

**THE RETURN  
OF THE FALLEN  
EMPIRES**



# **THE RETURN OF THE FALLEN EMPIRES**

Kraków 2015

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Edited by:

Danuta Glondys, Ph.D.

Ziemowit Józwiak

Coedited by:

Dominika Kasproicz, Ph.D.

Conference concept:

Dominika Kasproicz, Wojciech Przybylski

Cooperation: Olga Glondys

Translation:

Piotr Krasnowolski

Proofreading:

Martin Cahn

Photographs:

Tomasz Kizny

Paweł Mazur

Design and composition:

Piotr Hrehorowicz, Małgorzata Punzet, Inter Line SC

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# Introduction

**Dominika  
Kasprowicz**

The first fifteen years of the twenty-first century have opened a new chapter in the world's history. In analysts' opinion, its current content and following pages will be filled primarily with geopolitical events and technological innovations. The former will mainly include relatively new international conflicts (like in Libya, Syria and Ukraine) and escalation of the ongoing wars in Africa (Somalia, Sudan) and Middle East. The second subsection of the new chapter will deal with socio-political issues, especially growing protests against corporate globalization and their influence on institutions of liberal democracy. The last critical factor that manifests itself in various places of the world is the fundamentalist threat to the West.

All three themes, their origins and results are nothing new in a sense that they fit into a global pattern of the rise and fall of societies traceable back to the ancient times. However, the cycle of rise and decline appears to be accelerating under the influence of the digital revolution and technological innovations.

The main aim of a conference *The Return of the Fallen Empires* (14–15 October 2015, Villa Decius in Krakow) was to take a closer look at the new world order *in statu nascendi* from a perspective of historically significant global players and to address roles of old and new global powers, new areas of imperialism as well as the rise and fall of contemporary societies. The conference delivered inspiring intellectual contributions from internationally recognised public figures like Jeannette Bougrab and Pawel Kowal and outstanding academic experts: Giles Scott-Smith, Scott Lucas, Patrycja Sasnal, Emel Akçali, David Jones and Felix Kaputu. Two key-notes and panel debates, moderated by Wojciech Przybylski and Łukasz Fyderek, focused on the themes of *Goliath vs David* or the role of the United States global superpower and its counterparts and old-new arenas of imperialism, ie. Western Asia and North Africa.

The conference offered a space for reflection, rapprochement and provision of knowledge for the general public and professionals from the sector. The round-table talks held on the second day of the conference, opened by Hans Kolstad and moderated by Michal Vašečka, gathered numerous representatives of academic, political and cultural circles and NGOs from Poland and abroad. The topics' discussed were the socio-political implications of the geopolitical trends with special emphasis on the state institutions and its change, the rule of law and human rights in the times of hybrid wars and growing immigration.

*The Return of the Fallen Empires* conference was also a platform of awarding with *The Polish Prize of Sérgio Vieira de Mello, UN High Commissioner of Human Rights (2002–2003)* both persons and nongovernmental organisations from all over the world for their efforts in fostering peaceful cohabitation of communities, religions and cultures. This year, we had an honour and pleasure to host and award doctor Pietro Bartolo, who, for more than two decades, supervised and delivered the emergency medical response to the incessant waves of migrants and refugees passing through the island of Lampedusa and high representatives of the “La Strada” Foundation against Trafficking, and Slavery which, among other projects, conducts a program “The Prevention of trafficking of women from Central and Eastern Europe”. The Honorary Prize went to Sergey Kovalev – Russian intrepid defender of human rights and a symbol of fight for freedom and democracy .

The conference was 12. of the series of international seminars dedicated to the idea of freedom organised by the Villa Decius Association since 2002. This year it was organised together with “Res Publica Nowa” and Krakow academic communities.

# Welcome and Opening of the Conference

**Danuta Glondys** | Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to Villa Decius. Welcome to an exquisite conference that has gathered intellectuals, diplomats, local government authorities, students, and representatives of civil society acting in support of human rights and defending human dignity.

I would like to very warmly welcome the Consular Corps represented by Oleh Mandiuk, the Consul General of Ukraine, and the regional authorities represented by Krzysztof Markiel, the Director of the Regional Department of Culture. Let me welcome all the conference experts: Samuel Abraham from Slovakia, Emel Akçali from Cyprus, Joanna Bar from Poland and Jeanette Bougrab from France, Metin Bulut from Cyprus, Asli Erdoğan from Turkey, Łukasz Fyderek from Poland, Olga Glondys from Spain/Poland, David Jones from the United States, Felix Kaputu from Congo, Marcin Kędzierski and Tomasz Kizny from Poland, Hans Kolstad from Norway, Paweł Kowal and Beata Kowalska from Poland, Sergey Kovalev from the Russian Federation, Scott Lucas from the United Kingdom, Janusz Majcherek, Robert Piaskowski and Wojciech Przybylski also from Poland. Let me welcome Ziyad Raooof from Iraqi Kurdistan/Poland, Agnieszka Rozner from Poland, Hans Ingvar Roth from Sweden, Irakli Samkharadze from Georgia, Giles Scott-Smith from the Netherlands, Michał Sutowski from Poland, Elżbieta Świącicka from Sweden and Michal Vašečka from Slovakia. I welcome Ludmiła Boytsova, Sergey Kovalev's wife, Michał Kurkiewicz of the Polish National Remembrance Institute, Laura Koba of La Strada Foundation and also our conference bloggers in Polish and English: Gabriela Rogowska and Ziemowit Józwik.

Let me very warmly welcome and thank the sponsors of the Polish Sérgio Vieira de Mello Prize for their support and assistance: Wiesław Nowak and Karolina Wilkojć-Żesławska from ZUE S.A., Grzegorz Krawczyk from PZU Group, Urszula Podraza from Krakow Airport and Zdzisław Ingielewicz and Marek Żołąbowski of the Polish Steel Group.

The funders of today's events are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, the Municipality of Krakow, the Małopolska Regional Authorities and, the Donimirski Boutique Hotels and the Ars Modi Restaurant at the Villa Decius. Let me express our deep gratitude for your support.

Our conference, organised together with the Res Publica Nowa and the Krakow academic communities, is a continuation of a cycle of annual conferences and seminars dedicated to the idea of freedom.

**Bogusław Sonik** | I welcome you very warmly to *The Return of the Fallen Empires* conference which not only serves as a platform of reflection on current socio-political and human developments, but also gives an opportunity to bring back the memory of Sérgio Vieira de Mello, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the fact that we sometimes must pay with our life, the highest price for freedom. Thanks to the initiative of Danuta Glondys, the Prize has been awarded to people who continue his work for 12 years now.

Our conferences cross the borders of academic disciplines and relate to global international affairs, questions of freedom and current developments on local platforms. Today's conference will become a platform for discussion and reflection on the status of contemporary empires. We have all witnessed the collapse of the Soviet Union, but its substitute is being reborn along with others, some of which take completely new forms like Islamic State with its ideological message based on terror and death.

Nowadays we are not efficient in defending freedom. The USA used to stand guard for liberty and tried to defend it, sometimes imposing their idea of freedom, with its impact being the opposite. I believe that we will discuss this today and follow the lodestar of freedom as the most important value. And even if we are not perfect in spreading this idea, we will be defending it because the most important is that we never go astray from this path, the path of Sérgio Vieira de Mello whom we will be commemorating tonight.

**Krzysztof Markiel** | It is my great honour to welcome you on behalf of the communities of Kraków and Małopolska and the authorities governing this region but also in my own name as an old friend of this place. Villa Decius has always been a space where great people met and discussed or explored the challenges of the world. Here people were learning the ways of the world into the future.

I would like to thank you warmly for coming to our region, to Kraków, to this place. *The Rise of the Fallen Empires* is a very special question that is normally associated with a variety of feelings including that of domination, of having power over somebody. The notion of an empire has become very important for



the contemporary world. When we look at historical atlases and see the extent of various empires from the point of view of history, we can observe how these areas, those colourful stains on the map of the world, have been changing and how they are moving now and new borders are being defined. Yet, what is most important is what is happening to societies, to people, to individuals. The fate of the individual and one's experience should always be at the centre of our reflection. Thinking about the empire should include being aware of how civilisational and political changes or military issues, influence the fate of individuals.

Another important challenge of the 21st century is the future of communities steered both by ideological propaganda and new technologies. Both can serve global communication and allow us to live the world in real time, but only some can give everyone in every place all over the world the possibility of speaking up. These new technologies today shape our imagination and can influence the way we perceive reality, how we feel about certain situations, and how we judge ourselves and others. I believe that what we all need is a wise and deep reflection over the world which is based on freedom, sovereignty and also on self-determination. I hope that today Villa Decius will become the place of such a reflection and it is my most sincere wish for all of us today.

**Dominika  
Kasprowicz**  
on behalf of  
**Rafał  
Trzaskowski,**  
Secretary of  
State Ministry  
of Foreign  
Affairs

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to very warmly congratulate the representatives of the Villa Decius Association in Kraków for organising this conference with such a significant title – *The Return of the Fallen Empires*. I have had the opportunity to participate in the events organised by the Villa Decius Association and thus all the sadder I am not to be able to be with you in this exceptional meeting place of inspiring debates concerning the world of politics, culture and economy.

The developments over recent years have proved that the end of history was announced too early. The balance of power in the world continues to evolve much like the zones of influence of the former and current empires. It is important that the voice of Europe is also heard in this global game of powers. Let us not forget that despite the numerous crises that we are facing in everyday life, the EU is not only an economic power, but also and primarily the most tolerant, safe and open place in the world. Thanks to the implementation of the ideas of the founding fathers and after nearly five decades of peaceful

cooperation, the community of states that we live in is the promised land for many people in the world. The universal values on which modern Europe has been built are its greatest treasure and its hallmark.

In this context, I would like to congratulate the Laureates of the Polish Sérgio Vieira de Mello Prize very warmly. History proves that the promotion of human rights, the cherishing of peaceful coexistence and cooperation between nations, religions and cultures is a task that never ceases and that is highly responsible. We must not forget that freedom and peace are not given to us once and forever.

Wishing you a fruitful time and inspiring conclusions.

**Rafał Trzaskowski**

Secretary of State, Secretary for European Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

**Danuta  
Glondys** | Before we start, let me very warmly welcome the students of the Jagiellonian University, the AGH University of Science and Technology, the Pedagogical University and all of you who have joined us for the conference. I believe this is going to be a very good, and a very wise formative experience.

Today's conference lectures, debates and discussions will be translated by a team of superb interpreters into four languages: Russian by Żanna Słoniowska, Maria Charmas and Aleksander Jakimowicz, English by Bartosz Waliczek and Piotr Krasnowolski, and Italian by Krystyna Mydlarz.

# Key note speech:

## Empires in the 21st Century

**Giles  
Scott-Smith**

Ladies and Gentlemen, distinguished guests – it really is an honour to stand before you today and what I wanted to do was offer some reflections on the idea of empire, the idea of world order and power. I wanted to do that by looking at role of the United States through the 20th and into the 21st centuries and use that as a way hopefully to frame some of the discussion that will follow today and tomorrow.

On 29 May 2015 Sepp Blatter secured an unprecedented fifth term as FIFA president in an unopposed election. The Swiss, long surrounded by accusations of financial mismanagement and corruption, had once again shown himself to be a master of manipulation and patronage for securing the necessary votes. Yet within four days he called a snap press conference and announced to the few journalists who could make it that he was stepping down because ‘FIFA needs a profound restructuring’. What happened in the intervening four days? The answer is that Blatter was fast coming in range of an FBI investigation into FIFA financial improprieties, which already involved a raid and arrests made by Swiss police in a Zurich hotel on 27 May, armed with US Department of Justice warrants. Clearly, Blatter’s lawyers had advised him over weekend that it was in his best legal interests to resign, with charges against him looming. The significance of this story for our subject – empires in the 21st century – concerns the cross-border reach of the US legal code. Blatter had appeared immune to accusations stretching back fifteen years until the Americans declared their interest in the matter. How does this help us think about empire?

First, we need to define our terms. Empire has traditionally been seen as the application of hard power in order to conquer and control territory outside of the nation-state. The purpose of the conquered regions – the periphery – was to serve as an exploited source of wealth, raw materials, manpower, and prestige for the conquering power – the metropole. On this relationship, discourses of racial hierarchy and superiority were built, and as we know from Edward Said, these then infused the entirety of metropole cultural production and identity formation. But the primary designator of imperial power was territory – lines on the map indicating bounded spaces, usually in recognisable colours. Territory has continued to

be prime marker for empire. European empires may have seriously diminished since mid-20th century, but their remnants continue, even if in adapted form, in Surinam, Greenland, Nouvelle Calédonie, Diego Garcia, and Grozny. But how should we think of the empire-territory connection in the 21st century?

In 2000 Harvard professor Charles Maier published a thoughtful essay on 'Consigning the Twentieth Century to History'. His principal argument was that using the 20th century as a hundred-year template for interpreting recent times obscured the out-folding of 'structural narratives' that were not bound by standard interpretations of human time. In particular, he focused on the world historical trend of 'territoriality', namely "the properties, including power, provided by the control of bordered political space." This has been a "historical formation" that provided "the spatially anchored structures for politics and economics that were taken for granted from about 1860 to about 1970 or 1980 but that have since begun to decompose" (Charles Maier, 'Consigning the Twentieth Century to History: Alternative Narratives for the Modern Era,' *American Historical Review* 105 (2000), 807–808.). The causes for this decomposition are what we can conveniently call globalization, ranging from the end of the Cold War bipolar system to the spread of neoliberalism and advances in information technology.

But decline of territoriality did not mean the end of the nation state – instead, it referred to a weakening of connection between what Maier terms 'identity space' and 'decision space'. During the territorial era, individuals were orientated on the nation-state as the focus of their public loyalty and provider of their economic and political well-being. Both of these have been undermined, through mobile capital and supranational governance on the one hand, and the desire for local autonomy on the other (as the Scots, Catalans, and South Sudanese have been demonstrating). These two forces are not necessarily counter-productive either – what they are doing is forcing us to reconsider our common understanding of the familiar nation-state.

