of totalitarian minorities* (Polish: *O cywilizacji śmierci. Jak zatrzymać antykulturę totalitarnych mniejszości*). It contributed to the discussion in Poland of the LGBT movement and its predilections to steer toward enforcement of policies propagating the growth of this movement.

Our expanded speaker series on Poland and the Intermarium Region at The Institute of World Politics was continued. We organized the 12th Annual Kościuszko Chair Conference and the 10th Annual Lady Blanka Rosenstiel Kościuszko Chair Spring Symposium (postponed to June 2020 due to corona virus pandemic). We followed and commented on the Polish-American relations and developments in the European politics.

Publications and Media Activism

Dr. Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, Kościuszko Chair Holder

Dr. Chodakiewicz regularly discussed political and social developments in Poland and America. Since June 2019, Dr. Chodakiewicz has published more than seventy articles in American and Polish electronic and press publications (*Crisis Magazine, American Thinker, The American Spectator, Polonia Institute, Do Rzeczy, Tygodnik Solidarność, Najwyższy Czas!, Weteran, W Sieci Historii, and Glaukopis*). Major topics included commentary on World War I related to Dr. Chodakiewicz's Pinsk research, commentary on the events of World War II, ISIS, U.S. Presidential elections in 2020, Polish-American relations, offensive of the LGBT movement in Poland, as well as topics related to the study of history for *Glaukopis*.



The Kościuszko Chair continued efforts to raise funds necessary to strengthen our endowment. We are thankful to all our benefactors and friends for their generous support. We would like to thank in particular Lady Blanka Rosenstiel and The American Institute of Polish Culture for great generosity and unwavering support. We are also grateful to Mr. Bogdan Chmielewski and his team of the Polish and Slavic Federal Credit Union, the Hon. Aldona Woś, Mr. Adam Bąk, Mrs. Ava Polansky-Bąk, Mr. John Niemczyk, The Polish American Veterans' Association (PAVA), Mr. Jan Małek of The Polish-American Foundation for Economic Research and Education (PAFERE), and many others. We would also like to thank our staff and interns for their help in running the daily activities of the Chair. Thanks to the support and encouragement of all our supporters, the Kościuszko Chair of Polish Studies is able to inform the American public about Poland and propagate the message about the most valiant and awe-inspiring achievements of Poles and their contribution to the survival of the Western Civilization.



Dr. Marek Chodakiewicz

Another important achievement of this academic year is the coming publication of the book authored by Natalie Grant Wraga, entitled *Disinformation*. Thanks to efforts of the Kościuszko Chair of Polish Studies, a typewritten

manuscript of an important book on the operation of Soviet intelligence was digitized, edited and will soon be published in 2020.

Dr. John Lenczowski, IWP Founder, President, and Professor

On June 21, 2019, Dr. Lenczowski spoke as a part of a panel discussion at a White House event commemorating the 40th Anniversary of Pope John Paul II's nine-day pilgrimage to Poland. This was the first visit of a Pope to a communist country and helped turn the tide against oppression in Poland.

The event featured a screening of *The Divine Plan: John Paul II, Ronald Reagan, and the Dramatic End of the Cold War*, a film by Robert Orlando. This film, which will be released worldwide on November 9, 2019, had been shown last November at IWP's Kościuszko Chair Conference, followed by commentary by Mr. Orlando. Dr. Lenczowski pointed out that, for all the material pressures that we put on the Soviet empire, the decisive factor that brought millions of people into the streets to demand radical political change was in the moral and spiritual realm. It was U.S. public diplomacy--specifically our effort to connect with the oppressed peoples of that empire to bear moral witness to give the people courage and to show that moral resistance was possible--that was the decisive element in the ultimate collapse of communism.

