

TRANSREGIONAL CENTER FOR DEMOCRATIC STUDIES

bulletin

CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE • SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA • LATIN AMERICA

Was Pontius Pilate a Liberal Democrat? Democracy Between Relativism and the Absolute

ADAM MICHNIK

Reading Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger

When Pilate put Jesus to death, was he being a democrat?

In asking this question, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger – today's Pope Benedict XVI – began his polemic with a certain theory of democracy, which he ascribed to Hans Kelsen, the Austrian theorist of law.

As we remember, Pilate asked Jesus, "So what is truth after all?" The question – Ratzinger explained – represented for Kelsen, "an expression of the skepticism that is indispensable for a politician." It was directed not so much at Jesus as at the audience. Pilate made his decision conditional on the "voice of the people, and acted like a genuine democrat: not knowing what is just, he leaves the decision to the majority."

According to Kelsen – Ratzinger noted – Pilate "appears to us as the symbol of a relativistic and skeptical democracy which is not based on values and truth but on procedures," because for a relativist and a skeptic "there is no truth other than the truth of the majority." And Ratzinger added: "The fact that a just man, who had done no wrong, had been sentenced to death does not seem to worry Kelsen."

continued on page 4

Dear Friends,

This issue of our *Bulletin* is an accurate reflection of how busy the fall semester has been since the moment we returned from our Krakow summer institute, glimpses of which, by participant Piotr Kuczynski were recently exhibited in the NSSR lobby and are presented here in the *Bulletin's* first use of photos. Charles Gati offers a piece that follows up on his participation in a provocative panel discussion at NSSR on October 2, "The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: Fifty Years On." On October 30, we hosted a former Krakow faculty member, Jorge Castañeda, until recently the Foreign Minister of Mexico, in a talk on the challenges to democratization in our own hemisphere. A week later the former Political Adviser to the Prime Minister of Kosovo, Anna Di Lellio, gave a talk on "What We Owe Kosovo," excerpts of which we offer here. And on November 13, the Wolff Conference Room was filled to capacity on the occasion of what many consider an historic lecture by Adam Michnik, which is presented here in its entirety.

As we go to press, we are gearing up for our 8th *Democracy & Diversity* Summer Institute in Cape Town, South Africa, whose rich offerings include a course on media and the public sphere co-taught by our brilliant South African alumnus William Gumede and a leading media expert from Poland, Karol Jakubowicz, who was warmly received as a guest speaker in Krakow last summer.

It seems that our Transregional Center for Democratic Studies is already fast becoming a trans-divisional center of our University, with initiatives that increasingly engage virtually all divisions of The New School, including a growing collaboration between the NSSR and Lang College, which we will tell you more about in our next issue.

As we invite you to look through this window into our life at TCDS, we also wish you time for reflection and refreshment during the holiday season, inspiration in your work, a New Year of fruitful scholarship and harmonious collaborations, and the strength to keep advocating for dialogue, non-violent resolutions of conflict, a more civil society, and peace.

With warmest wishes,

Elzbieta Matynia
Director, TCDS

Our Krakow

Photos by

PIOTR KUCZYNSKI

From July 10 - 28, 2006, TCDS hosted its fifteenth annual *Democracy & Diversity* Institute at Przegorzaly Castle in Krakow, Poland. The name of the institute – *Democracy & Diversity* – not only reflects the subject matter of its seminars and lectures, but is also indicative of its participants. This year's institute brought together 41 young scholars and civil society organization workers from a total of 16 countries in Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus, Latin America, East Africa, Western Europe, and North America. Through daily seminars, evening lectures, study tours, shared meals, and everyday interactions, the institute created an intimate and intellectually vibrant dynamic among the participants. Through their experiences at the institute, the participants were able to forge meaningful contacts with one another and with institute faculty, and become a part of TCDS's global learning network, which continues to assist them in their career-building efforts and professional development.



