

**The Blanka Rosenstiel Lecture Series on Poland**  
European and Eurasian Studies Program

**Democracy: Past and Present in Central Europe**  
**Conference**

**Florida International University – Modesto A. Maidique Campus**  
**11200 SW 8<sup>th</sup> Street – Miami, FL 33199 – MARC 290**

**Participants: Biographical Notes**

*Monday, October 28, 2019*



**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.

## PANEL I: MARKING ANNIVERSARIES

### The Start of WWII & the Invasion of Poland and the Fall of the Berlin Wall

**Moderator:** Beata Paszyc, Honorary Vice Consul of the Republic of Poland, and Executive Director, The American Institute of Polish Culture



**Rebecca Friedman, Ph.D.**  
*Associate Professor of History*  
*Director of the Wolfsonian Public Humanities Lab*  
*Faculty Fellow, Office of the Provost (2015-2019)*  
*Florida International University*

Rebecca Friedman directed the EU Center and European and Eurasian Studies for seven years and currently serves as Faculty Fellow in the Office of the Provost. She was recently named Director of the Wolfsonian Public Humanities Lab, one of FIU's emerging preeminent research programs.

She is just completing a monograph *Modernity, Domesticity and Temporality: Time at Home* being published by Bloomsbury Press. Her research is focused on modern Russian cultural and gender history. During her 19 years at FIU, Friedman has participated in multiple interdisciplinary programs and served in numerous administrative capacities, including GSIPA, the Humanities Program at BBC and Women's Studies.



**Martin Palouš**  
*SIPA Senior Fellow*  
*Director of SIPA's Václav Havel Center of Human Rights and Diplomacy Initiative*  
*Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs*  
*Florida International University*

Ambassador Martin Palouš is a Senior Fellow at Florida International University's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), and Director of SIPA's Václav Havel Center for Human Rights and Diplomacy initiative.

Born in Prague on October 14, 1950, Mr. Palouš received his PhD in chemistry from Charles University, Prague, in 1973, and went on to study philosophy and social sciences (graduating in 1977). He also studied law (1996-1999, 2002-2005), completing his PhD in international law in 2000 at Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic, with a dissertation entitled Freedom of Expression at the beginning of the 21st Century.

In 2001, he defended his higher doctorate in political and became associate professor at Charles University in Prague.

One of the first signatories of the 1986 Charter 77, Martin served as spokesman for this dissident human rights group. A founding member of the Civic Forum (November 1989), he was elected to the Czechoslovakian Federal Assembly in 1990 and became a member of its Foreign Affairs Committee. He joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Czechoslovakia as adviser to Minister Dienstbier and was Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs from October 1990 to October 1992. From October 1998 through September 2001, he served as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the newly formed Czech Republic, and was then asked by President Václav Havel to travel to Washington, D.C. as Ambassador Extraordinary and

Plenipotentiary of the Czech Republic to the United States from September 2002 to November 2005. Dr. Palouš was then designated as Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the United Nations, where he served in New York from 2006 through 2010.

Mr. Palouš has held a number of teaching positions at Charles University, since 1990. He became a member of the Faculty of Social Sciences (the Institute of Foreign Relations) in 1994 and served for some time as the Faculty's Vice-Dean. In 1993, he joined the Centre for Theoretical Studies (research centre run jointly by Charles University and the Czech Academy of Sciences, headed by Ivan M. Havel). He has lectured extensively in the United States. In 1993-1994 he was a visiting professor at Northwestern University, in 1995-1996 an associated professor at Central European University in Budapest. Until 1998 he was also active in various non-governmental organizations (Chairman of the Czech Helsinki Committee, Co-Chairman of the Helsinki Citizens Assembly).

Mr. Palouš is the author of numerous publications, including the chapter on the Czech Republic in the European Commission publication *Democratization in Central and Eastern Europe*, "Totalitarianism and Authoritarianism", in the *Encyclopedia of Violence, Peace and Conflict* (1999), "Between Idealism and Realism: Reflections on the Political Landscape of Postcommunism", in *Between Past and Future: "The Revolutions of 1989 and their Aftermath* (2000), and most recently "What Kind of God Does Human Rights Require?", in *Does Human Rights Need God?* (2005), "Common Sense and the Rule of Law", in *Philosophy, Literature and Politics* (2005). He translates the works of Hannah Arendt and Eric Voegelin. Mr. Palouš is married to Pavla Palousova, nee Nemcova. They have two children: Michal (1986) and Johana (1989).