If territoriality – the linkage between power and the control of bordered political space – is declining as a frame of reference, how should we think of empire? Maier wrote his piece in 2000, at the peak of liberal assumptions of one-worldism and global interdependence. It is only fifteen years later and many would say that territory is back, that lines on the map matter like never before, and that power has stopped being soft and has returned to emerging from the barrel of a gun. Major American theorists clearly thought so. Erstwhile neoconservative Robert Kagan (or liberal interventionist as he prefers to be named) declared in

2008 that the liberal dream was over, and history – meaning 19th century style great power politics – had returned with a vengeance (R. Kagan, *The Return of History and the End of Dreams*, New York: Vintage, 2009). Robert Kaplan styled it in 2012 as the revenge of geography – the alleged permanently borderless, flat world of the 90s could not after all overcome the physical boundaries that separate nations, and that continue to be the site of conflict (R. Kaplan, *The Revenge of Geography: What the Map tells us about Coming Conflicts*, New York: Random House, 2012).

So has the importance of territory really gone away? I don't think so. But let's consider a slightly different interpretation of empire. In his masterful study on the subject, political theorist Michael Doyle opts for the following definition: Empire is a relationship, formal or informal, in which one state controls the effective political sovereignty of another political society. It can be achieved by force, by political collaboration, by economic, social, or cultural dependence. According to Doyle, imperialism "is simply the process or policy of establishing or maintaining an empire" (M. Doyle, *Empires*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986, 45). Shifting the emphasis from territory to sovereignty opens up new terrain for considering the workings of imperial power. It no longer means only pointing to lines on a map, but also requires scrutiny of clauses in a treaty, responsibilities in a security alliance, or the rules in a trade agreement. It directs attention to what many have referred to as 'informal empire', where power is inscribed not in formal top-down directives but in relationships. On these grounds the dividing line between informal empire, hegemony, sphere of influence, or simply great power politics would seem to blur – how to differentiate between them if they all function according to a preponderance of power rather than a dominance? The answer lies in scope. Imperialism is not only a set of processes or policies, it is also a state of mind – an assumption (even presumption) of influence based on a particular interpretation of the world. The discourse of imperialism determines the difference between order and disorder, between stability and chaos. As Doyle put it, "Imperialism's foundation is not anarchy but order, albeit an order imposed and strained" (M. Doyle, *Empires*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986, 11). In other words, the order provided by empire requires political sovereignty of others to be contravened. The implication of this is that it occurs for the general (global) good, even if its imposed against or strained by local resistance.

Let's return to the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty first As we have seen, we are used to the 20th century being termed the graveyard of empires, and the 21st as their return. But interpretation

of empire that focuses on transgressing others' sovereignty, on relationships, on establishment of order, and on an imperial state of mind must acknowledge that the most profound example effectively shaped the 20th century and continues to impact the 21st – this is of course the American empire.

Discussing the American empire remains contentious, the word 'empire' for many being completely incompatible with what the United States stands for. Generally used as a means of critiquing US foreign policy as being excessively militarist or economically neoliberal, the term 'empire' is closely associated with leftist critics such as William Appleman Williams, the New Left, and anti-imperialist advocates around the world. The debate on American empire has raged since the Spanish-American War of 1898. By disavowing the European model of territorial empire – or, at least retreating from it when it proved too costly to implement in the Philippines – the United States has long lived in a state of denial as to its imperial characteristics. But here I agree with Niall Ferguson, John Ikenberry, and other liberal internationalists: empire does not need to be a 'dirty word', it can also designate power capabilities and value systems which benefit others. Empire, in the American sense, can also mean forms of benevolent hegemony (admittedly, with a coercive edge). The configurations of US power – both material and discursive, hard and soft – stretched in multiple directions across the 20th century and continue to stretch into the 21st. The question for us, then, in considering Empires in the 21st Century, is to what extent the American empire is still with us, and what alternatives are arising to challenge or replace it?

To condense our understanding of American empire, I would like to propose three markers which illustrate key aspects of US power over recent past. These are:

- the Platt Amendment of 1901;
- the United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference of July 1944;
- and the Global Positioning System of 1973. Firstly, the Platt Amendment.

This piece of legislation, little more than an appendix to a US Army Appropriations bill, set out eight conditions the Cubans needed to meet in order to secure the withdrawal of US forces from their island. Its most notorious condition was that the Cuban government lease territory for a naval station, which is still with us today in the form of Guantanamo Bay. But the overall purpose of the Amendment was to allow the United States to intervene in Cuban affairs: as the State Department's own Office of the Historian puts it, "the United States needed some method of maintaining a permanent presence and order" ("The

United States, Cuba, and the Platt Amendment, 1901,' Office of the Historian, US Department of State, <<https://history.state.gov/milestones/1899-1913/platt>>). Overshadowed by the more famous Roosevelt Corollary of 1904, which stated the right of the United States to carry out interventions in the western hemisphere to ensure political and economic stability, the Platt Amendment is a key document for charting the growing confidence of a rising power to determine its legitimate field of action and claim its world role as a force for stability and order – an order for the general good, but one inscribed with American characteristics.

Much more could be said in this with reference to more obvious markers such as President Wilson's 14 Points, the Atlantic Charter, and the whole cause of Making the World Safe for Democracy. But let's jump ahead to our second marker, the Bretton Woods conference. Held in a New Hampshire hotel and involving representatives of 44 nations (some lacking sovereignty or a definite government at the time, such as France and India), Bretton Woods introduced a rule-based financial system on which post-WW II economic stability could be based. It did this through three innovations: firstly, the establishment of international institutions such as the IMF which could be used to overcome balance of payments problems; secondly, through the designation of the US dollar as the global reserve currency by fixing its value to that of gold; thirdly, the willingness of the United States to back this system and accept resulting costs (up to a point, of course). These structures – characterized as forms of embedded liberalism or benevolent hegemony – provided a unique layer of global governance that is still with us today. They formed the grounds from which legitimate and illegitimate economic behavior could be judged and responded to. They also form the basis for ongoing claims that the preponderance of the US-led liberal internationalist project is the best chance for continuing global stability. Thus John Ikenberry in his latest publication refers to "the liberal ascendancy" that "has entailed a commitment to international order that is open and at least loosely rule-based" (G. John Ikenberry, 'The Logic of Order: Westphalia, Liberalism, and the Evolution of International Order in the Modern Era,' in G. John Ikenberry (ed.), *Power, Order and Change in World Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014, p. 91, 93.). However, this commitment to international order also involved limiting – and in extreme cases controlling – the political sovereignty of other states in order to ensure a particular economic outcome based on neoliberal precepts and corporate interests. World orders also necessarily

involve forms of disciplinary power, otherwise there can be no order. This is an observation, not a justification.

Let's consider the third marker: the development of the global positioning system. Initiated by the Pentagon in 1973, GPS was driven by the need for a global navigation system that could provide greater accuracy for US nuclear forces. Other technological breakthroughs could be mentioned – ARPANET, or the silicon chip – but GPS is significant for its specific linkage to structures of global security. This encompasses navigation and targeting for conventional weapons, but also for the robotic next generation of unmanned aerial vehicles or drones. GPS enabled pinpoint force projection around the globe.

What do these three markers signify? Firstly, a right of intervention based on an idea of the general good (be that order and stability, or a set of values such as democracy and human rights). Secondly, a set of rules and norms to guide economic behaviour, with the power of sanction against transgressors. Thirdly, the self-proclaimed right to identify, and the technical ability to strike opponents at any point on the globe. Fourthly, all three require the assent of allies to function effectively, either for legitimacy, for implementation, or for global reach – territory has always been essential for the American empire, at least on a limited scale for the extension of air power from strategically located bases. Lastly, no other nation has come close to having such direct or indirect influence and impact on all other nations, and such capability to project power, over such a period of time as the United States.

These three factors continue to shape our world today, but they are being challenged in the rapidly changing 21st century environment. The right of intervention for order and stability continued throughout the Cold War and gained new impetus under the UN and NATO umbrellas in the 1990s, but has been seriously undermined by the experience in Afghanistan and Iraq. Now the recent Russian entry into the Syrian conflict, and the offer by Xi of an 8000-strong standby force for UN expeditions, both signal a new phase in the politics of intervention.

The Bretton Woods system has gone through major changes, not least the floating of currencies and the transformation of the IMF into an enforcer of neoliberal fiscal probity since the 1980s. Since 2008 the IMF now has new wind in its sails as a partner in various financial rescue operations. Neither the G20 nor the BRICS have so far shaped up to being credible challengers to the established order. But in 2015 the arrival of Beijing's Asian Investment and Infrastructure Bank, with widespread



support despite US resistance, signalled for the first time an institutional rival to the US-led Bretton Woods system. Meanwhile the US dollar continues to reign supreme as the inescapable global reserve currency, granting the United States a unique power of seignorage to print money at will. The current situation in terms of global economic and financial governance is therefore decidedly mixed.

Lastly, there is the global scope of US security. Since Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson there has been a direct linkage made between US national security and conditions in the rest of the world. This justified the projection of force during both world wars, during the whole of the Cold War, and in a different form since 9/11. The designated right of the US president to authorize drone strikes against individuals deemed a threat according to so-called 'signature' criteria is perhaps the apogee of this linkage in imperial form. This force projection is being sustained by a technological edge, by the willingness of allies to support it through the provision of bases and airspace, and by them adopting it as their own – as we have seen with British drone strikes in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria. Similarly, as we now know, the NSA could not conduct its global surveillance without willing compliance from allies in Europe and around the world (sometimes in the form of allies spying on allies for American goals).

To sum up: the three markers of the US-led world order are out of synch. The right of intervention and the cause of democracy promotion have suffered major setbacks; global economic and financial governance are in a state of uncertain flux; and the technological edge is intact, but for how long?

What are the broader conclusions that we can draw from this? Firstly, there is no doubt that the control of territory remains a basic attribute of 21st century power politics. Russian military intervention in eastern Ukraine or Chinese occupation of atolls in the South China Sea are typical acts of great powers able to project power in their immediate neighbourhood. One can definitely argue that the Russian-controlled enclaves of Kaliningrad, Transnistria, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and particularly the Crimea represent something more. Putin has been actively rehabilitating the concept of Soviet/Russian empire as a means to bolster his rule through mob-patriotism. 'Paleo-imperialism', be it Erdogan's Turkey, Orban's Hungary, or Putin's Russia, is on the rise. As Pawel Kowal put it, there is "a crisis of the attractiveness of the soft liberal power of the United States" across the region. Nevertheless, vestiges of imperial authority live on. From the perspective sketched here, this means the implementation of financial sanctions against Russia not only because of the Crimea annexation, but also the specific US sanctions against top-level Russian

individuals for their association with the death of the lawyer Sergei Magnitsky and their involvement in large-scale financial corruption. In other words, Russia crossed certain boundaries – both literally and figuratively – and while its military capabilities prevented a direct response, its financial and economic assets could be targeted in a different way.

Secondly, empire does not require the full control of political sovereignty that Michael Doyle suggested. The form of American empire that we have sketched here does not require (or even desire) full control – it aspires to upholding a particular rule-based system through international institutions, alliances, treaties, and agreements that readily involves allied nations willing to support it, act according to its rules and norms, and enforce powers of sanction should others ignore them.

Thirdly, the maintenance of rules and norms in the US world order has been challenged as much by friends as foes. The rise of the European Union as a global actor of some weight lies principally in its influence as a ‘regulatory empire’ of major significance. Development of the Single Market since the 1980s has boosted its regulatory powers to unprecedented levels, enabling decisions on competition and market access that have challenged US corporate practices up till then largely immune from outside interference. In July 2007 the president of the EU Commission, Jose-Maria Barroso, famously exclaimed during a press conference that EU was indeed an empire. He exclaimed to a bemused press corps: “We are a very special construction unique in the history of mankind ... Sometimes I like to compare the EU as a creation to the organization of empire. We have the dimension of empire ... Empires were usually made with force with a centre imposing diktat, a will on the others. Now what we have is the first non-imperial empire.”

Barroso had a point, but recent history hasn’t done him any favours (See also Jan Zielonka, *Europe as Empire: The Nature of the Enlarged European Union* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). The absence of diktat is hard to defend in the economic sphere, eight years and many debt repayment schemes later. EU’s regulatory power hasn’t collapsed, but the shine of European ascendancy apparent at the time of Euro’s introduction has definitely palled. The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)

That the US-led imperial model sketched here is now under some strain goes without saying. It has always been under strain because it has always been incomplete – as Scott Lucas noticed, the imperial narrative too easily claims comprehensiveness, and in doing so “blots out” those conflicts that “don’t fit”: Congo, Somalia, Libya, now Syria. Counter-imperial challenges have previously come through the century

from Germany, Russia, China, Cuba, Vietnam, Chile, Teheran and Caracas, and now manifest themselves once again in Moscow and Beijing. US allies in the Asia-Pacific such as Japan and the Philippines may welcome a resurgence of US power and intent, but others such as Turkey and Saudi Arabia are clearly no longer convinced, instead seeking their own responses to regional turmoil. Power has drained away from the nation-state, even imperial ones like the USA. The markers for the 21st century are therefore quite different. 9/11 and the collapse of Lehman Brothers bank almost exactly seven years later, both occurring in New York, the quintessential site of 20th century US power, indicate a quite different matrix of power relations. Non-state networks have the capabilities to strike at, even to erase state authority. Banks hold governments hostage with reckless trading, apparently beyond effective regulation. Blatter may be running from the FBI, but the United States still solidly rejects the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court, the most striking example of how international law has diverged away from US conceptions of its legitimate right to act as it sees fit.

I do believe that Obama is the first President since Nixon who understands the limits to US power in whatever form. His significance comes from his attempts – the Cairo speech, the Russian ‘Reset’, the Asian Pivot, the TTIP, the nuclear deal with Iran – to adapt the United States to a dramatically changing world. The results have been mixed, but the intent is clear. We will have to see if his successor follows down this path or instead seeks to re-instate US pre-eminence in a world that is increasingly unlikely to accept it.

## Debate 1

# Goliath vs David: United States global superpower and its regional counterparts

**Wojciech Przybylski** | We have what seems to be a very difficult subject – empires. This subject can be very easily made banal and brought down to simple sympathies or antipathies, usually antipathies towards imperial projects. Nevertheless, I believe the discussion will be interesting if we give careful consideration to the introduction of Giles Scott-Smith.

Let me start by saying that it is my great pleasure to be with you in Villa Decius and to discuss the subject of empires. We have already thought about it before and worked on it for quite a time but we still cannot agree as to what our attitude is towards empires. This only shows and illustrates the problem of Polish and European discussions when things relate to broader phenomena in politics and one needs the courage to ask difficult questions. Today many states (including Russia) make references in their policies to a certain imperial heritage. Yet, there are also others who claim that the imperial project is over and you can no longer build nor imagine the return of an empire. All you can imagine is a cheap mock-up used for the construction of a new national or nationalistic project.