PIOTR KUCZYNSKI was a TCDS fellow at the *Democracy & Diversity* Institute in July 2006. He studies at Eugene Lang College and Parsons. These black and white photographs capture an unobstructed view of life at the Krakow institute and provide insight to the intimate environment experienced in Krakow. Piotr is currently working on a long-term project embracing nostalgia and memory and his youth in Poland.

The Revolt that didn't have to Fail

CHARLES GATI

Fifty years ago this October, 200,000 of us stood on Kossuth Square in front of Hungary's huge Parliament Building, waiting for the arrival of Imre Nagy.

From 1953 to 1955, until the Kremlin decided to oust him, he was the country's prime minister. An anti-Stalinist Marxist-Leninist, he sought a socialist but somewhat more democratic and more independent Hungary. So did we. He was the man who was going to change our lives forever.

At 9 p.m. on Oct. 23, 1956, Nagy finally appeared on the Parliament's balcony; when he did, the silence was sudden and palpable. "Comrades," he began—and the crowd replied: "We're not comrades any more!" Nagy didn't recover until the end of his speech, when he sang the Hungarian national anthem. We sang with him.

Much as he despised his hard-line comrades, Nagy was a party loyalist. He went to party headquarters later that evening, where the Stalinist old guard appointed him prime minister once again. There, although he knew that the first large-scale anti-Soviet revolt in history was under way, shootings had begun—after state radio denied the students' demand to air their program—he didn't know what to make of it.

For four long days, he hesitated. If he had supported the revolt from the beginning—if he had led it away from inflated expectations toward a moderate dénouement—and if the United States had supported him, the Hungarians might have realized some, though certainly not all, of their goals. And if they had succeeded, there might have been a period of détente in the second half of the 1950s. After all, just a year earlier, in 1955, Moscow had made three striking concessions. Having said "nyet" for a decade, the Kremlin withdrew the Soviet Army from occupied Austria; made peace with Marshall Tito of Yugoslavia, an independent-minded Communist; and held a summit with President Dwight Eisenhower in Geneva—the first such high-level contact between the two

countries since World War II.

Perhaps more important, at the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in February 1956, the Kremlin both confirmed and accelerated the processes of de-Stalinization. Archival evidence and several Soviet leaders' memoirs indicate that Moscow was also prepared to give the Soviet Union's satellite states more elbow room, although not Austrian-like neutrality.

The record of their secret deliberations during the Hungarian crisis shows that on Oct. 30 the presidium (as the Soviet politburo was then called) made a unanimous decision against military intervention. The record is spotty, but the Kremlin appears to have believed that Imre Nagy could and would save "the cause of socialism" for them. But then, in 24 hours, the presidium reversed itself and opted for military intervention. Why? One reason was a breakdown in the relative calm and order that had prevailed in Budapest for a couple of days. On Oct. 30, ugly atrocities took place at Republic Square, in front of the party's municipal headquarters. There were also signs that the "Hungarian virus" was spreading.

Meanwhile, the Suez crisis increasingly preoccupied the British and the French, and the United States was just a week away from the November 1956 presidential elections. Having professed since 1952 to seek the "liberation" of Eastern Europe and the "rollback" of Soviet power, Washington remained all but silent during the Hungarian crisis. On Oct. 27, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles issued an ambiguous statement that was so nuanced as to give rise to conflicting interpretations in Moscow, Budapest and in Western European capitals.

The United States didn't put the Hungarian issue on the agenda of the United Nations until after the Soviet intervention.

The CIA had but one agent in Budapest (the only Hungarian-speaking official at the U.S. Legation during the revolt), and all other CIA officials were forbidden to enter the country's territory. We also know now that Washington made no effort to find out if Moscow was interested in finding a compromise solution. Washington's lack of useful engagement gave new meaning to the acronym NATO, which now stood for No Action, Talk Only. On the one hand, Radio Free Europe egged on the Hungarians to seek a knockout victory—even offering advice on how to make Molotov cocktails. On the other, Vice President Richard Nixon, a leading hypocrite, had noted at a top-secret meeting back in July already that "it wouldn't be an unmixed evil" if the Soviet iron fist were to come down on the Soviet satellites. After the crackdown, President Eisenhower said of the Hungarians: "Poor fellows, poor fellows. I think about them all the time. I wish there were some way of helping them."

