

The Blanka Rosenstiel Lecture Series on Poland

European and Eurasian Studies Program



Participants: Biographical Notes

Monday, November 16, 2020 | 11:00 am | Live Webinar

Opening Remarks



His Excellency Piotr Wilczek

Ambassador to the United States and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas

Ambassador Piotr Wilczek was born on 26 April 1962, in Chorzów, Poland. A prolific literary scholar, intellectual historian, writer, and translator, he graduated in 1986 from the University of Silesia in Katowice, where he also received his Ph.D. (1992) and *Habilitation* (2001). Recruited by his *Alma Mater*, he remained there until 2008 as a professor and Faculty Dean.

His interests include comparative literature, philology, and intellectual history that form the culture and geography of knowledge across time. In 2006, he received the title of Professor of the Humanities from the President of the Republic of Poland.

In 2008, he joined the University of Warsaw faculty at the new, experimental *Artes Liberales* program. He became the Founding Director of *Collegium Artes Liberales* (College of Liberal Arts and Sciences) where he helped establish and chaired Centre for the Study of the Reformation and Intellectual Culture in Early-Modern Europe. Since 2010, he has also been at the helm of the *Artes Liberales* Doctoral Studies Program. An international scholar active in Europe and the United States, he has been promoting liberal arts education, which breaks the existing barriers between narrow fields of specialization traditionally favored in the continental Europe.

His commitment to interdisciplinary approach to learning draws on his own engagement with international studies, scholarly exchanges, and cultural diplomacy. A recipient of numerous grants and scholarships, he conducted postgraduate research in intellectual history at Oxford's St Anne's College in 1988 and completed two postdoctoral projects at the Warburg Institute, University of London, in 1996 and 1998. Twice, he was visiting translator at The British Centre for Literary Translation, University of East Anglia. In the United States from 1998 to 2001, he taught Polish literature and language as a visiting professor at Rice University, the University of Illinois, and the University of Chicago. He was invited to give public lectures at Harvard University and the University of Texas at Austin and conducted research as a visiting scholar at Boston College and Cleveland State University.

Piotr Wilczek is an active member of the Warsaw-based non-partisan American Study Group at the Polish Institute of International Affairs, which brings together experts, journalist, and academics who comment on political and cultural developments in the United States and analyze their implications for Poland, Europe, and the trans-Atlantic alliance. Until his diplomatic appointment in the US, he was Representative in Poland of the New York-based Kosciuszko Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to educational, cultural, and artistic exchange between the United States and Poland. He also served as President of the Foundation's affiliate in Warsaw.

Piotr Wilczek authored and edited 22 published monographs and more than 100 journal articles which appeared in Poland, the UK, and the United States, both in English and Polish. He belongs to a number of professional groups and associations and is a board member of various international scholarly journals, book series, advisory councils, and academic and educational initiatives in Europe and the United States. In May 2017 he was awarded an honorary doctorate in humane letters from Cleveland State University.

On 21 October 2016 the President of the Republic of Poland nominated him Ambassador to the United States and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas.

Guest Speaker



Norman Davies, Ph.D.
Honorary Fellow
St Antony's College, Oxford

Professor Norman Davies CMG, FBA, FLSW, FRSL, FRHistS etc has been an Honorary Fellow of St Antony's since 2011. Born in Bolton, (Lancashire), he was educated at Bolton School, the University of Grenoble, Magdalen College, Oxford (MA), the University of Sussex (MA) and the Jagiellonian University, Krakow (PhD). Professor Emeritus of UCL-SSEES, he was elected to the British Academy in 1997, and awarded the CMG in 2001 "for services to History". An Honorary Fellow of Clare Hall, Cambridge, and a life member of Peterhouse, he has received many honorary doctorates and literary prizes, is an honorary citizen of four cities, and in 2012 was granted Poland's highest award, membership of the Order of the White Eagle.