In our panel we have intellectuals, former politicians, and experts whom I am going to present briefly. Metin Bulut, a holder of MA degree in Communications from Selçuk University in Konya and a graduate of the Turkish Military Academy; former member of the military and commander of a mission in Afghanistan, also employed by the UN. He was awarded the Courage and Self-Sacrifice Medal by the Turkish General Staff for his achievements in internal security operations and the NATO Medal and Legion of Merit in Afghanistan during the NATO ISAF Operation. Our next panellist is David Jones, a professor at the Centre for American Studies in Warsaw University and a scientist specialising in critical analysis of contemporary American foreign policy; an author of many publications, books and scientific articles, including those on hybrid wars and NATO strategy in our region. Now the person I do not have





to introduce, Sergey Kovalev – a human rights activist, one of the founders of the Memorial and Amnesty International branch in Russia. He has been repeatedly nominated to the Nobel Prize for his activities in defence of human rights. He is also a writer and the recipient of the Great Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland. And last, but not least, Paweł Kowal, former deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and former Member of the European Parliament. A political scientist working i.a. in the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences. He led observation missions and consulting missions to Ukraine and is an eminent expert on Polish Eastern policy.

Let's start with Sergey Kovalev and ask him to tell us what is the understanding or the significance of the notion of an empire in the Russian context and why the rhetoric or the nostalgia of the empire is important from the point of view of what is taking place in Russia today, and what role does Russia want to play worldwide, globally?

**Sergey Kovalev** | Let me add a word to your introduction. The main events in my biography are the Gulag “Academy” and later Chechnya. These give me the right to speak about the problems that we are discussing here today.

When we are talking about empire as a term, all over the world the best informed people agree that Russia aims at the reconstruction of an imperialist system and a return to the old Soviet borders or even more to the pre-1917 borders. These territorial aspirations of Russia prove that the country is delayed in development and compensates its ambitions by means of simple interventions and occupations. Modern empires, as we have just been told by Giles Scott Smith, are not territorial. Territoriality is now an antiquated approach to the perception of an empire. Russia has been trying to extend its territory not only by taking over Crimea, but in 2008 we had all already witnessed how parts of Georgia were annexed. But what is worse, a continuation of these processes can be easily foreseen. This is very retarded and backward thinking. The whole world fights for markets and Russia does it for square kilometres. Yet, this is not the most important characteristic of the country I live in, I represent. A true characteristic of Russian imperialism is different. Once a president of the United States very precisely described it by saying that it is an EMPIRE of EVIL. This is a characteristic feature of my country.

Let me now refer to the title of our panel: *Goliath against David*. A long time ago people noticed – and this has turned into something trivial and banal – that the borders between evil and good cross in every

heart, in every one of us, every living creature. What could be said then about states and communities? Does this border really divide people and groups or does it only take place at random?

I would like to say something that I believe to be important. David is always on his own, alone, and there is nobody by his side. Goliath has plenty of people on his side, plenty of supporters around. When we were listening to Wojciech's introduction of the panel, a question was asked: "Who is whose ally?" Well, Goliath has allies all over the world including here, in your part of world. Look at the international press and listen to international commentators, journalists. Each of them treats very seriously a certain lieutenant colonel who was educated and trained in the office of evil, the KGB. This man has given guidance to Russia for the last 15 years. But who is he? If we take a closer look at him, we will see that he is brutal and arrogant, and that he has never said a word of truth. He lies during every speech of his, in every sentence, in every statement that he makes, even about petty things. For example he goes diving somewhere by the Black Sea and he comes out with two Greek amphorae in his hands as if he found them. These little lies are everywhere: him catching a huge fish, him flying an airplane. Lies, all lies.

Let me repeat – David is always on his own, Goliath is always surrounded by allies all over the world. Who are the people who support Goliath? Let me show you one example. I have an excerpt from a newspaper containing an article "The blind alley of Katyń" written by a professor of history. The subject should be very familiar to all of you. This historian claims that the Polish officers in Katyń, in Miednoje near Kharkov, were executed by Germans. Two presidents of Russia, including the current one, asked Poles for forgiveness for those barbarian murders, but the author simply does not agree with it and gives this soft charge to today's power in Russia that they are not fighting sufficiently enough for the Russian position.

It is an old story to charge Germans for the Katyń murder. You all remember that for three days during the Nurnberg trials the Germans were accused of the execution of the Polish prisoners of war. One could think that this is a story that has been reached a conclusion, documents were published, archive materials were published. Why do I refer to it? One could think that this article was published in the period of Soviet power, before Gorbachev who was the first one to recognise the truth about the Katyń murders. You could think this is an article written in the 1950s or 1960s. Yet this was not. It was published by "*Literaturnaya Gazeta*" in its 2–8 September issue this year. This is a good example of how now "the collective Goliath" is forming the awareness, based on lies, against historical truth.



Speaking of allies of Goliath let me remind you about the ideology of “collective Goliath” being spread all over the world. Let me remind you about the Munich conference which paved the way for cannibals. We all should remember the Teheran ‘43, Yalta ‘44, Potsdam ‘45 conferences where all allies fighting against Hitler declared that they rejected the ideology of cannibals, and soon after absolutely shamelessly gave up half of Europe, including Poland, to another man-eater. That was an absolutely conscious decision. I am not going to quote other examples. Nor am I going to recall nuclear attacks against two peaceful cities. Nor am I going to discuss the fact that Obama went to Moscow to renew partnership and with whom.

Is it so difficult to understand that you must not be the devil’s partner, that you must not believe liars, collaborate with those who run and support evil empires? Is understanding this the biggest international problem?

**Wojciech Przybylski** | This debate focuses on the power of the US, its allies and its counterparts. Sergey Kovalev started with Russia and tried to identify who Goliath can be. Yet, the identity of David still remains a mystery and we are going to return to it in our discussion.

I would like to ask Paweł Kowal to present how Poland imagines its place on this post-imperial map or in this international configuration that is developing at the moment. We are within a military and economic alliance with the West, under the American presidency, one could say: safe and protected. But what is our real position in the world and how do we deal with a situation in which some states return to an imperial ideology and others want to reinstall some kind of imperial order?

**Paweł Kowal** | If one had listened to our yesterday’s discussions, one would have thought that we should now be speaking about refugees and not imperialism. Yet, in both cases we all would agree that what the world needs now is a leadership which could address key problems at a global scale.

In the case of Poland, the need of leadership is perhaps quite typical and it was our intuition after 1989. You might remember the Polish experience of the last two centuries, when our country was partitioned

by the neighbouring empires and later fell under communist rule. Given what specialists would say, if you want to learn history, as history is really a teacher of everything, we have to look back at least 200 years into the past because what happened during that period was not a fairy tale and has been influencing our perception until today. For over 200 years Poland was a part of empires; it was not a free and independent state. And then in 1989 a big change came and our dream came true. A dream of regaining our independence and having a coherent free state was fulfilled.

Nowadays we often think about empires and sometimes long to be part of something larger. This is of key importance when Polish perspective is concerned. This reaction is related to the big crisis we have now and to the crisis of democracy, which, based on online surveys and the ideas of voters, leaves very little room for true leadership. A typical way in which such democratic states can function is that leaders basically repeat the general views of public opinion and there is nobody who actually formulates these opinions. Then if you add the weakness of churches, of different authorities or even the lack of authorities, especially in Western Europe, you will be left with no space for leadership. In such conditions it is difficult to run a serious discussion about all the problems, not only about immigration or refugees but also such issues as the environment, access to water and so on.

Currently we face attempts to rebuild empires in Europe. These take different forms, but in the case of Russia the process is most spectacular because it is being done in real life. I think Sergey Kovalev presented it very clearly. If you study a book on empires, you will find definitions and terms which can be illustrated by what Russia is doing today. Russia is returning to a classical understanding of empire; it does not intervene overseas but simply crosses the borders of neighbouring countries. This is what I call “neo-imperial” or “paleo-imperial” policy – taking a part of the territory of neighbours, binding those neighbours, determining their policy by freezing these conflicts. But it is also reflected in internal policy and manifests itself in rules and measures leading to what might be called illiberal democracy, and, if reinforced, to different types of authoritarian regimes. This paleo-imperialism, however, is reborn today not only in Russia and can be exemplified by numerous cases. Take for example the way in which the current Turkish prime minister Ahmet Davutoğlu describes the role of his state, or the lack of criticism of governmental actions in the majority of Central European countries, or even the imperialistic ambitions of small European states. I have a positive feeling about Viktor Orban but if you look at his policies

towards Hungarian minority in Trans Carpathian region in Ukraine or the way he masters his comments on Russian politics and support he receives from some of the Hungarian elites, you can clearly identify the paleo-imperial way of thinking so characteristic for inter-war period when the Greater Hungary concept was popular. Other countries will still remember their glorious past of being historical empires, but also their humiliation when their empires collapsed. Important changes can also be seen in organisation of a state itself, and then we speak about illiberal democracy and the restriction of a democratic system which may lead to an oligarchic system. Such processes can be observed in many places.

Now referring to the recent publication by Res Publica Nowa, let me go back to the role of the United States. According to scientific research I have conducted, the United States suffered because of the democratic changes in Central Europe. I could speak for hours about the way the United States tried to transform Poland and the other countries of Central and Eastern Europe and typical features of their actions like the lack of subtlety illustrated by using special forces or involving diplomacy and soft power to prove the attractiveness of the US. When you analyse the archives of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, you clearly see the hegemonic role of the United States until 1989 but it could not be defined as an empire. The US played an important role, perhaps like Athens in ancient Greece. And I am not saying that the US was not using force, but draw your attention to the proportion between the use of force (which nobody approves of) and the attractiveness of the American image that made so many emigrate to the US.

This is changing because the United States is forced to use power more and more frequently. Those who come to the US today after a long break, will see that the American democracy is not as good as it used to be. Americans have used power too often, which has had very concrete consequences for the US as world leader, and this might result in, as Bartłomiej Sienkiewicz would call it, an extra-liberal empire.

Can the liberal empire compete with the paleo-empire? I would say it cannot because a paleo-empire is a tactical project and it will end one day. But before it ends, it is going to do a lot of harm to itself and other states. This is what we are observing today. On the other hand, if a liberal empire decides to use force too often, it has to take into account public opinion and measures which are usually modified by public opinion. The policies that are results of such measures like the military related expenditures or use of force are motivated by different interests. The spending on the army and the use of force have to be motivated by different interests which might play a deceptive role in shaping policy. Where can it

lead us to in a democratic sense and what is going to happen if, as a result of the democratic process we will see such threats in the US? What if someone tries to change the nature of the American leadership?

It is difficult to say what the US is today. In my view it is not Goliath but perhaps a postmodern empire, a place where business, networks, producers, and corporations take the most important decisions. Perhaps the US is still a liberal empire which, according to European writers, will soon end. One would say that fighting Al-Qaeda, which was performed in a moderate way, could have strengthened the international authority of the US and actually released the US from responsibility. In European politics there is a specific mix of resentment, love (that actually has not been reciprocated) and temptation to compete with America. Maybe this is a response to what happened after the Second World War when the Americans created their leadership which was accepted by Western governments. Maybe it is a crisis of attractiveness of the soft, liberal power of the US? Maybe also a crisis of identity.

We have this belief that a nation state can find its place on a paradigm of the liberal imperialism of America. The basic difference between the goals of the liberal and the classical imperialism is that the Americans did not want to expand territory but to strengthen the state, to protect human rights, to trade. Now we have a crisis of the role played by the US and at the same time an attempt to make the States stronger. Creation of a strong state seems to be an important project of many national policies. Weak leadership and European resentment on the part of America for excessive use of force define the new situation. And the more we need leadership, the more liberal imperial system seems to be falling apart.

**Wojciech Przybylski** | Now I would like to give the floor to Metin Bulut to address the question of empires in the light of memory and aspirations. Please tell us, how much of the relationship with the US is dictated by the military alliance with NATO and how much by belonging to the alliance of liberal values and freedom of speech.

**Metin Bulut** | As a retired major who has worked at the national, NATO and UN levels and grew up in the midst of the crises that have taken place in the Middle East, I will try to offer a brief overview of the current problems together with my own personal analysis.

The problems that have arisen as a result of the militarised conflicts, the regime changes, the refugee crises, the shifting power balances that have taken place in the aftermath of the Arab Spring in the Middle East and Africa do not seem to be easily solvable in the short run. Yet, it is important to evaluate them in order to be able to look forward more clearly. I will therefore try to evaluate the problems that have emerged in the northern and the southern parts of the south-eastern border of Turkey. I will also concentrate upon the US' regional partners in the region such as Turkey, Iraq, Iran and the Kurdish Regional Administration in Iraq and I will also try to shed some light on the Russian role in the region. Finally, I will analyse the emergence and the ascendance of ISIS in Syria.

It would be too superficial to evaluate the current crises in the Middle Eastern and Northern African region by looking only to the sectarian and ethnic differences in the region and/or linking the causes of the crises solely to the Arab Spring. The region is strategically very attractive to both global and regional powers due to gas and oil reserves and the transit routes of these reserves. When we analyse the map of the World Powers' military presence, we can clearly spot, for example, the air, land and naval forces of the US, UK, France and Russia in the region.

Let's now look at oil and gas reserves and their transit routes together with the spheres of influence of regional powers in the region. When we analyse the map, we recognise that high intensity conflicts are taking place close to the western regions of Syria which are clearly the opening points to the Mediterranean. When we look at the military and state controlled regions, we spot that Assad's forces are effective in the western part of Syria, the Free Syrian Army is present in the northern and western parts and ISIS controls a huge section in the inner parts of Syria and, finally, the Kurdish groups dominate the North eastern parts of Syria. When we look at Iraq, the North Eastern part of the country is under control of the forces linked to the Kurdish Regional Administration and the North western line and the central parts are controlled by ISIS. The Iraqi gas and oil production and the infrastructure are, as we can observe, on this map. When we look at forces dominant in the region, we see a struggle between ISIS and the Regional Kurdish Administration. When we look at the gas and oil map of the region, we see that most of the conflicts are around the water and the energy resources and their transit routes existing in the region. The energy and water resources therefore still play a major role in the new Middle East as in the old one and this can clearly be understood when we look at the areas dominated by ISIS.

Finally, we look at this map and we can see that Russia is trying to control the Mediterranean transit routes of energy resources as well as those that belong to Iran and Syria. It is hence no coincidence that in June 2012 a Turkish jet was shot down in international air space by a Russian Air Defence Unit close to Latiqia in Syria. Due to the political and military crises in Ukraine, Russia is playing the energy card against Europe and the US, and in this context has entered into a strategic partnership with Turkey and decided on a new transit route for its energy sources that will go directly through Turkey.