Among a few moderate dissenters was the legendary columnist Walter Lippmann, who understood that advocating full freedom and independence was as unrealistic as doing nothing was irresponsible. He knew that the revolt did not have to fail. "In the interest of peace and freedom," he wrote at the beginning of the crisis, on Oct. 26, "we must hope that for a time, not forever but for a time, the uprising in the satellite orbit will be stabilized at Titoism." He wanted America to use its considerable influence to encourage evolutionary goals and work toward partial gains. In official Washington, however, the excuse of helplessness replaced the myth of liberation.

In Budapest, belief in an elusive victory stifled the search for a *modus vivendi*. In Moscow, a brutal Stalinist military intervention crushed the promise of de-Stalinization and détente. With a bit of wisdom and circumspection—keeping firmly in mind that something is better than nothing—it didn't have to end this way.

CHARLES GATI teaches at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies and has just published *Failed Illusions: Moscow, Washington, Budapest, and the 1956 Hungarian Revolt*.

This work originally appeared in the *International Herald Tribune*.

continued from page 1

I

It is not entirely clear what set of views and attitudes is referred to here as relativism. No democrat will claim that truth does not exist, though he will note that what was once regarded as indisputable truth often turned out to have been simply the truth of its time. Any democrat will say that he does not want to live in a state where everything is allowed, but he will add that there exist issues on whose truthfulness he would not dare to pass judgment because he knows the limits of his own cognition. Hence the democrat is often skeptical towards institutions and people who present their views as revealed truth.

I do not think there are grounds for accusing the democrat-skeptic of indifference with regard to the crucifixion of Jesus. Contrary to what Ratzinger believes, the trial of Jesus does not illustrate a system of relativistic democracy, where the “truth of the majority” decides, but rather, it is the prototypical court murder where the sentence is passed by the mob. It is not “relativistic democracy” that condemned Jesus to death but the fanaticism of the crowd and the opportunism of Pilate, who preferred to stand with the crowd rather than with the lone defendant.

The democrat-skeptic has no ambition to enter into a fundamental dispute with the Catholic Church’s supreme authority. These notes, scribbled down in the margin of one’s readings of Ratzinger, are a record of the reflections and doubts of someone who has immense respect for the Church but whose respect is streaked with fear. The Church for him is like fire: you can warm yourself by it, but you can also get a bad burn. The author of these words has experienced both.

II

The specificity of Poland – Europe’s most Catholic country – illustrates perfectly well the challenges the Catholic Church faces today. In its search for an answer to the challenges of secularization, the crisis of democratic institutions, and the new totalitarian temptations, Polish Catholicism – following a period of forced unity under

communism – is highly diverse. That has been evident during the great public debates: over the new Polish constitution, EU accession, abortion laws, or the controversial Radio Maryja, with its peculiar mixture of Catholic fundamentalism, ethnic nationalism, and social demagoguery.

The argument that keeps reappearing in the Church hierarchy’s statements is that values are not subject to voting: if something is a value, it cannot be decided on by the majority. But what does this general and obviously true axiological judgment mean when translated into the language of real politics? That the Church’s views should be automatically passed by parliament as laws.



Photo by Irena Chalecka
Adam Michnik, The New School for Social Research,
November, 2006

Besides a position that accepts the principles of the democratic state of law and of friendly separation of Church and state, there also surfaced within the Church hierarchy views harking back to pre-1939 stereotypes, with that era’s typical aggressive nationalism and anti-liberal phobia. The spirit and language of the Second Vatican Council have evaporated almost without a trace. Instead, we hear echoes of the Manichean division between good and evil, and the language of contempt and suspicion so typical of totalitarian rhetoric, exposing the Church’s alleged camouflaged enemies, referred to as the “pinks,” i.e. the “crypto-reds,” or the “Catho-left.”