Dr. John Lenczowski discussed his experience fighting communism also in the press, which were quoted extensively in the *Epoch Times* article, "Reagan's Epochal Battle Against Communism Offers Lessons." He spoke about his experience serving on Reagan's National Security Council from 1983 to 1987, and how the administration worked to connect with people in the Soviet empire. During the Cold War, many people living under the Soviet regime were forced into silence. He explained that Reagan's goal was to undermine the control that the Soviet Union had over its people. He also noted that many scholars and policy experts believed that the Soviet system was permanent and that the U.S. government should tread softly with communism. However, Reagan was adamant that the Soviet system had weaknesses and could be taken down. The *Epoch Times* concluded its article with Dr. Lenczowski highlighting the importance of public diplomacy in today's foreign policy establishment, "*The State Department has long had a culture that focuses principally on relations with governments as opposed to relations with people. To change this culture,*" Dr. Lenczowski asserted, "*political leadership must be involved.*"

The 9th Annual Kościuszko Chair Military Lecture

On September 26, 2019, the annual Gen. Walter Jajko Kościuszko Chair Military Lecture was given by Dr. Chodakiewicz. The lecture was entitled, "War and Humanitarianism: The Case of Maurice Pate (1894-1965)". Maurice Pate was an American philanthropist who, early in his youth, felt the urge to help victims, children in particular,

of war, revolution, and other calamities. The lecture focused on Pate's role in the American Relief Administration's stupendous effort in Poland between 1919 and 1921 which saved millions of Europeans from death and disease. Mr. Pate eventually assumed the post of the Executive Director of UNICEF.

The 12th Annual Kościuszko Chair Conference

On November 3, 2019, Dr. Chodakiewicz opened the 12th Annual Kościuszko Chair Conference. This year the topics entailed the experiences of Poles related to the two world wars as well as the Russian intelligence tradition and its operational methods in the past and present. The lectures offered on the one hand a presentation of general

background of world events at the time of the two world wars, and on the other hand personal accounts of experiences of victims of Nazi and Soviet policies as well as those who provided humanitarian help to them. The program of the conference entailed the following lectures:

Introduction

Dr. Chodakiewicz introduced the main themes of the conference.

"Disinformation" by Natalie Grant Wraga

Dr. Jack Dziak, IWP Adjunct Professor and a Former Senior Intelligence Officer, discussed the Trust: the premier Soviet domestic and foreign disinformation operation and the model for future provocations (a book preview).

The Miracle Man on the Vistula

Mr. Nicholas Siekierski, Ph.D. candidate, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw, Poland, focused on the 100th anniversary of Herbert Hoover's visit to Poland as head of the American Relief Administration; Hoover went in Woodrow Wilson's stead. The significance of the relief is still little-known in the Polish public consciousness even among historians. Meanwhile, it may have been one of the finest episodes in U.S.-Polish relations and is worthy of more recognition.

The town of Pinsk, the gubernya of Minsk: On the Eve of the Great War

Dr. Chodakiewicz discussed political, economic, social, and cultural situation in Pinsk and its environs on the basis of his latest research.

Polish lands 1939-1956: Civilians' Survival Strategies During the War, Occupation, and Liberation

Dr. Jakub Isański, Professor of Sociology, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland, provided results of his research on a unique data base of the written anecdotal reminiscences and experiences with both Nazis and Soviets by Poles from the years of World War II. The Polish population suffered huge losses during WWII--millions of soldiers and civilians were wounded and killed, and those who survived developed various ways to cope with the extreme situations they had to face during the war. These methods proved to be very useful in the years after Soviet liberation in 1945 in the era of mass migrations and resettlements, but also in the times of Stalinist lawlessness and repression. The vast majority of these

diary materials have not been published so far, but will be sent to three competitions for settlers in western Poland.

Witold Pilecki: an ordinary man turned volunteer for Auschwitz?

Mrs. Maria Juczevska, Associate Director, Kościuszko Chair of Polish Studies, gave a lecture on Rotamaster Witold Pilecki, a Polish intelligence operator who volunteered for Auschwitz. He is presented by non-Polish authors as an ordinary man who was capable of a heroic deed in times of war. Mrs. Juczevska examined the validity of that narration in view of evidence provided by scholarly research, archival material, and accounts of his close and kin.