Let's now look at how ISIS has emerged in order to better understand the regional and global dynamics and influences in the region. How has it emerged? How has the Armed Syrian Opposition weakened?

The Western powers were hesitant to give military aid to the moderate opposition forces in Syria due to the fear that the weapons would be captured by the radical forces. This weakened the Syrian Freedom Coalition. Such Western fear also applied to the promised financial aid further weakening the Syrian opposition forces which led to frustration and hopelessness amongst the groups forming the Syrian Freedom Army. A small fraction of the moderate opposition groups used looting and confiscation in order to obtain money and arms and this generated a negative reaction from the Syrian population. The Syrian regime hence could easily disempower the Syrian Freedom Army. The armed conflict against the Syrian regime and the massacres the regime has committed against the Sunni population weakened the reconciliation efforts on both sides. The Syrian Opposition groups have started to give themselves a more Islamist character in order to attract the support of the Gulf countries as they have not received Western support. As a result of the Geneva 1 and 2 talks, most of the opposition forces left the Syrian Freedom Coalition since they saw reconciliation between the sides as unsustainable.

There was never a full unity between the political and the armed opposition groups. The political opposition groups were manipulated by certain foreign powers. France, Russia, the United States, UK, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and UAE tried to shape the Syrian opposition groups. Saudi Arabia tried to empower another armed group arguing that the Syrian Freedom Army was ineffective. This created marginalisation within the Syrian Freedom Army. Several of the Syrian Freedom Army groups therefore have joined ISIS which was disciplined, well-equipped and has become a point of attraction. As a counter-strategy to this development, the Nusra Front formed in September 2011 and developed a strategy to

prevent the resistance momentum flowing towards ISIS. Al-Nusra rejected ISIS plans and declared a commitment to Al-Qaeda. As such, Al-Nusra was immediately listed as a terrorist organisation by Western powers. Since ISIS and Al-Nusra were marginal and radical, this created a vacuum in the moderate opposition on the ground. The Ahrar-i Sham organisation wanted to fill this vacuum but because of its Islamist character, it did not receive support from the West.

So what stays behind? IKBY in Iraq and PKK and PYD in Syria? Do these represent the hope of the Western powers?

**Wojciech Przybylski** | Professor David Jone, is America an empire or not? Some claim that America is a falling, declining empire just like Rome, others say that it is at its best, and a typical American citizen claims it is not an empire at all. Still, being a leading country in NATO and the global world order, what does it have to say now and why does it not influence the world order as much as we expect?

**David Jones** | I do not think that the United States is in decline – I am sorry to disappoint you but I do not share the idea that we live in a post-American world. That will be long after all of us are no longer here – that is my point number one. Number two – I do not think it is a declining empire and I am not sure if it is an empire at all. Whatever it is, it is advancing, and so is its influence. But advancing in different ways than it has done previously and its competitors have done.

Before I get to the United States, let me reflect on the Russian empire. I agree strongly with Sergey Kovalev and President Reagan when they describe it as the “evil empire” and with my predecessors when they speak of its territorial, its paleo-, almost “Palaeolithic” nature. It is a throwback to a bygone age and it will not succeed. Russia does not have the resources, either economic or military. It has the fire power, it does not have the technological skill or the training to be able to do the things it claims it wants to do. It is very transparent what it wants to do. It wants to increase its territorial influence, possibly its territorial control in its region. It wants a “Russian sector” on a global map. By itself it would not be so bad if it had effective leadership, as Sergey Kovalev said today. But the next door empire is

China, again paleo-imperialistic. It wants to return to the time when it controlled Asia and argues simply that it has a right, almost of a divine nature, to control Asia. It claims rights and privileges that it really has not earned and cannot effectively take over even if it had a chance. So, we have got those two empires, both of an old-line nature, and I do not think either will succeed. China may have a greater chance although it is hard to believe that it really has confidence in its imperial future. Otherwise why are the members of the regime trying to get out?

The third empire would be the United States although, as I said earlier, I do not consider it to be an empire. The Atlantic Charter made that very clear and the United States' policy administration has never intended to increase territory for itself, although, in some cases, it strengthened territories of their allies. I can see the United States as an empire, but not as a liberal or Neolithic one, but as a cultural empire. It is an empire into which many people around the world can come and buy. It is not just soft power. Soft power is money and influence. A good deal of what the United States has to offer is what people want to buy, to adopt, or to receive. I think that has been a splendid success across the post-1945 period.

Earlier during the conference people were talking about the return of the empires. Surely Russia and China aspire to return to imperial status but I think they will fail. The United States does not need to return to anything. It has never foundered. Since it rose to global power sometime between the First and the Second world wars, it has maintained that leadership position.

I have been a critic of both the Democrats and the Republicans. I have frequently criticised President Obama, but he is staying out of a good deal of the Middle East, withdrawing from where his predecessors went in, and failed with the exception of Afghanistan. I think in some respect it is difficult to criticise this because it is a double-edged sword. If you go in you are blamed for going in, and if you do not go in, you are blamed again, perhaps not so heavily. And this refers to a war that neighbours have to fight. You can't give peace. If they do not earn it, they will not appreciate it, they throw it away. Giving *pro bono* legal or medical services is another example. They will not appreciate it. They have to earn it by themselves. The Kurds have proven that. They have been on the forefront of trying to take a leadership role in their neighbourhood. It is the small group of people that the United States has tried to help. But the US has also tried to help, to give guidance and support, to Turkey.



The fourth empire could be, but is not yet, the European Union. If the United States is a cultural empire, the European Union would be a human rights or regulatory empire. The Treaty of Lisbon gave that opportunity. The reason why it has not become an empire is a lack of European leadership or bad leadership. A good example is the constant hustling of Greece for debt it cannot repay, largely by Germany.

In my recent publications I noticed that this might be an opportunity for China to come in. Take a port out of Crimea (which is what causes the Ukrainian problem), turn it into a yacht club and say: “get out of there” and build another big port there. Then build the second one in Piraeus in Greece and make Greece rich, make Greece an equal partner with the other member states in the European Union. How about it? That would create a EU empire – a sort of a commercial empire – for the 21st century.

Now let me come back to a question raised by Sergey Kovalev concerning David and Goliath. I do not consider the United States the big Goliath. Goliath was an overpowered giant, he resorted too much to muscle, relied too much upon the support of his allies. In some ways, the US is David. It was David in the Second World War in the Pacific when, with a British support, it defeated a very large empire – Japan.

Hoping not to offend my neighbour from Turkey, my idea of David in Europe would be His Royal Majesty Jan III Sobieski of Poland who contributed to Europe as much if not more than Wellington, Montgomery or any other positive Western leader. I think that also that Poland and Solidarity in the late 1980s inspired His Holiness John Paul II to contribute significantly to changes in Europe and Eurasia.

I think that the misconception in the world today is by leaders of governments not by people. The way the Chinese people buy into the American way of life is in steadfast opposition to their leadership. If you probe the emerging generation, the younger people strongly buy into the American way, in terms of culture, sport, cinema, food, clothing, automobiles, etc. This is what I mean by the American cultural empire and I believe it is dominant.

**Wojciech  
Przybylski**

May I now ask the audience for words of comment and also for questions to the panel.





**Ziyad** | My name is Ziyad Raof. I am an official Representative of the Kurdistan Regional Government in Poland.

**Raof** | I would like to address my question to Professor Jones because you spoke about president Obama and his policy towards the Middle East Region. What do you think about recent developments there? What do you think about Iraq which has a strategic contract with the US and, at the same time, enters into a coalition that was developed a few days ago between Russia, Iran, Syria and Baghdad? This is an interesting case of being at the same time in two coalitions. To make things even more interesting in Iraq, there are regular armies and the paramilitary Shiite groups. Regular armies support the coalition and the Shiite paramilitary, commanded by Iranian leaders, are on the side of the Russian coalition.

**Irakli Samkharadze** | As I come from Georgia, I think you understand in which direction I may strike now. I will be relating the imperialistic approaches and endeavours within its nearest peripheries and I will be referring to Georgia. You have mentioned the year 2008, the time of brutal intervention in Georgia run by the Russian Federation. Thousands of people left or were internally displaced in Georgia, many of them died.

My question is about the principles of accountability and accountability mechanisms that the world can actually apply against those who are very intense in their endeavours intervening in other countries' sovereignty and territorial integrity. We all know of the very modern and some may even call it "populist" Western condemnations but sometimes these may not have a hands-on approach on what is actually going on in the world. So my question is: How can one resist the imperialistic approaches and what are the accountability mechanisms that can stop those who are willing to implement imperialistic endeavours?

**Olga Glondys** | As a researcher in Latin American countries during the Cold War period, I do not have any doubts that the US imperialism did exist on that continent. Actually, it was present on all levels: social, military, economic, cultural...

My question to the panellists is about the rules and limits of intervention of the Western world regarding "an export" of democratic liberalism to other countries. Here I would like to give three examples

illustrating the context of my question. First, Ukraine – to what extent is the dramatic situation, that we are currently facing also a result of European Union policy towards Ukraine? The second case is Syria, where the US first supported the moderate opposition military groups but now they are withdrawing from it. And the third one is Venezuela, where American foundations give money to some opposition groups, officially as part of the efforts to spread democracy and liberal values.

My question is about the limits of intervention of liberal democratic countries. Do we take into consideration the fact that our intervention can sometimes affect in a negative way the very groups that we are trying to help, like eg. in Venezuela where the opposition is treated like a foreign agent representing external interests.

**Sergey Kovalev** | First of all, I would like to refer to what has been said here about Georgia. To speak about Russian intervention in Georgia and the current situation in the region, we should broaden this subject and include the role played by the Russians in Abkhazia in 1991–1992 or the methods used by Russian forces in the Caucasus region. Russian peacekeeping forces played their role there and there is no need for me to go into details as the imperialistic behaviour of Russia in the Caucasus is quite obvious to everyone.

Now a few words on Ukraine. As a matter of fact, the main reason for the current situation in Ukraine is not its territory but its European aspirations. To stop Ukraine's integration into the European Union is the strategic objective pursued by Russia and the main idea of President Putin.

There was a question who David is. As for David, I would like you to remember one name, one figure: Czesław Miłosz. Well, Goliath – I agree – is not the United States of America. In my view, we have to be just and fair in our comments and remember what the US did, not only during the Second World War, but also in the following decades. There may be many reasons to criticise the Americans but let us simply keep proper proportion here.

David itself might be portrayed in an ideological context as a certain idea that can be seen in many parts of the world. Perhaps the values of liberal democracy, freedom of speech and impartial courts are what we call "David". Yet, in many countries we have rulers who manipulate, violate the laws and move away

from fundamental values and many politicians are interested only in votes. It is more and more difficult to live by the values of liberal democracy. And for me David is represented by civic movements and activists in different countries and societies.

Let me give you an insight into the Russian situation and let's focus on Russian intellectuals today. Scientists are interested in physics, in history, etc. but in order to be able to carry out their research they eagerly accept anyone in power. They do not care who rules Russia. What about the artists? If I quoted the words of a well-known poet and singer Alexander Galich, the artists would be called "the teachers of wolves", the ones who encourage wolves to be tame. Artists are just interested in their everyday work and are ready to be representatives of Putin.

A notion of critical mass is so well known to everyone, and we know that there will be no explosion until a certain threshold is reached. The same goes for societies. Achieving that threshold is indispensable to start a chain reaction and change the country. In every country there is a certain critical mass that accepts the democratic order and – in my view – these are the representatives of intellectual elites. No matter what the understanding of democracy is among average citizens, the existence of a critical mass among the elites who cherish freedom and democratic values makes a difference. This is why Czesław Miłosz's legacy is so important for Polish culture.

**Pawel Kowal** | Definitions and notions taken from political science to politics may cause problems. In Poland if you describe the regime of Jaruzelski as a totalitarian one, you will have to face those who would try to make up other, more complex and vague descriptions.

In the conference's title the word "empire" is quite neutral, but if you call the US an empire, not everyone will agree and they will persuade us to look for another definition. We have heard comments from David Jones about European criticism of American imperialism. In my opinion it shows European hypocrisy. In the times of American leadership after The Second World War, our relations were based on mutual confidence and sympathy. Once trust disappears, then everyone seems to have objections to everybody else. This hypocritical element in relations between the US and European countries is very destructive in the Western world today.

Coming back to definitions taken from political science, I am against adding adjectives to the word “empire”. Referring to the US as a “cultural” empire is confusing as among European states you can also find examples of cultural dominance. What is more, if generalised, it might lead to absurd situations in which political commentators would claim that there is a neo-imperial element in Polish policy towards its Eastern neighbours. We have to be clear about the limits of what we call empire. We have to be disciplined also in the historical context because otherwise we will not be able to conduct a reasonable discussion.

Now some remarks on Ukraine. What has happened there might be compared to the US and Western European policy towards Poland in the late 1980s. In Ukraine we do not have a situation in which a new system was imposed from outside but we had clear results of elections, even at the times of Yanukovich, which proved that the pro-EU political orientation has had political legitimacy. It is worth mentioning that Yanukovich’s party also claimed to be a pro-EU party, interested in the implementation of the *acquis communautaire*, and that for about 10 years there has been no serious political force in Ukraine that would be against its pro-EU course. There is a great deal of evidence, such as the results of elections or opinion surveys. If you take this look at the situation – the Ukrainians simply decided. They have chosen their path which is a very conscious, democratic and stable choice. There is a problem of coordination of the US and European measures and it seems that the whole process is very much delayed now, but all this could be a subject of another debate.

What are the limits of liberal democratic states’ interventions? I think we can illustrate this by an example. In the US strong political or business interests were very often combined with a certain democratic idea. If the popular support legitimised an intervention, coordination of measures were undertaken both by the US and the Western Europe. Then the intervention itself was carried out and a change was brought about and a new government was established in cooperation with society. This époque has come to an end and the attractiveness of the US and their values is not so evident today. Nowadays the limits of intervention are related to what happened in the Middle East. After Arab Spring it turned out that successful interventions are not possible anymore because you can’t influence the change, support local democratic movements that would lead to a change of government. It is not possible anymore.

**Metin Bulut** | Power is composed of several elements – the economy, military, population, politics, society, culture. The countries or non-state actors which hold and control these elements can be considered as global powers. The US has all the elements which I counted before, plus the US is guarding the security of its key allies against enemies or hostile states. Enhancing the resilience of democratic governance – this strategy is increasing the power of the US. However, the US might not have these elements forever due to global competition and the energy resources it needs to keep its power.