The Church hierarchy’s tolerance for the rhetoric of the far right has been an element of this spiritual landscape. It has been

accompanied by a violent attack on the demon of “liberalism” or “relativism” – as the Catholic right calls the ideas of its adversaries, gladly underpinning their argument with the peculiarly interpreted opinions of the incumbent Pope. It is these constituencies, let us add, that form today’s governing coalition in Poland. Their discourse combines orthodox Catholic rhetoric with nationalism. So it is no accident that their ideologues never quote, for instance, the following words of Ratzinger: “Nationalism brought [...] Europe to the brink of destruction; it contradicts what Europe essentially stands for, spiritually and politically – even though it dominated the recent decades of European history.”

The Polish Catholic right is nationalistic and euroskeptic. It is also deeply anti-liberal. Following the fall of communism, it is “relativistic liberalism” that has become – according to these self-proclaimed anti-relativists – the main enemy of the public good and the Christian value system. They have declared a war against it that they present as a struggle between good and evil, light and darkness, idealism and materialism, purity and corruption. For them, “the liberal” is God’s enemy. The spirit of the French Revolution and materialism are his ideals. Only recently the servant of Marxism and Bolshevism, he has now put himself at the service of the unscrupulous market and an unbridled lust for power. Liberalism destroys marriage, the family, the love of one’s country, the Catholic Church, morality. That is why societies have to defend themselves against liberal influences in the arts, press, film, literature, science, economy, and politics.

Ratzinger surely knows this kind of rhetoric. It is the language of the Protestant theologians who in 1933 voiced their support for Hitler. At that time, it was the Jew that was branded the demon of evil.

Today, after the historic gestures made by Pope John Paul II, no Christian will repeat these criminal idiocies. And no Christian theologian will declare himself to be an anti-Semite. Today, this discourse has replaced the Jew with the relativist liberal, someone who refuses to believe the holders of absolute truth and demands respect for the rights of all citizens, including homosexuals.

III

Ratzinger is an enemy neither of modernity nor of democracy. What's more, he is a man of dialogue who feels at home in the world of democratic debate. In his writing, subtle and sophisticated, there is nothing of the brute crudity of the Polish Catholic right. The conservative spirit harmonizes there with respect for the democratic order, even though it is accompanied by the critical intuition that contemporary democracy is being threatened by the same kind of madness that manifested itself in the totalitarianisms of the 20th century.

Ratzinger believes that the modern separation of religion and law is a positive thing. At the same time, he demands that a "common respect for moral values and God, underlying official law," be acknowledged as a condition of democracy. In his view, this "includes tolerance and an appropriate space for atheists, and must not have anything to do with religious constraint." Democracy can only function when the conscience works, and the latter has nothing to say if it is not "guided by Christianity's fundamental moral values, applicable also outside the Catholic faith, and even in the context of a non-Christian religion."

These words bespeak an approval of pluralism; it is, however, a pluralism with limits. Ratzinger accurately names the ailments of contemporary – and not only Polish – democracy, where everything is for sale, including votes and experts' views, and where opinion polls, "TV viewing levels," and circulation figures become all-important, and newspapers turn into tabloids in the pursuit of profits. This is how mores change, ideas are abandoned, moral standards break. In a world dominated by money, the spirit of corruption reaches for power. The angel of tolerance and representational democracy is being squeezed out by the demon of populism and corrupted democracy. Ratzinger sees this as the triumph of relativism and connects the new culture to the popularization of the philosophical ideas of the Enlightenment and liberalism.

The democrat-skeptic will note first that what seems new is not new at all, because democracy has been criticized since its very inception. He will also note that the liberal

confession of a belief in reason, liberty, and pluralism is as critical of corrupted democracy as is Ratzinger himself. He will not, however, stop repeating that he believes the political ambitions of Catholic fundamentalism – accompanied by populism and nationalism – pose a threat to democracy in Poland.