Professor Davies's association with St Antony's College goes back to 1969, when he was tutored by the late Harry Willetts. In 1970-2, he was the first Alistair Horne Research Fellow in residence, and remained a Senior Associate Member for over three decades. He returned as a Visiting Fellow in 2008-9, since when he has been a member of the Russian and Eurasian Center. In 2012, through his connection with the philanthropist, Dr Leszek Czarnecki, he initiated the College's Programme on Modern Poland which, chaired by the Warden Margaret Macmillan, ran 2013-16.

Norman Davies is a well known writer, broadcaster commentator, and traveller. He has been a Visiting Professor at Columbia, McGill, Hokkaido, Stanford, Harvard, Adelaide, ANU (Canberra), and Tasmania. In 2012, he embarked on a world tour, which took him to a score of countries and formed the basis of his book, *Beneath Another Sky*, (Penguin, 2017), translated as *Ins Unbekannte: eine Weltreise in die Geschichte*, (WBG Theiss, Darmstadt, 2020).

Earlier publications in English include: *White Eagle, Red Star: the Polish-Soviet War of 1919-20* (1972), *God's Playground: a History of Poland* (OUP, 1981), *Heart of Europe: the Past in Poland's Present* (OUP, 1984), *Europe: a History*, (the Oxford History of Europe, OUP, 1996), *The Isles: a History* (1999), *Microcosm: Portrait of a Central Europe City*, on Wroclaw/Breslau in conjunction with Roger Moorhouse (2000), *Rising '44: the Battle for Warsaw*, (2003), *Europe East and West: Collected Essays* (2006), *Europe at War, 1939-45* (2006), published in the USA as *No Simple Victory* (2007), and *Vanished Kingdoms: the History of Half-forgotten Europe* (2013). These titles have been translated into more than 30 languages, including Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Ukrainian, Lithuanian and Estonian. Penguin is due to publish his *George II: not just a British monarch* in 2021.

Most recently, Norman has received honorary degrees from UCL (2015) and the University of Bolton (2018). Inadvertently nominated for the Nobel Prize for Literature, he has published an autobiography, *Sam o Sobie*, (Znak Krakow, 2019). In 2020, the Folio Society produced a 3-volume, special edition of *Europe: a history*. At present, when not appearing on assorted webinars, he is writing a History of Galicia.



David J. Kramer

Director, European & Eurasian Studies

Senior Fellow Vaclav Havel Program for Human Rights and Diplomacy

Steven J. Green School of International & Public Affairs

David J. Kramer joined Florida International University's Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs as a Senior Fellow in the Václav Havel Program for Human Rights and Diplomacy in May 2017. In July 2019, he also became Director for European and Eurasian Studies.

Before moving to Miami, Kramer worked in Washington, DC for 24 years, most recently with The McCain Institute for International Leadership as Senior Director for Human Rights and Democracy. Before that, he served for four years as President of Freedom House. Prior to that, he was a Senior Transatlantic Fellow at the German Marshall Fund of the United States.

Kramer served eight years in the U.S. Department of State, including as Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor; Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs (responsible for Russia, Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus affairs as well as regional non-proliferation issues); Professional Staff Member in the Secretary's Office of Policy Planning; and Senior Advisor to the Undersecretary for Global Affairs. He also was Executive Director of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy in Washington.

Before joining the U.S. Government, Kramer worked at various think tanks in Washington including the Project for the New American Century, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Kramer was an Adjunct Professor at the Elliott School for International Affairs at The George Washington University. He also is Chair of the Board for the Free Russia Foundation, a Member of the Board of the International Republican Institute, and a Member of the Advisory Council for the George W. Bush Presidential Center's Human Freedom Project, a Member of the Advisory Council for the Alliance for Securing Democracy at the German Marshall Fund, and a Contributing Editor for The American Interest.

A native of Massachusetts, Kramer received his M.A. in Soviet studies from Harvard University and his B.A. in Soviet Studies and Political Science from Tufts University.