**David Jones** | Let me start with Ziyad Raouf's question. In my view, life is falling apart in Iraq and President Obama must have had extraordinary intelligence services not to jump into that battle on the ground. As to Irakli's comments, I do not believe in sanctions and I am glad that president Obama reversed them. They only hurt ordinary people and do not have much impact on governments. Replying to Olga's question, it was Ronald Reagan's doctrine 30 years ago to go in and try to shore up the opposition in Central America where he felt that communist infiltration was jeopardising American security. I think that was a good decision but it would be better if it remained covert.

**Danuta Glondys** | Before we start the second part of our conference, let me underline the fact that here in the Villa Decius we are open to different perspectives and points of view. During the debates we exchange opinions, discuss numerous approaches and learn from each other. And with this assumption we have started today's conference. As you probably might have noticed, the first part has already been quite turbulent. Let us see how it will develop. Now I would like to give the floor to Scott Lucas and his special lecture.



# Special lecture: Challenging “Empire”

**Scott Lucas** | I want to thank the Villa Decius Association and everyone who has worked for this conference. It is a great honour to be here.

During the first part of the conference I turned from being a professor into a student to learn from you. To learn from the ideas and the debates that have already started and I think will go on. I think, having the space for this debate, is actually very important to me as I develop the talk as I hope you see.

Does anyone know what an outlier is? You have heard the term “outlier” in American parlance? During discussions you have all the experts and specialists – you know – the wise minds like yourselves that agree on in general terms on economics or politics or philosophy. But then you have someone who is an outlier, who is off to the side, who stirs up a bit trouble. I am your outlier.

Now, because of the discussion that I heard today I am changing the original title of the lecture from *The Rise of the Fallen Empires?* to *Challenging “Empire”*. This will be now an anti-empire lecture subtitled: “Who is David?”

## CHALLENGING “EMPIRE”

The early 21st century has witnessed a rebirth of notions of “empire” to explore national and international relations, primarily with a look outwards from the US. The American war against Iraq in 2003, hoping to fulfil the Bush Administration’s aspirations for a unipolar era, both drew from and fed notions of an exceptional US-led imperial system. Niall Ferguson celebrated the past of the British Empire and warned of the future of “overstretch” for the Americans. Michael Cox exalted US power even as he critiqued it and then, with American failures in Iraq and Afghanistan, rode its fall in further publications. Other authors declared “America’s Struggle with Empire” or, alternatively, declared that the US would cope through the development of “soft power” and then “smart power”.

The surge in books and articles – sometimes accompanied with the projection of other possible empires such as a rising China or a reborn Russia – profited those pundits, academics, and journalists who could grab public attention with the imperial idea. However, promotion does not necessarily mean value or even relevance. Far from offering routes for explanation, empire is often a counter-productive and misleading concept in today’s world. Certainly States have power: political, economic, military, judicial, and cultural. They will try to use those forms of power for their advantage. However, empire in the sense of a hegemonic, dominant, or controlling power of a State or States is not explanatory for much of contemporary international relations and crises. Away from the State centre, empire in the sense of a world system of trans-national actors, sometimes allied to States, is also insufficient. It provides an important framework within which States, communities, and individuals operate, but it is only a framework. It is not determinant of the outcomes of encounters of and with power.

The alternative of a rule-based model or “informal empire” based on standards of behaviour – American officials and intellectuals posited a “Concert of Democracies” to clean up the mess of the Iraq War – is also illusory. All power is lodged in a system of courts or political and administrative rulers, giving subjects only the choices of being coerced or persuaded to accept power exercised by others.

Where then is the catalytic source of power and often conflict? Contrary to the imperial idea of power from the top down, it is often from the ground up. Relations among communities or between communities and a country’s leaders fuel change, sometimes through negotiation, sometimes through confrontation and violence. These local and national dynamics can move beyond borders, leading other national, regional, and international actors to become involved – influencing but not directing these dynamics.

### **HOW DID WE GET HERE?**

The great artifice of the Cold War was to supplant a world of empires, institutions, and local actors with the “bipolar”, constructing all international affairs as those between US and Soviet blocs. Despite its promotion by Washington and Moscow – and by generations of historians – there were obvious leakages in the system. The development of the Communist system in China from 1949 pointed to the “tripolar”, while the evolving and competing visions of “Europe”, culminating in the European Union at the end of the Cold War, could not simply be reduced to a US- or Soviet-directed project. Other countries negotiated

between the supposed superpowers, from the Egypt of Nasser and Sadat to the new State of Israel to Tito's Yugoslavia. Negotiations and conflicts within countries escaped the American v. Soviet framework, such as the complexity of the Lebanese Civil War or the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran.

There was never a neat fit into the bipolar, but it offered deceptions that both projected the "winning" US power and assurances of a permanent stability. Francis Fukuyama proclaimed in 1992 – three years after the Chinese Communist regime put down the protests of Tiananmen Square and US troops invaded Panama, a year after the Gulf War, and contemporary with the break-up of the former Yugoslavia in a series of conflicts – that there was an "End of History" in which liberal democracy had triumphed. The historian John Lewis Gaddis closed off the Cold War with the assurance of a "We Now Know" in which all could be explained by "WE WERE GOOD AND STALIN WAS EVIL", completely erasing areas like Africa and reducing Cuba to a single page. Even when the illusions were shattered by the turmoil before and after Iraq 2003, the bipolar could be invoked: John Ikenberry wistfully hoped for a return to a Cold War which was supposedly one of a "liberal international order".

Even more importantly, the artificial conception of the bipolar was the platform for the American unipolar that propelled the vision of the George W. Bush Administration for a perpetual US dominance. Almost a decade earlier, officials in the US Government of Bush's father had issued a Defense Planning Guidance which envisaged a quest for hegemony: "Our first objective is to prevent the re-emergence of a new rival. This is a dominant consideration underlying the new regional defence strategy and requires that we endeavour to prevent any hostile power from dominating a region whose resources would, under consolidated control, be sufficient to generate global power. These regions include Western Europe, East Asia, the territory of the former Soviet Union, and Southwest Asia".

The officials said the US "must show the leadership necessary to establish and protect a new order that holds the promise of convincing potential competitors that they need not aspire to a greater role or pursue a more aggressive posture to protect their legitimate interests, deterring [them] from even aspiring to a larger regional or global role."

Those involved with the DPG would have even more significant positions in the George H.W. Bush Administration. Author Zalmay Khalilzad would become Ambassador to Afghanistan after the defeat of the Taliban and Ambassador to Iraq after "liberation". Assistant Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz

would be a rank higher, as Undersecretary of Defense, in 2001. Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney became Bush's Vice of President. Donald Rumsfeld, the Secretary of Defense from 2001 to 2006, was not part of the process; however, he played his part in the conception of the unipolar, through enhanced, US capabilities, as head of the Ballistic Missile Commission in 1996–97.

Thus, it was no surprise that the priority of the new Administration in 2001 was regime change in Iraq to demonstrate the global power of the US. The venture was the first item on the agenda of the first National Security Council meeting. Two days later, Rumsfeld told the Principals Committee of the NSC: “Imagine what the region would look like without Saddam and with a regime that’s aligned with US interests. It would change everything in the region and beyond it. It would demonstrate what US policy is all about.”

The confidence in an American imperial would bolster the fantastic assessments of US officials even as Iraq was descending from the “Mission Accomplished” of President Bush into a protracted insurgency against the US-led occupation and then into civil war. Asked if the Administration had been misled by the idea that Iraqis would greet US troops with flowers, Douglas Feith, the Assistant Secretary of Defense, said, “They had flowers in their minds.”

While acknowledging that perhaps the US quest had not gone as intended, some took refuge in evasions posing as explanations. Ikenberry maintained the possibility of an American exceptional. Alongside future Obama Administration official Anne-Marie Slaughter, he directed the Princeton Project on National Security, which built on meetings involving more than 400 participants to declare: “America must stand for, seek, and secure a world of liberty under law. Our founders knew that the success of the American experiment rested on the combined blessings of order and liberty, and by order they meant law. Internationally, Americans would be safer, richer, and healthier in a world of countries that have achieved this balance – mature liberal democracies.”

The United States should aim to sustain the military predominance of liberal democracies and encourage the development of military capabilities by like-minded democracies in a way that is consistent with their security interests.

Others fell into jeremiads about American power. The New York Times’ Thomas Friedman capped years of doom-laden column with the announcement in June 2008: “My fellow Americans: We are a

country in debt and in decline – not terminal, not irreversible, but in decline. Our political system seems incapable of producing long-range answers to big problems or big opportunities. We are the ones who need a better-functioning democracy – more than the Iraqis and Afghans. We are the ones in need of nation-building. It is our political system that is not working.”

Yet others posted new illusions. Niall Ferguson jumped from nostalgia for British Empire to caution about US Empire to the global economic dominance of Washington and Beijing in “Chimerica”.

None of these post–2003 revisions acknowledged a possibility beyond the locus of US power – be it reconfigured, in decline, or re-aligned with another dominant country. None considered that perhaps Washington was not necessarily – during the Cold War, in the unipolar after the fall of the Soviet Union, or following the Iraq War – at the centre of events.

### **THE MESSAGES IN AN “ARAB SPRING”**

The uprisings from December 2010 across the Middle East and North Africa caught the US Government, like many in the world, by surprise. While some targets of protests had been backed for decades by Washington, such as Tunisia’s Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and Egypt’s Hosni Mubarak, the catalysts for protest were local. In Tunisia, the spur was the self-immolation of an unemployed fruit and vegetable vendor. In Egypt, it was the police beating a young man to death in Alexandria. In Libya, it was a demonstration against supporters of leader Muammar Qaddafi jumping the queue to get public housing, following by the imprisonment of those who complained. In Yemen, it was a gathering of activists and students in the capital Sana’a against the Saleh regime. In Bahrain, it was the repressive and discriminatory policies of the monarchy, while in Syria, the conflict – still ongoing – started with teenage boys spraying graffiti on walls in Daraa in the south of the country.

Despite allegations by an unlikely alliance of some of the regimes and conspiracy theorists, the US did not stimulate the protests. Instead, Washington was hesitant and even paralysed in its reactions. It said little about Ben Ali before he fell in January 2011 and it belatedly pursued a resolution in Egypt by asking Mubarak to stand aside, a request that the President refused on at least two high-profile occasions. The Obama Administration took a low profile as the Bahraini regime, supported by the Saudi military, crushed dissent and destroyed the icon of the protests, the Pearl Monument. It refrained from a call for

Syria's President Assad to leave in the initial months of the protests. Only in Libya, after Qaddafi's forces threatened to overrun the second city of Benghazi, putting a million people at risk, did Washington act with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's statement.

More than five years later, the situations are still far beyond any US power or control. Tunisia has moved toward a fragile representative system negotiated between Islamist and secular groups. However, Egypt has reverted back to an authoritarian military regime, propped up by money from the Gulf States, and Libya is riven by competing governments and militias and hindered by long-term strikes in its oil industry. Yemen is in a state of civil war, with Saudi Arabia the most significant outside actor. Syria's conflict has a web of internal and external antagonists, but the US has a secondary role compared with Russia, Iran, Lebanon's Hezbollah, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and even non-government Iraqi militia as well as the Islamic State. Even in Iraq – which was supposed to be the demonstration case for American supremacy – the US has been eclipsed by other outside actors, such as Iran, and by “local” groups from Iraqi Kurdish authorities to the Islamic State.

In 2008, I had proposed an approach to Middle Eastern affairs based on the “de-centring of America”, with the US put to the side as attention was paid to local constituencies and political, economic, social, and religious dynamics. However, the successors to the Bush Administration tried to maintain that central position, with Robert Kagan, a prominent public intellectual, advising: “American predominance in the main categories of power persists as a key feature of the international system. The enormous and productive American economy remains at the centre of the international economic system. American democratic principles are shared by over a hundred nations. The American military is not only the largest but the only one capable of projecting force into distant theatres.”

Even as he criticised the Bush years, Joseph Nye declared a kinder, gentler way of American imperial: “If I can get you to want to do what I want, then I do not have to force you to do what you do not want to do.”

The “Arab Spring” shattered that illusion. So did other situations. In Eastern Europe, the protests over Ukraine's Yanukovych Government were not an outcome of US power. Nor was the Russian response after President Yanukovych's departure a direct response to Western dominance, despite Moscow's propaganda line that NATO had spurring the demonstrations in Kiev. Instead, as Moscow moved

to annex the Crimea, the US had to pursue a possible diplomatic and economic approach alongside European partners. Elsewhere in Europe, issues from Greek economic weakness to the surge of refugees and migrants – itself a product of the failed “Arab Spring” from Libya to Syria – testified to the American role as an interested bystander, rather than a central protagonist.

In East Asia, the invocation of the “rising China” too often obscured the broader picture of a US trying to re-align itself in a changing Asia-Pacific community. In Latin America, the fading of the Cold War years opened space for Governments and communities to develop beyond an American hegemony. While there would be US attempts to re-impose control, notably with challenges to Chavistas in Venezuela, a variety of systems across the hemisphere would include the “centre-left” or even “left” political and economic approaches in countries such as Bolivia, Ecuador, and Brazil. In sub-Saharan Africa, continuing crises from the civil war in Congo to the Boko Haram threat in Nigeria spoke more to the recession of US power rather than its continued imposition after failures such as intervention in Somalia.

### **THE COST OF THE IMPERIAL SPECTRE**

Yet if the reality of empire is that it is peripheral if at all relevant to many situation, its spectre continues to produce costly distortions. Learned discussions begin from the assumption that powers are exploiting events on the ground, rather than an actual examination of those events and their causes.

All too often, the outcome is an artificial construction of “empire” v. “anti-imperialism”. Advocates of a dominant American power proclaim an absolute need for US intervention. Critics proclaim that local action must be the product of Washington’s interference – even when there is no evidence for the assertion – and thus must be opposed, even in humanitarian cases.

The situation in Syria illustrates the cost. While complex, the core of the conflict was the Assad regime’s decision to crack down on peaceful protests in spring 2011. At that point, the US limited itself to requests to President Assad to carry out reforms and to refrain from the use of violence.