Is it possible – through constitutional or administrative means – to transform a sinful democracy, also referred to as a "democracy without values," into a "democracy of values"? Will this not inevitably undermine the very foundation of democracy – i.e., liberty? Will the ailments of democracy mentioned by Ratzinger disappear if we write into the constitution that "God is the supreme value"?

The Polish democrat-skeptic has to voice his skepticism. All the public debates in which the Polish Church has taken a stand indicate that no law has ever improved the quality of public morality: the politicians and journalists have not become more honest, perhaps only more opportunistic with regard to the Church hierarchs' demands. And it is not just from one Polish bishop that we have heard demands aimed at nothing else but a cementing and broadening of their own institutional and material power.

The Polish constitution was endorsed in a universal referendum, despite the bishops' reservations. The same bishops who were very sparing in their criticism of the communist authorities during martial law, did not spare critical, or actually insulting, words for the post-communist parties elected in a democratic ballot.

In the debate on squaring accounts with communism and its people, we did not hear appeals for forgiveness and reconciliation, but rather, there emerged a tone of triumph and revenge, a spirit of re-conquest rather than reconciliation. The logic of the Polish transformation consisted in negotiation and compromise. Those were made in the name of the common good – social peace, a bloodless course of the democratic process. The Great Change was symbolized by the Round Table, not by the guillotine. On this profoundly moral and highly divisive issue the Church has not spoken clearly on behalf of reconciliation in truth.

Two visions clashed in the constitutional

debate: one, of a Catholic state of the Polish nation, and the other, of a republic of citizens. We did not hear from the Polish bishops any declarations on behalf of a state of equal civic rights versus a state of privileges for Catholics.

This is how the dispute between the skeptics and the moral absolutists is shaping up in Poland.

IV

We lived for many years under an ideological dictatorship. We rebelled against it in the name of truth, freedom, dialogue. We opposed the self-proclaimed holders of absolute truths with the right to search, to doubt, to be skeptical. We believed that laws should be passed only by a democratically elected parliament, and that neither the Constitution nor the statutes were divine revelation or absolute truth but rather the result of compromise. In a pluralistic society, the constitution is always the result of compromise. In the end, it is the majority that decides.

But then I read Ratzinger, saying that such a line of reasoning leads to the conclusion that there can be no other principle in politics than the decision of the majority, which – in the life of the state – is to replace truth: "And truth is not a product of politics, i.e., the majority, but it precedes any political activity, as it illuminates the path of politics. The majority," says Ratzinger, "can err." These errors, I read, "can pertain not only to peripheral fields of life but can also challenge fundamental values, as the result of which there is nothing to guarantee human dignity and human rights – causing the very goal of freedom to collapse." The democrat-skeptic, says Ratzinger, is "so sure his views are right that he has to impose them also on people who do not share the relativist position. This inevitably results in cynicism."

The democrat-skeptic will say to this: sure, the majority can err. The point is that everyone can err – people, nations, governments, churches, parliaments. The majority can be manipulated and hand power over to people unworthy of it. This is, I believe, what has happened in my country. But do I have the right to say that if the majority has made a wrong – in my view – choice, then

some minority should invalidate this choice? If the majority can err, is not the same true of the minority? The times when the Church acted as the supreme authority are, as Ratzinger himself points out, gone forever.

There remains the question of cynicism. Is it cynical to believe that, in a democracy, decisions should be made by the majority, with respect for the rights of minorities, or is it a dangerous cocktail of cynicism and fanaticism to believe that there exists a minority, enlightened by the light of truth, that knows better, and can thus impose its will on the majority?

V

The democrat-skeptic honestly agrees with Ratzinger that in “today’s times the fundamental problem is the blindness that our reason manifests towards the transcendental dimension of reality.” And yet, living without a fear of the Last Judgment, the democrat-skeptic knows that “truth” and “freedom” are not values that originate from a simple, rational calculation; he knows that, becoming involved in defending those values, he does so to obey an inner voice, which he calls the conscience. This voice is necessary in any public debate. When it is lacking, the debate degenerates into a vanity fair where arrogance and lies rule supreme.