**Beata Paszyc**  
*Honorary Vice Consul of the Republic of Poland*  
*And Executive Director of the American Institute of Polish Culture*

Beata M. Paszyc is the Honorary Vice Consul of the Republic of Poland and the Executive Director of The American Institute of Polish Culture, both in Miami, FL. With a Masters from the Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland in English literature and linguistics, and coursework in a Ph.D. program in Sociolinguistics at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., she spent a number of years as a Polish-English translator and interpreter at the White House and other government agencies, for businesses like National Public Radio, and for dignitaries such as astronaut John Glenn and Nobel Prize poet, Wislawa Szymborska.

Mrs. Paszyc's has led the non-profit organization, The American Institute of Polish Culture for the past 20 years, utilizing her skills in management, diplomacy, marketing, and publishing. She has built countless worldwide alliances with the media, universities, corporations, government agencies, diplomats, artists, scholars, and event sponsors. She organizes and oversees large scale national and international cultural and educational programs, coordinates fundraising events, designs scholarship and outreach programs, and produces several publications, magazines, invitations, brochures and educational materials.

As an Honorary Vice Consul representing Poland for two decades, Mrs. Paszyc is not only responsible for arranging and supervising visits of international dignitaries within the parameters of diplomatic protocol and Homeland Security regulations, but also advising international students on such issues as immigration policies and employment in the US, and acting as a liaison with the Polish Embassy and Consulate General in Washington, D.C. for private citizens in distress and other consular matters.

Her interests include photography, traveling, literature and coaching. She resides in Miami Beach with her husband and daughter.



**Suzanne Zwingel, Ph.D**

*Associate Professor, Politics & International Relations  
Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs  
Florida International University*

Dr. Zwingel received her Ph. D. in Political Science from Ruhr University Bochum, Germany, and an M.A. in Politics and Sociology from Hamburg University, Germany. Before joining the Department of Politics and International Relations at FIU in 2014, she worked as Associate Professor of Politics at the State University of New York in Potsdam, NY.

Dr. Zwingel's research interests include international women's rights norms and their translation; gender equality advocacy around the world; global governance and gender; feminist, constructivist and post-colonial IR theories; and gender and armed conflict. Publications in her fields of expertise include journal articles (e.g. "How Do Norms Travel? Theorizing International Women's Rights In Transnational Perspective", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 56, 2012) and co-edited volumes (with Elisabeth Prügl and Gülay Caglar: *Feminist Strategies in International Governance*, Routledge, 2013). In 2016, she published a monograph titled "Translating International Women's Rights: The CEDAW Convention in Context" (with Palgrave Macmillan). The focus of this book is on the diverse connections between internationally codified women's rights and real-life contexts as well as on the agency that is necessary to integrate rights into women's lives. For a complete list of publications please see her CV.

A project Dr. Zwingel is currently working on is finding reasonable ways of assessing outcomes of gender equality policies beyond mere numerical measuring (see in this context her co-authored piece with Debra J. Liebowitz, "Gender Equality Oversimplified: Using CEDAW to Counter the Measurement Obsession", *International Studies Review*, Vol. 16, 2014). In the future, Dr. Zwingel plans to investigate the role of translators in international organizations.

At FIU, Dr. Zwingel teaches International Relations Theories, Men and Women in International Relations, Political Repression and Human Rights, among other courses. As a German national who is also fluent in English and Spanish, she is excited to contribute to FIU's multicultural and dynamic community.

## PANEL II: STATE OF DEMOCRACY: TODAY IN CENTRAL EUROPE

**Moderator:** Markus Thiel, Associate Professor, Politics & International Relations; Director, Miami-Florida Jean Monnet Center of Excellence, FIU



**Ian Brzezinski**  
*American Foreign Policy and Military Affairs Expert*

Ian Brzezinski leads the Brzezinski Group, LLC, a consulting firm advising commercial and government clients on international security policy, government relations, business development and political risk. He is a Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council's Brent Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security and its Future Europe Initiative.

Mr. Brzezinski's background includes five years in defense industry as a Principal at Booz Allen Hamilton providing policy and technical support to United States combatant commands and international military establishments. He served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Europe and NATO Policy from 2001 to 2005 during which his responsibilities included, NATO expansion, Alliance force planning and transformation and NATO operations in the Balkans, the Mediterranean, Afghanistan and Iraq. Mr. Brzezinski served for seven years on Capitol Hill, first as a Legislative Assistant for National Security Affairs to the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, Senator Bill Roth, (1995–2000) and then as a Senior Professional Staff Member on the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations (2000–1).