Déjà vu on the Vistula: Russian Active Measures against Polish-American Military Cooperation

Boleslaw Piasecki, lecturer at War Studies University in Warsaw and a security expert in the financial sector, discussed his research on intelligence, deception and information warfare as well as the impact of new technologies on modern society.

The 10th Annual Lady Blanka Rosenstiel Kościuszko Chair Spring Symposium

Due to emergency security measures announced in relation to the corona virus pandemic, this year's Lady Blanka

Rosenstiel Kościuszko Chair Spring Symposium that usually occurs every April was moved to June 20, 2020.

The Kościuszko Chair Intermarium Lecture Series

In this academic year, monthly lectures were given as a part of our Intermarium lecture series.

The War Begins: Poland, September 1939

Dr. Marek Chodakiewicz discussed the details of the Nazi and the Soviet attack on Poland in 1939. He explained pre-war diplomatic arrangements and the impossible predicament of Poland stuck between Germany and the Soviet Union, forcing the country to face off with two totalitarian powers: the Third Reich and the Soviet Union. In the Intermarium, the lands between the Baltic, Black, and Adriatic Seas, Warsaw had the dubious distinction of attracting the wrath of both Hitler and Stalin. This was a geopolitical nightmare, but it was also nothing new. Poland remains situated between Germany and Russia.

Russification vs Westernization: Battle for Hearts and Minds of Belarusians

Franak Viačorka, Vice President of the Digital Communication Network and Creative Director of RFE/RL Belarus Services discussed how Belarus can't find a way out of geopolitical turbulence. In contrast to neighboring Ukraine, Russian meddling here is mostly done through soft power. But the Belarusian society is growing more resilient in the face of the Kremlin's narratives. Rejecting Russian revanchism, Belarusians embrace their pre-soviet history, like a heritage of Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Rzeczpospolita. Before Presidential elections next year and the population census this fall, a discussion about identity and national ideology is intensifying. What can the West do about it?

War and Humanitarianism: The Case of Maurice Pate (1894-1965)

Marek Chodakiewicz, Ph.D., IWP Professor of History and the head of the Kościuszko Chair of Polish Studies

Dr. Chodakiewicz talked about Maurice Pate (1894-1965), a philanthropist and businessman, whose charitable works for civilian victims, children in particular, of war, revolution, and other calamities. serve as an example of humanitarian efforts during times of conflict, as provided by an earlier description of the lecture in this report.

Encounter with Katyń

Professor Tadeusz Wolsza, Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAN) in Warsaw proposed that there are generally two major approaches of research on Katyń--the perspective of the victims and, to a somewhat lesser extent, the perpetrators' perspective. In his book, Encounter with Katyń Wolsza, he touches upon another dimension of this atrocity which has not been addressed in the work done so far. He describes the stories of over 60 representatives of various social groups who visited the Katyń site in 1943. The postwar Communist regime in Poland consistently plugged the Katyń lie and conducted a campaign of repression and reprisals against witnesses of the Soviet crime. The witnesses were accused of collaboration with the Germans, forced to cancel testimonies about the real perpetrators, put under

surveillance and imprisoned; some of them had to leave the country. Wolsza's book portrays the Katyń Massacre not only as the extermination of Polish elites by a totalitarian regime, but also as a symbol of the struggle for universal values such as memory, truth, and justice. This corresponds to the wider perspective of the struggle of an enslaved society fighting for its freedom and independence.