Ratzinger believes that democratic “institutions cannot exist and act without common ethical views. Those, in turn, cannot be derived from purely empirical reason,” but must be rooted in religion, whereas those that “dissociate themselves from the great ethical and religious forces of their own history, culture and the nation, commit suicide.” “We must,” Ratzinger writes, “cultivate the important moral values, must preserve and protect them as the common good, without imposing them on anyone – that is what I regard as the necessary condition of freedom in spite of all nihilism and its totalitarian consequences.”

The democrat-skeptic will gladly agree with that view – with just one underlining. The key expression for him will be “without imposing them on anyone,” because the democrat-skeptic believes that moral values, when “imposed,” immediately turn from the common good into the “common evil.” He

believes so from the vantage point of the last dozen or so years of Polish history, but also because of his conviction that the “pathology of religion,” as Ratzinger calls it, “is the human spirit’s most serious ailment.” Ratzinger mentions the pre-Columbian Aztecs, who made bloody sacrifices to their Sun-god, as an extreme example of such a pathology. Another example is provided by the Polish philosopher Marian Zdziechowski who, writing about the Inquisition in his essay *On Cruelty*, wondered, “How can cruelty go hand in hand with a belief in God? How to explain the perversion in mind and character because of which people who, by vocation and by office, served God and God’s cause, could believe that they served it well by torturing other people?” Zdziechowski found no answer.

VI

The democrat-skeptic respects this honest confession of helplessness. He himself – like his great masters – is helpless when faced with such questions: he is convinced neither by the Marxist explanation nor by the Freudian one; he rejects Zarathustra’s advice: “if he falls, kick him.”

That is why, to return to the beginning, the story of Pontius Pilate is not an illustration of the laws governing the thinking and doings of the democrat-skeptic; instead, it is the sanctimonious Catholic apologetics’ anti-rational stereotype of the liberal or secular humanist.

The democrat-skeptic is convinced that the human sense of justice and tolerance makes democracy possible, but that the human tendency to injustice and intolerance makes it necessary. The democrat-skeptic’s relativism does not mean a lack of respect for moral values, but rather a respect for diversity. The democrat-skeptic believes that the homo religiosus is a reality as empirical as the homo scepticus. They can argue, but they have to learn to live with each other.

The democrat-skeptic knows that, when meeting a democrat-Christian, he has to put his views in metaphysical brackets. He has to tell himself that if so many scholars assure him in good faith that religion is the result of external conditions, a kind of false consciousness, then perhaps his atheism – or agnosticism – is also the result of external

conditions, a false consciousness of another kind.

The democrat-skeptic knows that it is not easy to live with such a consciousness. He says, “I don’t believe I can be holy and I don’t believe I will be saved, but that does not mean I can behave like a bastard.”

The democrat-skeptic would never accept applying the principle of parliamentary majority in the field of the judiciary. In fact, did anyone carry out a vote in the crowd that shouted, “Crucify him!?” What guided that crowd? The democrat-skeptic does not think it was religious feelings: religion would have reminded those people of the simple commandment – thou shalt not kill! Much less does he think that they were guided by the spirit of liberal skepticism; it would have told them, “when in an emotional crowd, do not adjudicate on someone else’s life; you didn’t give that life so you aren’t in a position to destroy it.”

One cannot fail to recall that it was not democrats-skeptics who sacrificed people to the Aztec gods; it was not they who condemned heretics and disobedient philosophers to death, it was not they who acted as prosecutors and judges in Hitler’s and Stalin’s service. So who were those people? Fanatics possessed by a degenerate idea? Cynics? Monsters? Cowards? Whatever it is that guided them, they belied the values that Christianity had contributed to the world: faith, love, hope. And they contradicted the foundations of the democrat-skeptic’s value system: trust in human kindness, sense of brotherhood, dedication, and the obstinate voice of conscience.