**Thaddeus Kontek**  
*Former Foreign Service Officer at U.S. Department of State*

Thaddeus Kontek is a lecturer at Collegium Civitas in Warsaw, Poland. He was a Foreign Service Officer at the U.S. State Department from 1999-2017. From 2015, he was an Intelligence Analyst covering Russia and Eastern and Central Europe in the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research where he prepared assessments for the President of the United States, the Secretary of State and other senior government officials. His diplomatic overseas posting have included the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon, and the U.S. Mission to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Vienna, Austria. He also served at the U.S. Embassies in Baghdad, Iraq; Bridgetown, Barbados; Antananarivo, Madagascar; Moroni, Comoros; and Minsk, Belarus. At the State Department in Washington, he served as the Regional Labor Officer for the countries of the former Soviet Union and as Ukraine Desk Officer.

Prior to his diplomatic service, he held positions at the U.S. Departments of Labor and Treasury, the Executive Office of the President, the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Peace Corps in Warsaw, Poland.

Mr. Kontek received a bachelor's degree in International Relations from the American University in Washington, D.C., a Master's Degree (ABD) in Economics from the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia, and a Master's Degree in Strategic Intelligence from the National Intelligence University in Washington, D.C.





**Tatiana Kostadinova, Ph.D**  
*Professor, Politics & International Relations*  
*Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs*  
*Florida International University*

Professor Kostadinova received her Ph.D. from the Florida State University in 2000. Her research and teaching interests include political institutions with a special emphasis on electoral systems and reform, East European democratic transition, and comparative public policy. She has been the recipient of several grants, among which the American Political Science Small Research Grant (2002) and a Fellowship Program Award from the German Marshall Fund of the United States (2003-2004). Professor Kostadinova's first book, *Bulgaria 1879-1946: The Challenge of Choice* (Columbia University Press), explores Bulgarian parliamentary elections, party strategies, and voter behavior. Her 2012 book, *Political Corruption in Eastern Europe: Politics After Communism* (Lynne Rienner) analyzes the emergence of corruption as a major obstacle to successful democratic transition. Other publications include book chapters and journal articles in *American Journal of Political Science*, *Electoral Studies*, *Journal of Peace Research*, *European Journal of Political Research*, *Political Research Quarterly*, *Party Politics*, and *Europe-Asia Studies*.

Professor Kostadinova's primary teaching area is comparative politics. At the undergraduate level, she teaches courses in Russian and Eastern European politics, electoral behavior, and research methods. Her graduate level courses include seminars on institutional choice, democratic transitions, political parties, and advanced research.



**Markus Thiel, Ph.D.**  
*Associate Professor, Politics & International Relations*  
*Director Miami-Florida Jean Monnet Center of Excellence*  
*Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs*  
*Florida International University*

Markus Thiel is associate professor in the Department of Politics and International Relations at Florida International University, Miami and director of FIU's Jean Monnet Center of Excellence. Dr. Thiel's research interests are the political sociology of the EU and European (Union) Politics more generally, as well as Nationalism & Identity Politics. He graduated with a Ph.D. from the University of Miami in 2005 and has published several EU-related articles and book chapters in peer-reviewed journals. In addition, his research on the political sociology of the EU produced the monograph, *'The Limits of Transnationalism'* (Palgrave, 2011), and 5 co-edited volumes on: *'Diversity and the European Union'* (with Lisa Pruegl, Palgrave, 2009), *'Identity Politics in the Age of Globalization'* (with Roger Coate, Lynne Rienner/First Forum Press, 2010), *'European Identity & Culture: Narratives of Transnational Belonging'* (with Rebecca Friedman, Ashgate, 2012), *'Sexualities in World Politics: How LGBTQ Claims Shape International Relations'* (with Manuela Picq, Routledge, 2015) and *'EU Development Policies between Norms and Geopolitics'* (with Sarah Beringer & Sylvia Maier, Palgrave, 2019). Most recently, he published a book on the linkage of European transnational civil society groups with the EU Fundamental Rights Agency: *'EU Civil Society and Human Rights Advocacy'* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017).

He teaches CPO 3103 Comparative (Western) European Politics, CPO 3104 EU Politics, INR 3214 International Relations of Europe, INR 3502 International Organizations, as well as graduate courses on European/EU Politics, International Organization and Research Design in IR. He supervises doctoral students in the areas of EU Politics and International Organizations.