Three cases of Polish captivity in the years 1918 – 1924

Mr. Wiktor Węglewicz, Ph.D. Candidate at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow, Poland, will present a lecture based on archival resources, including Central Military Archive in Warsaw, Central State Historical Archive in Lviv and Central Archive of Supreme Bodies of Power and Administration in Kyiv, as well as newspapers from that era and the literature on the subject. The theme is about how, right after Poland regained its independence, three wars with her neighbors ensued--the Ukrainian war in the Eastern Galicia; a conflict with other Ukrainians-- this time from Dnipro Ukraine--in the territory of Volhynia; and finally, the conflict between Poland and Soviet Russia when the Red Army entered present-day Western Belarussian lands. One of the outcomes of these conflicts was the presence of thousands of prisoners-of-wars and internees in Poland; either captured on the frontline or interned by Polish military authorities on the charge of being a threat to newly created Polish state. Mr. Węglewicz will propose a new approach to the problem of their captivity by comparing these three groups of POWs. First, the approach of the Polish military authorities to all three groups will be presented; then, he will analyze other topics, such as material conditions in the camps, alimentation/hunger, sanitary conditions and the death rates; and in conclusion, the fate of the POWs after release from the camps also will be moved.

Postcards From Hell: Siberia 1940 in Deported Children's Accounts

Mrs. Juczevska will lecture about the winter of 1940 when Soviet authorities organized mass deportations to Siberia of Polish citizens from the Polish territories annexed in September 1939. Over one million people were dispatched

Postponed Due to the Corona Virus Pandemic

Due to emergency security measures announced in relation to the corona virus pandemic, the 10th Annual Lady Blanka Rosenstiel Kościuszko Chair Spring Symposium that usually occurs every April has been rescheduled for June 20, 2020.

General Remarks

In addition to the regular scholarly activity, The Kościuszko Chair of Polish Studies has enjoyed continuous interest of visitors from the Intermarium Region as well as scholars, journalists, and others interested in the problems of the

in overcrowded cattle cars in the dead of winter to unknown destinations in the Soviet interior, where they were forced into slave labor in order to survive. Thousands of them, adults and children alike, died from starvation, rampant disease, and overwork. That harrowing experience was later described by the fortunate ones, including numerous children, who managed to leave the Soviet Union after the so-called amnesty in July 1941.

False WWII Narratives Circulated by Russian Propaganda

Dr. Chodakiewicz will discuss Russian President Vladimir Putin who periodically regurgitates Soviet propaganda about the Second World War. Lately Poland has triggered his ire again as Warsaw failed to fall in line with the standard Soviet fantasy. According to this standard narrative, the global conflict started on June 22, 1941 when Germany attacked innocent and neutral "Mother Russia," and thus the Soviets were wronged, victimized, and suffered staggering losses. The armies of Moscow nonetheless rebounded and they alone defeated "fascism," saving the world from its menace. Anything that threatens this narrative endangers the grip of the Kremlin over the denizens of the post-Soviet Empire. Its legitimacy rests on the legacy of the Soviet victory in the Second World War and Moscow has been running on fumes of that triumph since the implosion of the Soviet Union in 1992.

How the Kremlin Weaponized Yandex and Telegram

Franak Viačorka will present a lecture about the historical visit of U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's to Minsk amid Russia-Belarus tensions. The entire event was met with thousands of posts, comments, memes, manipulative publications online. The extensive network of pro-Russian organizations, digital influencers, Russia-friendly media, and particularly web-services, including Yandex and Mail.ru news, Odnoklassniki and VK, Telegram messenger, was mobilized to fill out the information space with the specific narrative and mislead the population. This lecture is about the role of media in Russia-Belarus conflict, mechanics of the Russian propaganda machine in Belarus, and how technology helps regimes to manipulate public opinion and perception of the events.

A lecture by Dr. Chodakiewicz entitled *Katyń: The Politics of Remembrance* to commemorate the Katyń Forest Massacre has been postponed to a later date.

Our lectures are recorded and are made available to our followers on-line. We would like to wholeheartedly invite you to follow our conferences and lectures through the Internet as well!

region. The Chair encourages the participation of independent observers of totalitarian tendencies in the Post-Soviet zone to ensure multiplicity of voices in the American public arena.