And Pilate? Does this cowardly opportunist deserve to be called a skeptic? Is it necessary – as Joseph Ratzinger did – to quote Hans Kelsen in order to understand the nature of cowardice and opportunism? Is our world not full of such Pilates?

ADAM MICHNIK, legendary dissident, historian, writer, lecturer and one of Poland’s leading journalists, is co-founder and editor-in-chief of *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Poland’s largest and first independent daily newspaper.

What We Owe Kosovo

ANNA DI LELLIO

In 1999, the International Community— in its NATO incarnation – intervened in former Yugoslavia to strengthen the alliance, but also to stop the killing of Albanian civilians and avoid a humanitarian catastrophe. After the military intervention the international community – this time the UN, NATO, and OSCE – established an interim international trusteeship that suspended Serbia’s sovereignty over Kosovo and set out to administer Kosovo’s transition to democratic and stable self-government. This year the international community – the Contact Group plus Russia, NATO and the UN –intervened again to mediate a negotiation between Serbia and Kosovo and decide the final status of Kosovo.

At each intervention, the international community has fallen short of its stated goals and the aspirations of the people it had committed to help: in the military intervention, it did not prevent a humanitarian catastrophe, although it arguably limited it; as a warden of Kosovo, while it helped in rebuilding local institutions and civil society, it failed in its fundamental task of establishing a culture of rule of law and human rights; and the current impasse of the negotiations on status is leading to an imposed solution that includes prolonged international tutelage of Kosovo, partition, and power sharing with Serbia—a very difficult plan to implement, with serious risks for regional stability and certainly an impediment to the integration of minorities.

The international community has consistently treated the people of Kosovo – no matter their ethnic belonging – as an object of intervention, protection, and control, rather than a subject. It owes Kosovo to stop acting *in loco parentis*.

It is a good start to look at Kosovo in a different way, not just a hostage of two competing nationalisms, but a place with a rich, never mono-ethnic past under powerful Empires. Kosovo arrived at the threshold of

modernity with an overwhelming majority of Albanians whose greatest aspiration was to become sovereign. Now Kosovo has the potential to do so and join the international community. As some among the most eminent members of the international community, countries such as Great Britain, France and the Netherlands, are grappling with their own problems with minorities, we owe Kosovo greater consistency. We ought to ask of Kosovo what we are asking of ourselves: the elimination of barriers that create fear, more and better integration, and respect for all communities, minority and majority. It is time to ask directly the people of Kosovo what they want to be.

The full text of Anna Di Lellio’s talk can be found on our website: www.newschool.edu/tcds.

ANNA DI LELLIO is the editor of *The Case of Kosova*. She has worked for years in Kosovo, most recently as political adviser to the Prime Minister, and previously as Media Commissioner. She currently teaches at The New School.

TCDS NEWS

WALDEMAR BULIRA (Krakow 2005) translated into Polish and edited *Agnes Heller: Lectures and Lublin Seminar*, which was published by UMCS Press, Lublin, 2006.

GODFREY CHESANG, (Cape Town 2002, NSST 2002), is working on a joint Post-Doctorate between the French Institute of South Africa and the Centre for African Studies (CEAN) at the University of Bourdeaux in France. His project, “Technologies and Trajectories of Insertion” explores the modes and strategies of insertion of African migrants to African cities.

FRANCK KAMUNGA CIBANGU (Cape Town 2005) contributed to a volume, *Views on Migration in sub-Saharan Africa*, published by the Human Sciences Research Council, July 2006.

MONICA CIOBANU (Krakow 2001, NSST Fellow 2003), is coordinating a network of research groups on 1989. For information, see: <http://www.cee-socialscience.net/1989/index.html>.

PIKI ISH-SHALOM (Krakow 1999; NSST 2000), lecturer at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, published an article written during his NSST fellowship, “The Triptych of Realism, Elitism, and Conservatism,” in the *International Studies Review*.