Washington moved through the summer to a call for Assad’s departure; however, it was not responsible for the escalation of the conflict, as a Free Syrian Army was created to defend the demonstrators against attacks by regime forces. Nor did the US intervene when the Assad regime turned to its air force to avoid defeat, levelling parts of cities such as Homs in early 2012. Officials such as Secretary of State Hillary

Clinton and CIA Director David Petraeus proposed the establishment of no-fly zones in summer 2012 but President Obama refused to support the plan.

In August 2013, the US Government was on the verge of intervention after the Assad regime used munitions with sarin nerve agent near Damascus, killing at least 1,400 people. Secretary of State John Kerry compared Assad to Hitler while the US military prepared for operations alongside allies such as Saudi Arabia and France. However, Obama retreated at the last minute, suddenly telling advisors that he would refer the question to Congress before taking action. Days later, the US joined Russia in an initiative for the handover of Assad's chemical weapons, avoiding the issue of responsibility for the attacks even as the Syrian military turned to other chemicals such as chlorine canisters dropped in barrel bombs.

As of November 2015, the Assad regime is responsible for the large majority of deaths in Syria's 56-month conflict, conservatively estimated at more than 250,000 victims, and for the displacement of more than half the country's population – more than 4 million refugees and more than 7 million Syrians forced from their homes inside the country. The regime has “forcibly disappeared” more than 65,000 people, including 58,000 civilians. The Russian aerial intervention from September 2015 – bombing mainly opposition-held territory and supporting a six-front offensive by the Syrian military, supported by Iranian commanders and fighters, Hezbollah, and Iraqi, Afghan, and Pakistani militia --- has caused further displacement and civilian deaths.

However, the artifice of “empire” has often swept away the local dimension, replacing it with a caricature of US power vs. “anti-imperialism”. Public intellectuals such as Noam Chomsky, high-profile reporters including Patrick Cockburn and Robert Fisk, and political movements such as American “libertarians” – as well as the State propaganda outlets of Russia, Iran, and the Assad regime – proclaim that Washington is responsible for the Syrian rebellion. Investigative reporters like Seymour Hersh and Gareth Porter convert the August 2013 chemical weapons attacks by the Syrian military into a plot to justify an assault on President Assad and his inner circle. The proposal of no-fly zones and safe havens is deprived of humanitarian legitimacy with the argument that it is Washington's scheme – even though President Obama has consistently rejected the initiatives – to pursue regime change.

This elevation of the imperial eventually treated new actors as causes rather than consequences of the crisis, notably in the case of Islamic State. ISIS, which developed as Al Qa'eda in Iraq during, and under



the US occupation following, the 2003 war to topple Saddam Hussein, entered the Syrian conflict in 2012. Initially it deployed a new organisation, Jabhat al-Nusra, and later crossed the border under its own name and leadership. For several months, ISIS units allied with Syrian rebels on the battlefield, notably in Aleppo Province in northwest Syria; however, Islamic State turned on the rebels from January 2014 in battles which are still ongoing. ISIS also split from Jabhat al-Nusra in spring 2014 and subsequently renounced any allegiance to Al Qa'eda.

Islamic State's rise within Syria was fostered by the violence and chaos stemming from the Assad regime's attempts to suppress the uprising from 2011. The organisation tried to take advantage of the vacuum of authority in parts of northern Syria, first trying to build up a position in areas where rebels were challenging the Syrian military and then attacking those rebels and the opposition which was trying to establish governance in "liberated" towns and cities.

However, in the narrative of US power and anti-imperialism, Washington is responsible for Islamic State, to the point of creating ISIS. In some versions of the narrative, the US built up the organization during its occupation of Iraq; in others, the Obama Administration decided to establish Islamic State in Syria in 2012. The variants of the story are circulated by activists such as Canada's Global Research, by journalists like Pepe Escobar, and by Russian, Iranian, and Assad media outlets.

With the further descent of the Syrian crisis, the emphasis on Islamic State can even be embraced by the Obama Administration which is supposedly responsible for it. Unable to establish a strategy to deal with the local complexities of the uprising and the Assad regime's deadly response, US officials have set aside the issues to present ISIS – and also the "extremism" of groups like Jabhat al-Nusra – as the priority in the Syrian theatre. That interpretation meant that Washington, having refrained from intervention in the Syrian conflict for more than three years, could launch an aerial campaign against ISIS and Jabhat al-Nusra in September 2014.

Empire and anti-imperialism thus erases the Syrian people or reduces them to an abstracted bloc as intervention puts Islamic State at the centre of the narrative and endlessly pursues a political resolution which has now accepted President Assad's retention of power, at least in the short-term. An episode in autumn 2015 is illustrative. The British Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee held hearings on Syria, but focused on possible action against Islamic State rather than the fundamental crisis. The committee,

taking evidence from anti-imperialist observers such as Cockburn, called only two Syrians: one pro-Assad activist Ammar Waqqaf and one from the “Syrian Observatory for Human Rights” which has recycled rumours about the conflict as fact to become an oft-quoted outlet by mainstream media. No one from the Syrian opposition or civil society groups was summoned by the MPs.

Syria is far from the only case of erasure. Entire countries disappear in the public narrative because there is no presence of “empire” or “anti-imperialism” as the hook for attention and stories. For example, the civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo – ironically, a situation which in part was born out of empire more than 50 years ago – has led to the deaths of 5 million people, but is rarely mentioned in mainstream media outside sub-Saharan Africa. Other countries are in the headlines for a time and then recede: the everyday attention to Libya in 2011 as the Qaddafi regime was confronted and then fell has disappeared amid the instability, violence, and competing governments that have beset the country since then. Other countries become and then go beyond nightmarish spectres, such as Yemen with its civil war and Saudi-led intervention or Iraq with the Islamic State establishing its control of areas such as the city of Mosul.

### **CONCLUSION: THE INDIVIDUAL, NETWORKS, AND A CIVIL SOCIETY**

In a 21st-century construction of Goliath v. David, the Goliath of empire is mythical but it is a powerful myth. It rationalizes and justifies the exercise of power by States and systems. Depending on the supposed imperial centre, it posits a “liberal international order” or a Chinese-led stability or a Russian sphere of security. It is a myth which can distort political, economic, and social realities and oppress or erase people.

Yet a simple “anti-imperialism” is no more effective. It can pose as a resistance which does not offer recognition of the situation faced by communities or individuals, instead superimposing a narrative resting on the assumed control and evil of an outside actor. Doing so, it can lead to an implacable opposition to intervention, even in the form of essential humanitarian action. It can excuse and thus prop up repressions, abuses, and even crimes against humanity of leaders and groups who are not seen as no more than the innocent targets of the “imperial”.

But if the empire of Goliath is a misleading and counter-productive concept, what is the alternative? The answer lies in “Who is David?” David is – or at least should be – us. It should be us in interactions,

discussions, and negotiations which are not dependent on either subservience or simple opposition to an assumed dominant power. It should be in consideration and then pursuit of concepts of civil society, justice, and rights which come from the local, responding to conditions and challenges, rather than the assumptions of a dominant authority.

Does David win? Not necessarily. Recent history is littered with the debris after authoritarian regimes and systems put down movements for political, economic, and social rights. The “Arab Spring” offers salutary lessons of the challenges for uprisings – sometimes after they achieve initial success, sometimes before they can even claim a triumph.

However, those defeats and challenges do not mean that the effort should not have been made, taking refuge in the diversions of “empire” or the submission to other systems of power. To the contrary, there is hope only if David persists. As an Iranian activist said amid the repression of the mass protests after the disputed 2009 Presidential election, “This is a marathon, not a sprint.”

In one of the most arrogant post-9/11 statements, the historian John Lewis Gaddis declared: “Empire is as American as apple pie. It seems to me on balance American imperial power in the 20th century has been a remarkable force for good, for democracy, for prosperity. What is striking is that great opposition has not arisen to the American empire.”

That is not just a conflation of “American” power and the world, it is a conflation of values and that power: if anyone does pose “opposition”, in Gaddis’ eyes, then he/she has rejected “good”, democracy, and prosperity. It is a construction that, while promoting the power of a single system – be it American, Russian, Chinese, trans-national, or other – negates any power for the rest of us.

Empire is not an objective description of political, economic, and social conditions. It is a device for that negation of any power. In rejecting the term, we do not simply resist – we begin to examine the possibilities for our own negotiation of the challenges that we face in our lives, our communities, and our world today.

## Debate 2

# The Old-New Arenas of Imperialism – Western Asia and North Africa

**Lukasz Fyderek** | Thank you Scott for your great, inspirational lecture. My first request will be to ask you to present your vision of what we call Western Asia and North Africa and your outlook in terms of both imperialisms or maybe other explanatory frameworks.

As until now we have been focusing on David, perhaps now we should also ask ourselves if we have a Goliath? Is there a Goliath in the Middle East or is it just a Goliath in the making? Jeanette Bougrab – the floor is yours.

**Jeanette Bougrab** | My parents come from Algeria and we are Muslims. I think it is very important to make this thing clear because I do not have the same vision as you due to my cultural and religious background. We are immigrants in France. I was born and studied in France. I hold a PhD of the Sorbonne University and I became a professor of public law at that university. Later I joined the Supreme Court of France – the Council of State and soon after that I was nominated a minister at Nicolas Sarkozy's government.

When I was a minister of the French government the Arab Spring began. I supported the Arab Spring and I persuaded my colleagues that Mubarak had to leave office because a man cannot stay in power for 30 years. You cannot speak of any democracy in such a case. But when I said this, I immediately had problems with my government because at the beginning of the Arab Spring David Cameron, Angela Merkel and Nicolas Sarkozy supported Mubarak and cooperated with him and it was very difficult to reverse such a record. Then I repeated it in Davos and immediately after my return to Paris, I presented my demission. It was refused and I stayed within the government but I did not change my opinion. I





think it is not right to say that democracy is good for the Western states but not for the Arab countries. Democracy is the only system that gives power a true legitimacy.

But now, after the Arab Spring, what can I say? Three or four years after the Arab Spring I can tell you – it is certainly a failure. Even though I supported it, I have to say it has not succeeded, or that the success was very little. Nonetheless, the Arab Spring has shown that people want to have democracy and the rule of law. What is the biggest mistake of the Western states that cannot be forgiven? When the Muslim Brotherhood won the election in Egypt, when the Ennahda Movement won the election in Tunisia – everybody congratulated them and offered cooperation. How can you cooperate with somebody who does not accept equality between men and women, freedom and the other values of democracy? Just after those events I said in an interview to one French newspaper that it is not possible to accept Muslim fundamentalism in Egypt because there is no way that Sharia law can be soft or moderate. As one of the French revolutionaries Louis de Saint-Just said – no freedom for the enemy of freedom. I totally agree with Saint-Just on that matter.

As a Muslim woman I know the price of liberty and equality. As a minister I said that it was not possible to accept cooperation with the Muslim Brotherhood. In consequence I had problems with the prime minister and president (in a similar manner to other Western governments). They felt guilty for working for such a long period with Mubarak or Ben Ali and thought it was the right way to redeem themselves through cooperation with the fundamentalists who came to power after the Arab Spring.

I do think that Islamism is one of threats of the 21st century. I am sure that we are at war. The problem of the Western governments is that they do not want to see the reality. They see Boko Haram in Nigeria, they see Daesh (ISIS) in Iraq and Syria – and you cannot say it is not a problem or just something that is very far. It is a problem. A lot of French, British or Belgian people are going there and joining Daesh or other terrorist groups. Recently we have had a terrorist attack in Turkey and in France – the Charlie Hebdo tragedy. You cannot say it is not a problem.

A couple of days ago the head of MI5 (the Security Service of the United Kingdom) gave an interview on the BBC in which he discussed openly the terrorist threat. You have to know that if the head of MI5 decides to talk to the media on the dangers and lack of effective response to fight it, the threat is really out there. Just to give you an example – terrorists use the Internet. We got used to saying that the Internet is

a great achievement and usually forget to notice the other side of the coin, that it can be a threat. Young people in France are watching movies about Daesh on the Internet and find them attractive. The Internet might be a very effective and at the same time dangerous tool to convince French people to go to Syria and to join Daesh. Another problem is that some states are giving financial help to terrorist organisations. What makes things even worse is that sometimes Western governments cooperate with countries that finance terrorists. Of course, such cooperation is very important in terms of the economy but the fact that it takes place disturbs me.

You have probably heard about a crucifixion committed by Muslim fundamentalists who left the dead body to be seen for several days just to show people what the penalty is for those who dare to criticise the authorities. How can we accept that given our devotion to human rights? I cannot accept it as a Muslim woman whose parents came from Algeria and I cannot understand why Western governments accept this.

**Lukasz Fyderek** | Thank you Jeannette. Now I would like to ask Emel Akçali to present her point of view.

**Emel Akçali** | Trying to conceptualise the theme of the debate concerning the old and new arenas of imperialism, of course I join the keynote speaker of this conference and the previous speakers who showed us how our perception of imperialism in the past and nowadays is different. I am not sure if we can speak of imperialism in the classical sense of the word at the moment, i.e. the extension of territory by military measures. Instead of that we can talk about the kind of extension of sphere of influence by means of technological, economic and cultural capital as well as military power but also by instigating certain values such as neoliberalism for example.

In this light, perhaps a suggestion or a question that I want to introduce to a discussion that we can follow later – should we not talk about the new concepts and forms of imperialism with a sense of Foucauldian understanding of governmentality. This was something which we suggested in an



article which I wrote along with two other Turkish colleagues that was called “Taming Arab social movements: Exporting neoliberal governmentality” which was published in “Security dialogue”. I am not sure if this audience now will buy it but what we suggested is that a new type of imperialism is governing from a distance by fostering a mode of subjectivity on the ground by the economic rationality of entrepreneurship or by competition through which individuals govern themselves. That is what we suggested. This is what the European Union, the US or other superpowers are doing and creating their own type of governmentalities which is like governing from a distance by instigating certain values in certain countries. But how is this penetration of these values taking place, especially in the Middle East and North Africa but also Central-Eastern Europe? By certain strategies which include, for instance, civil society introducing procedural democracy via neoliberal values. We need to be very careful here. These are the ways in which governing from a distance is implemented in certain countries. We need to have a critical eye.

These strategies might not be so innocent when coming from certain power centres. For example, when we look at the instigation or penetration of neoliberal values in the Middle East and North Africa, which started in the 1970s and was especially promoted by the UK and the US, we can see that in time this created a retreat into economic nationalisation and the development of a state and created incredible income gaps. Neoliberalism has created wealth and huge inequality. These inequalities – decreasing wages, increasing unemployment, job insecurity, removal of subsidies and increasing domestic debt in countries like Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia are the reasons that led to the Arab Spring. People not only protested at the authoritarian regimes but also at the economic conditions.

The Arab Spring is not the term that Arabs use. They hate the word “ Arab Spring” or “Jasmine Revolution”. That is why a lot of Tunisian activists are criticising the Nobel Prize as an award to the Jasmine revolution. For them this is a Dignity revolution. It was not jasmine, a beautiful Arab spring – but they fought; they died for their dignity. Moreover, it was not only against the authoritarian regime but also because of the economic conditions which were killing them. In this sense this neoliberalism, introduced as a way to liberty, for these populations was also the reason why these people revolted. That is why I said that we need a more critical eye on the introduction of the so called “peaceful strategies” in certain countries because it also tends to foster extreme alternatives, and not only in the Middle East.

Look at rise of far right, racist, xenophobic and anti-Semitic political forces in Central and Eastern Europe or France. Thus, it is not only radical Islam that is a side effect of the neoliberal penetration. In Hungary the radical right burn Roma people's houses, they attack people on the streets. They are as dangerous as radical Islamists. When you look at radical Islamists in Muslim countries – they rise against Western supremacy. The radical right discourse is not that different. They also criticise the US, they do not like the EU and feel exploited by the EU. They are very similar in this sense.

We need to look at radical Islam as a case that is not so isolated. This might be a consequence of a new form of imperialism which is the neoliberal governmentality that we do not criticise enough. That neoliberal governmentality is imposed and exported – not by military power like in the past, not by the extension of territory, but through the creation of world supremacy.

Can radicalism be a form of resistance? If you look at Daesh today, you would be surprised to see that numbers of young people from France are joining it because they are offered some kind of alternative to the neoliberal world order. They established Al-Raqqah in Syria, which is a welfare state. It is an opposite discourse to the image of an individualist who has to compete for life. I mean that we need to take a deeper look to understand why these people are being attracted. This is not that easy.

**Jeanette Bougrab** | Sorry to disturb you but this is very important. Your explanation is like the beginning of a justification of why these young people go to Syria or Iraq to commit crimes.

**Emel Akçali** | It is not a justification. I am just trying to understand why this is so attractive to certain groups of people.

**Jeanette Bougrab** | Daesh is a barbaric regime.

**Emel Akçali** | The only point I tried to make is that if you marginalise those people more and more like the radical right, we will never find the roots of the problem and they will still keep attracting young people.

**Jeanette Bougrab** | My boyfriend was killed during the Charlie Hebdo attack. Thus it is difficult for me to find justification and accept the fact that because a person wants to have his socio-economic problems solved, they could kill my boyfriend. It is not possible for me to listen to such explanations.

**Lukasz Fyderek** | Thank you very much for your presentations and discussion. Now we should give a floor to Felix Kaputu.

**Felix Kaputu** | The title of this conference sounds redundant as it seems to suggest one thing and its contrary at the same time; the return of the fallen empires or again the old-new arenas of imperialism. However, when looking closely at these words, they stand exactly for what they mean, i.e., one thing and its contrary. As we look back in time as far as when the concept of imperialism entered the international arena, it almost meant world land conquests through operations hidden under different names (Twaddle, 1992:1). One thing and its contrary were often forced to mean the same thing. We would like the following lines to condemn the superpower of the world today, i.e. the United States of America, for getting in the policy of showing good intentions, getting into action, but so often never going up to the end of what would bring back peace and harmony. Quite often, as soon as its good intentions materialise, the United States disappears from the scene. It leaves the ground either in complete chaos, or in the hands of some surrogate self-appointed “power” whose main presence raises many doubts about security, opens the way to violence, and a quick return to dictatorship and its avatars in an endless cyclic chain of violence. The area opens to the world’s big weapon businesses as the most recent fabrications are tested and light weapons go mainly to very young soldiers.

The empires of long ago are not a good example to follow (Little, 2009; Rostow, WW., 1972). The United States should engage in peaceful missions that completely reflect its history and its commitment to work for the good of its people and humankind whatever the circumstances. Besides, it should engage more openly in global issues that threaten world integrity today. It should not wait until the last minute, or give the impression of making a show of its last military acquisitions. It should rather avoid any action that could easily be misinterpreted as neglect, lack of interest, or again creating space for any disorder. The United States should completely cover any commitment taken in making sure that the evil fought is eradicated. Once that harmony is restored, partnership re-created and preserved, it could then leave. The United States of America is the leader of a world where most people consume its culture and believe in its capacity to bring peace; it should fully assume its moral responsibility (Appadurai, 1996:17).

In the past, superpowers did not take their responsibility seriously. A bad example of the distant past can be found in the Ottoman Empire. Its history is still fresh in world memories. For many years, several countries showed up their power in one way or another as they needed the world to know and respect them as the most prominent superpowers (Taylor, 1991; Catherwood, C., 2011). England, France, Russia, Germany, to mention but a few, were among the frontrunners. They entered different wars and suggested solutions that in the end were about land possession and influence. When treaties were signed, they were always in the interest of one party or another; but, generally speaking, they forgot the main actors and the grassroots most concerned. Finally, what these powers had promised to avoid, arrived all the same. The Ottoman Empire disappeared. It was scattered in many small states placed under the direct authority of the superpowers in question. This example of the distant past draws a conflict resolution pattern that is quite useful for understanding the redundant character mentioned above and attributed to imperialism, and ipso facto to the fallen empires, and to the most active superpower today, i.e. the United States of America. The pattern is all about good political intentions taken to bring back peace and harmony, but which quickly leave their place to mercantilist schemes, or to a complete neglect of a territory that has a lot to do with money and human sacrifice.

It is the same pattern that functioned in world conquests, especially throughout colonialism. African colonialism was launched under the concept of “Civilisation and Enlightenment” from an over-religious continent and spread through a mission of salvation to the “dark continent” (Thomson, 1987; Blyden,

E.W., 1883). Unfortunately in its actions, Europe went against several universal rights and freedom of speech, religion, traditions, and self-governance for which it had itself fought for many generations. It sought one thing and its contrary through world homogenisation in forcing its social order as the best and the only source of inspiration that the world should follow. Words such as “primitive” and “savage” seemed to justify its engagement, while at the same time the continent was deprived of its most important artefacts, beliefs, and social construct.

Consequently, the 1885 Berlin Conference was but a disaster repeating the pattern. The conference butchered, hacked Africa into small pieces and literally invented countries that had nothing to do with people’s affinities, world visions, expectations and social construction imaginations (Appadurai, 1996:6). The continent had its coherent territory groups closely associated with ethnic groups, and local traditions. They were in their dynamic encounters locally and globally, sometimes moving to smaller or bigger spaces (Appadurai, 1996:9). Finally, they were determined to live through spaces open to each other, and eventually getting into negotiations with visitors.

The 1885 Berlin Conference led to artificial borders that split families and African kinship understanding in such a way that the newly formed territories or countries have never been able again to build true nations. The weight of old nations still calls for their survival, quite often over constructed borders. The nation-states that came from the international conference have a special hyphen that never serves as a conjunction linking nations and states (Appadurai, 1996; Appadurai, 2013:2). On the contrary, the hyphen marks a strong opposition. The virtual countries with overlapping borders make it difficult to sustain national and transnational initiatives for much of the confusion inherited from the 1885 Berlin Conference is still latent. In many places, the nation-states are trying to reach a level that could confirm them as nations and states but have failed to fully reach either. At the same time, the ethnic nations split into different parts have since then failed to reconstruct any nation or state as the international laws do not permit such anarchy. Many cases are a mess that led to years of dictatorship under one political party system adopted under the pretext and the hope of unifying areas. Failures have left wounds that are not healing yet as many turn to outside advertisements and engage in imaginations with the hope of constructing spaces that would remain in the official nations and would permit them free movement, and the freedom of association with new chosen kinds of kinship. Such

moves led to fractures and disjuncture from nation construction, and participation in the global space (Appadurai, 1996).

It is also unfortunate that the pattern of occupation identified above had prevailed in the invention of South America. Disjunctions prevailed in its constructions and had led to unsolved situations which have continued until today. Customary territories overlap official frontiers and often have a negative impact on the nation construction that had prevailed in the construction of Latin America. The same pattern of occupation also prevailed during World War I. As a consequence this war, for the first time, took so very many lives at the same time in so very many places. The pattern continued to prevail and led to the same conditions in the Second World War, and finally to the Iraq War (Cashman & Robinson, 2007).

The pattern of occupation went a bit differently in the Middle East. With the creation of Israel under patronage in 1948, through the splitting up of Palestine without the involvement of the major players, and without them being concerned from the beginning, the situation immediately went to the dogs. It has since then escalated into endless violence. This takes different dimensions and human lives cannot be defended from any side. Instead, despite so many technological inventions, killing people has become the *modus vivendi* on both sides (Sabasteanski, 2005). The world keeps saying the social conditions under which the Middle East continues to live are execrable, appalling but does not do enough to change it. The United Nations seems powerless. The United States of America is also powerless as its decisions are often disputed at different levels. Besides, the Middle Eastern countries wish to reach the level of world superpowers. They have developed such a large spectrum of hostility to each other and use religion as a criterion of division (Hinchcliffe & Milton-Edwards, 2007).

September 11, 2001, a date that has marked forever the United States, has a strong connection with the Middle East. This date became the starting point of a very difficult situation worldwide (Juergensmeyer, 2003). In fact, it became the visible part of religious violence. The world has overtly submitted to different kinds of violence since that time. Unfortunately the terrorism concept is not only overused in the literature, but also in practical social situations, and it is applied to people who have different visions of the world (Spark, 2014). The concept also seems easily applicable to people from a different world, and quite often of another skin. The terrorist concept has replaced the once misused “Kamikaze” (and indeed Kamikaze means the “holy wind from heaven”). Once again, from the beginning, the fight against

terrorism has gone halfway. The consequence is the evil that the snake doubles its heads every time one is cut. DAESH is an outcome of that long process of going halfway, just meaning one small thing without getting a broader picture, so often giving the impression that only a demonstration of fire is necessary and sufficient. Consequently, from September 11th, 2001, terrorists have found ways to recycle and attack the world through sophisticated strategies. These horrible tactics have not left any social strata unaffected. They go as far as recruiting youth and turning young people against their countries and socio-political institutions. In spite of their education, young people are indoctrinated to the point of accepting death in the name of evil forces. Once the wrong is identified, the process engaged should go to its end to leave no chance for negative forces. The original pattern has successfully produced sub-models whose evil forces strike the world.

In the Maghreb, another illustration of good actions that have gone halfway and produced disasters can be found in the case of Libya. Every scholar knows and agrees that Muammar Qaddafi was indeed a dictator. His country had socio-economic problems. The country's resources were distributed evenly. It was a dictatorship that protected a small group that got richer and richer while the majority of the population did not get much at all. Yasmina Khadra's book *La dernière nuit du Rais* mentions: "Tout ce qu'on invente est vrai. All that we invent is true". Qaddafi was a western invention (Khadra, 2015). He was left to govern his country in the ways he chose. At the same time, he was a good friend of some world leaders representing democracy. With him, his country was a barrier to the intense migration from Sub-Saharan Africa. For many other African dictators, Qaddafi was a model, and he was the one to give them solutions. At the same time, so many Sub-Saharan Africans went to Libya to get a job. For these Africans, Libya was a paradise for it permitted them to get some financial resources to send back home. Today, Libya is in chaos and an unrecognisable country. One has to understand that we are not trying to insist that Qaddafi should have remained in power. As a dictator, he had to go, and the decision to drive away a leader who was killing his people was very good. However, we need to underline once again the decision to remove Qaddafi to secure democracy for the country went half way. For, it was not just by removing him and by leaving power in uncertain hands that things should move ahead. The chaos could be avoided, and Libya could still be a good place to live in if only the decision to remove Qaddafi had a follow-up towards democratic institutions. Then two things happened, Qaddafi died in uncertain circumstances

and the country went literally to the dogs, and nobody can recognise it today (Christensen & Sandvik, 2014). So many killings are reported every day. Poverty and insecurity have reached a level never seen during the colonel's long reign. Also, migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa now come by the thousands, not to look for work in Libya, but to get facilitators to export their misery to Europe via the Mediterranean Killing Sea. The local Libyan security forces, the product of improvisation, are easily corrupted. They send any candidate who can pay for the sea passage to death on the sea.

In the same year 2012, while the violence and killings were happening in Libya, the Arab Spring took place in Tunisia, not so far away. (Jamshidi, 2013). It was sudden (Lesch & Haas, 2012). There are voices today criticising it on the grounds that it did not have clear objectives, that it was not structured. We would rather say its chance was the fact that it had not got any clear objectives, and it was indeed not structured at all. It was spontaneous and called on the human fibre. Everybody who saw the young man, Mohamed Bouazizi, on fire, understood from the inside that when hopelessness gets caught up in the heart there is no more hope or future. They had to imagine their future and justify their social life. It is this same pattern that was followed in Egypt and the deaths there were counted as well.

When we look at the Libyan pattern and consider the Arab Spring Pattern, it is obvious that when people take things into their own hands, they come to the "right" solutions (Manhire, 2012). When, however, big empire builders and imperialists take things into their hands without a clear judgment or a clear plan, things burn quickly from the inside. Violence has never stopped for many years and has gone on in different ways all around the places where the fallen empires applied their strategies of conquest. Some empires disappeared and left their place to the biggest empire of all times: the United States of America. However, its policy that turns from undertaking one thing and then its contrary has presently led to a catastrophic situation in Syria. Failing to take the right decision at the right time has opened a wide door not only to terrorism but also to a self-appointed surrogate superpower whose interventions must have a hidden agenda. Syria today is another example that comes and illustrates how the superpower should, every time it takes a decision for world peace, continue to the end.

The United States is a superpower that attracts admiration from the entire world. Its democratic theories are believed to be the best for human development and freedom. Many people consume its culture through different ways and communications. It is also with the same high expectations that the



world looks at it for all world events that demand attention and strong interventions especially when civilians cannot be defended. The entire world is turned to it not only for the admiration of its social development model, but mainly for providing peace and harmony around the world. In many cases, the United States also believes in its peace missions. Unfortunately, its recent interventions in different countries bring peace only for a few days. Chaos immediately follows and leads to cyclical violence like that going on in the Middle East at present.

To conclude: whenever the biggest world empire intervenes today for good reasons in any place around the world, it should continue to the end and make sure democratic institutions work. Another possibility to consider over a long period should centre on education. The United States should consider offering education and training opportunities to members of the civil society in countries that are likely to move towards democracy in order to have social agents and leaders to lead their country to democracy.