LOTAR RASINSKI (Krakow 1997), publisher for Wydawnictwo DWSE, an academic publishing house in Wroclaw, Poland, published two Polish-language books by NSSR faculty: *Liberalism’s Crooked Circle: Letters to Adam Michnik*, by Ira Katznelson, with an introduction by Elzbieta Matynia; and *Redistribution or Recognition? A Political-Philosophical Exchange*, by Nancy Fraser & Axel Honneth.

If you have news you would like to share, please send us an email at tcds@newschool.edu.

THE NEW SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH

Transregional Center for Democratic Studies
65 Fifth Avenue, Room 220
New York, NY 10003

TCDS Bulletin | Fall 2006

Transregional Center for Democratic Studies
East and Central Europe Program
Phone: 212.229.5580
Fax: 212.229.5894
Email: tcds@newschool.edu
www.newschool.edu/tcds

Elzbieta Matynia, *Director*

The activities of the TCDS/ECEP are made possible by the support of the Ford Foundation, the National Research Foundation in Johannesburg, the Open Society Institute, the Open Society Initiatives for Southern and West Africa, the OSI Burma Project/Southeast Asia Initiative, the Salus Mundi Foundation, national Soros foundations, the Aso Tavitian Foundation, and the U.S. Department of State.

Events/Announcements

OCTOBER 2

The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: Fifty Years On a panel discussion with Charles Gati (Professor of European Studies, Johns Hopkins University); Csaba Bekes (Founding Director, Cold War History Research Center); and Attila Szokolczai (Senior Research Fellow, the 1956 Institute, Budapest); moderated by Andrew Arato. Co-sponsored by The Hungarian Cultural Institute.

OCTOBER 30

Jorge Castaneda (Former Foreign Minister of Mexico) gave a talk on "Democracy in the Western Hemisphere: Prospects and Challenges." Co-sponsored by The National Endowment for Democracy and the Foreign Policy Association.

NOVEMBER 6

Anna Di Lellio (Former Political Advisor to the Prime Minister, Kosovo) gave a talk on "What We Owe Kosovo." Co-sponsored by the Howard M. Squadron Program in Media, Law and Society and the Program in Holocaust and Human Rights Studies, Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law.

NOVEMBER 30

Adam Michnik (Editor-in-Chief, *Gazeta Wyborcza*) gave a talk on "Was Pontius Pilate a Liberal Democrat? Democracy between Relativism and the Absolute." Co-sponsored by Eugene Lang College.

8th Annual Democracy & Diversity Summer Institute CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA, JANUARY 5-21, 2007

TCDS is pleased to announce the 8th annual *Democracy & Diversity* Graduate Summer Institute in Cape Town, South Africa, to be held in collaboration with the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA). During the highly intensive program, 40 civic-minded junior scholars and graduate students from sub-Saharan Africa, the US, Latin America, Central & Eastern Europe, and Southeast Asia will gather to examine current challenges to democracy in the host region and beyond.

The highly intensive program includes four core seminars led by faculty from NSSR and South Africa, and six Master Classes that provide a common thread for the institute's seminars, featuring speakers from South Africa and the region. The

curriculum is complemented by evening discussions with public intellectuals, policy makers, civic leaders, and scholars from the region; as well as study tours to the Langa and Khayalitsha townships, the District Six Museum, Robben Island, and the Cape peninsula.

The Institute will offer the following classes: **Economic Development and Global Governance** (Stephen Gelb, The EDGE Institute and University of the Witwatersrand; William Milberg, NSSR); **A Global Consensus? Democratization, Gender Equality, and Cultural Recognition** (Shireen Hassim, University of the Witwatersrand; Elzbieta Matynia, NSSR); **The Public Sphere: Problems of Democratic Culture, Social Change and Media** (William Gumede, University of the Witwatersrand and London School of Economics; Karol Jakubowicz, National Broadcasting Council of Poland); **Democracies & Boundaries: Conflicts about Membership, Borders, and Diversity** (David Plotke, NSSR).