**Lukasz Fyderek** | Thank you very much Felix. May I ask Patrycja to take the floor now?

**Patrycja Sasnal** | I had a big problem with the title of this panel. “Old and new arenas of imperialism” in the context of the Middle East. I do not know whether there is imperialism in the Middle East today. Quite the contrary, I do believe that rather there are plenty of strong currents that compete one against another. Yet, continuing what Felix Kaputu said, this past imperialism has remained as a spirit or as a certain creation or representation of imperialism. Many countries would be missing the former imperialist position and their policies would be based on those imperial yearnings.

Now, borrowing this historical framework from the French school of Braudel, let me first present the perspective of *longue durée* and then the shorter period. In the longer period, it seems to me that history is of profound importance and meaning. Let me start with Napoleon invading Egypt. From our perspective it was rather insignificant. In the Egyptian mind it is something very much alive and important. That was horrible because that was a conquest by an imperial power, yet although first they dominated you,

that invasion also caused a certain intellectual ferment in the society, and eventually brought something good. I am thinking here about those smaller Middle Eastern imperialisms, then the European ones, then American ones, as of mirrors looking one into another and borrowing that eagerness to be somebody else.

The 19th century in the Middle East started with the conquest of Napoleon who brought the first printing press and a whole body of scientists, and suddenly the Arab world was conquered and became part of a different empire – the Ottoman Empire. Let us consider what was happening. Why were they thinking what was happening – because they had that sense of being above it all. Those complexes of superiority and inferiority mix in the psyche of the leaders of the Middle East; partially also in Western leaders. Then in the 19th century, the dominated Middle East recalled the Middle Ages. It was the Middle East that dominated when the crusaders came from Europe to the Middle East. They were the stinking horde, the barbarians. They were what we see as the jihadists today. This is the same although the other way around.

History is coming round full circle. Here I just wanted to mention the sense of superiority and inferiority which is very important in relation to the fact that imperialism continues in our psyche, that is rooted there – yet, actually it does not exist as a single power because no one is that power.

Going further into the establishment of the countries in the Middle East, we see that they are creations with exceptions such as Egypt, Turkey, Saudi Arabia. Furthermore all the countries of the Levant are creations. Now this statehood is also a creation of Western imperialism at all levels: institutions, education system, the media – they have all been borrowed. All this is taken from, or awarded by, the West, namely by France and Great Britain. Take one example from Syria. Initially the Syrian parliament selected the US as a power that was to be a protector of the new Syria after the fall of the Ottoman Empire. In line with the League of Nations Charter every conquered state had the right to choose a protector as a part of developing the League of Nations and they opted for the US and they received France as the protector. They divided Syria – first into five, then into four, then into five again; then they thought how to divide Lebanon away from Syria and where the borders would be. They did it with their interests in mind in order to make these countries as weak as possible, easy to subordinate.

Well, in politics you do not think about the long term well-being of the state that you have been given to govern, and the French, for example, made the Alawites so powerful in Syria. They were favoured when

the army was developed because it was the decision of France to make such a system. So, somewhere at the heart of the structure of the state there was Western imperialism. It would disappear with time because the European states moved out. Yet, the state as such remained a certain Western construct.

When the Western colonisers were removed, local elites stayed but they had hardly anything in common with the inhabitants. The betrayal of the elites remains a big problem in the Middle East. It concerns all of them, the economic, military, legal, judicial or media elites. These are people who have been educated and brought up in a Western cocoon, Western imperialism. In the Middle East there is plenty of poverty. In 2010–11 in Syria 35% of population lived below the poverty line. It shows what sort of country we are talking about. This disproportion between the elite and the rest highlights the class-ridden nature of the society. These are the leftovers of Western imperialism.

What am I aiming at? It is not as though we – as the Western world – are to blame. It is not that Western imperialism is to blame especially for something particular. It seems to me that the conquered peoples of the Middle East today are “wannabe Goliaths”. Learning from the politics of the West, they want to duplicate it. Today, in this short perspective, the camp of future, “wannabe” power is developing. They want to rebuild their former imperialism – Greater Egypt with its history spanning 5000 years, Greater Iran, Greater Turkey. They all have certain historical grounds for doing it. But also new ones crop up like Saudi Arabia. Even if it is not big, Saudi Arabia, with money and religion behind it, begins to perceive itself as a mini new empire. Perhaps Israel – against all the odds and the historical heritage of this beleaguered fortress – begins to perceive itself in the same way.

Finally, referring to what Paweł Kowal said at the beginning – the paleo-imperialism, it is visible not only in Russia or Turkey. We can also see it in Egypt, Iran, Israel, Saudi Arabia and it happens so that all these states consider the relationship to the West as being in the other camp.

**Lukasz Fyderek** | Now it is time for discussion. Let me first refer to Jeanette Bougrab’s message and her remarks concerning the Internet and new technologies. I think these are undervalued, underestimated as an aspect of modern talk about imperialism that allows something that Emel mentioned, namely neoliberal penetration or governing from a distance. Now we are at the point that other “wannabe”

powers, as Patrycja called them, are using these means of communication and one of them is ISIS which I do consider as definitely an imperialist force. If we look into the propaganda of ISIS and ask ourselves why these young people from France and other parts of the world are going to Syria and Iraq, we will understand that it is because they receive a proper message. This message is anti-globalist or anti-Western but it also has a positive content – such as the re-creation of the caliphate and the spreading of dar al-Islam over dalal-harb – i.e. spreading Islam over infidels. If I may challenge you Emel – in your talk I find a gap between the material aspect of neoliberalism, the income gap which you have mentioned and the ideological factors – how can we bridge that? Speaking of neoliberalism, in Egypt it brought bigger income gaps but does it translate so easily to the political realm? I mean your remarks on civil society as a kind of foreign, imposed creation.

**Emel Akçali** | First of all, I was a bit disturbed by what Jeannette said that we should not cooperate with the Muslim Brotherhood or Ennahda Movement. I do think we should, otherwise you marginalise people and push them to extremism.

What happened in Egypt, Tunisia and other Muslim countries, but also in France, was that they pushed their youth to the extremes because they pushed them out of the system. They made the youth anti-systemic actors. When you actually include them in a dialogue and they come through democratic election, the situation would look different.. As long as you marginalise them, you push huge sectors of youth to the extreme and then they are looking for a platform where they can express themselves.

For instance in Tunisia, which is the most successful case of the so called Arab Spring, we have the highest number of young people who joined ISIS. This should raise a question. There we have the new technologies and means of communication and organisations who finance these people.

As for your question on civil society I think it is very valid. Civil society is not a coherent monolith, it can be right wing, left wing and represent all different ideological conflicts. But in the Arab world, civil society is financed not only by the EU and US, but also by Islamic organisations from Saudi Arabia or Qatar.

**Lukasz Fyderek** | So in a sense new technologies enable “wannabe” powers to compete with established powers?

**Emel Akçali** | If you look at ISIS’ videos, they use Hollywood aesthetics in order to influence the audience. Actually it is these Hollywood aesthetics that scare us so much. They use the new technologies to materialise their ideology on the ground.

**Lukasz Fyderek** | Now a question to Felix about the dilemma of stability vs. democracy. As you mentioned, Qaddafi was a dictator but at the same time a factor of stability in North Africa. This highlights challenges that countries under transition face. Egypt gives an example of a nondemocratic leader who provides stability.

Where should we go in thinking about societies – should we move more to grassroots movements and civil society in order to act out of idealistic Kantian assumptions of perpetual peace and democracy, or perhaps we should be realistic and support stability in some cases? Where is a balance between the two?

**Felix Kaputu** | What is clear is that whenever there is one of these international interventions, it seems as if there is a hidden agenda that is to come afterwards. The case of Libya is a good example. In France it gave place to so many discussions about personal demonstrations of power by the leaders instead of looking at the system as such. People are trying to judge themselves instead of looking at the interest of the people as such. That is why the grassroots seems to be the best alternative that can be reached only if people are educated and know what is going on in the world and therefore are able to participate in globalisation.

**Lukasz Fyderek** | Thus local solutions instead of imperial ones. That would be the point.  
Patrycja – you referred to the Sykes-Picot agreement and it seems that one cannot enter any conversation about international relations in the Middle East without recalling this agreement and colonialism or

imperialism. That is very vivid and lives in the minds of local players. How can it be that this imperialism is still valid in objective terms and popular among political players in the Middle East?

Globally imperialism had different consequences in different parts of the world. In South-East Asia, we had the French in Vietnam splitting it into 3 or 4 states. But Vietnamese people are not preoccupied with colonialism anymore. We had 9 and later on 11 states created by Britain in Malaysia and actually the Malaysians love the British culture and cherish this legacy. For me it is a big question – how come and why is it that this imperialist legacy is so valid and present in political discourses of the Middle Eastern states?

**Patrycja Sasnal** | I did not have enough time to go further and get to the US. I think that the US was a country that continued the imperial legacy. That is pretty obvious and Scott Lucas told us about the peak moment of 2003 with the Iraq war and its decline since then. If you take for instance an average Arab, and an average Arab person is certainly below 30 (70% of the Arab world is certainly below 30), what political events does an average Arab person remember? It is 1990–91 – the Gulf War, it is the Desert Fox operation in 1998, it is 2001 – Afghanistan, 2003 – Iraq, it is all about a series of American interventions in the Middle East.

I think that this imperial America is very much in the Arab minds today. It has not gone away. Hence you have anti-Americanism in the Middle East. At the same time, if you then look at the US – talk about them is becoming weaker or moving away from the Middle East. If you look at Syria and Iraq – more than 7000 sorties have been carried out by the US in the past year. The US is still very much present there.

Let us think for a minute why the Middle East is important for the US. There are several reasons. First would be transport routes, although globalisation made these things a little bit easier and the routes are not as important as they were 20 years ago. Then we have oil. Only recently the US has become energy independent but still imports 10–11% of their oil from Saudi Arabia. Another reason is Israel. Sure, there is a debate whether recent friction between Israel and the US is permanent or just transient and will go away with Obama who is the system error, and things will change once Hillary Clinton or whoever else is the new US president. Then take terrorism. The Middle East is important to the US when it comes to security and terrorist threats. The US recently has been very resilient when it comes to that. They have learned a lot and they have developed instruments to counter that threat.

Actually, every other week you have a shooting in a US school and it is not coming from the Middle East. This is an internal US affair. I guess there are many more problems for the US these days and in fact the Middle East is declining in importance but the US is also still very much present in the minds of the people.

There are very few reliable opinion polls conducted in the Middle East. The best known are: the Arab Opinion Poll done by Maryland University and the Brookings Institution and the Pew Research done by Pew Research Centre. Both of them show that when you ask a young Arab where he or she would like to live, work, learn, they will usually answer that it is the UK, Germany or France. I guess even though this imperial legacy is there in the minds, European attractiveness is still doing well.

**Lukasz Fyderek** | The opinion polls are really tricky. For example 80% of Syrians agree on only one thing: that Islamic State is a US creation. Conspiracy theories are there, but that is a picture of the region we are dealing with. This picture is a fascinating one. Now it is time for questions from the audience.

**Sergey Kovalev** | Please do not take too seriously what am I going to say, but when we speak about imperialism we mainly criticise it and illustrate it with, for example, the Sepoy uprising in India. The British Empire lost its colonies but if you ask the former colonised people, they would like to remain a part of the Commonwealth. If you were to ask an average British citizen if they want to remain a colonial power, their answer would be “no”. In India many uprisings were held, many people died. But if we read Indian authors, some would say that they are grateful to Britain for the culture they brought to their country.

**Mike Roth** | It is a fascinating conference. I am, however, a little disappointed because so far nobody mentioned the defining factor in modern politics, that is, global capital. That’s Goliath. Global capital has no conscience, has no face but you have to follow the money. On the back of the big investigation in America in the 1970s after the Watergate affair, they followed the money and they found the source of corruption.

England and the US continue to invest huge sums of money in arms deals in Saudi Arabia and in other countries and Russia does so too. Politicians profit through this. Look how many of them have become billionaires in office or out of office. That is the real enemy. These are the ones which create huge inequalities in our society.

**Michał Sutowski** | The question of new technologies and new media and their impact on grassroots movements and the older structures of hierarchy and power leads me to Evgeny Morozov's: "The KGB wants to have you on Facebook."

If we claim that there is a new potential for grassroots movements to countervail the power of the old hierarchies, old empires, and old nation states, we should keep in mind that the Chinese, Russian or American governments also have enormous potential to compete within the new media. What is your opinion on the impact that the new media have on the power of traditional empires?

**Giles Scott-Smith** | Thank you Patrycja for bringing up the idea of history. What I wanted to emphasise in my talk was the ambiguity of empire, which brings violence but also benefits. Benefits to a minority – but it still does.

You mentioned the printing press brought by Napoleon to Egypt, Emel mentioned those people who became very rich thanks to neoliberal policies, Felix mentioned the borders that were drowned at random in Africa. One thing that I find really most difficult to deal with in the whole imperial narrative is the wish of some people to turn the clock back and effectively aim to erase imperialism culturally, politically and economically. That disturbs me. You do not have to turn the clock back too long to find out that Israel disappears from the map for instance. What we are dealing with here is negotiation with imperial legacies. That is the daily basis. It is easy for me to say as a West European white male, but it happens to all of us, and we have to do that all the time.

**Lukasz Fyderek** | Now please present closing statements to this discussion.



**Emel Akçali** | Just very briefly about the new media. I sometimes I think the question of new media is a bit exaggerated because the protest movement still use the traditional means, tactics and strategies in order to mobilise and organise people. In my view, the new media first and foremost enables the creation of an international civil society, and not only in the Middle East. You have all heard about the World Social Forum which started in Porto Alegre in Brazil and every two years takes place in a developing country. In 2013 it was in Tunis, this year it was also in Tunis. What I realise is that the World Social Forum groups who get together are alter-globalists, anti-capitalists and against the neoliberal system, and are mostly associated with leftist thinking from Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia. The new media helps them to create this transnational civil society. Nevertheless, in order to make a revolt at the scale of the so called Arab Spring, you still need traditional means of organisation.

Speaking about benefits of imperialism, I would not say that people in India talk highly about the UK. Most postcolonial studies and postcolonial literature in India is critical. Moreover, it is not only the Middle East that is so critical towards the US and the West. Take a look at Latin America which is really very anti-American. In countries which were subjected to colonialism there is a common ground (especially among leftist circles) that domination of an outside power of a different culture and religion is a negative phenomenon. That's why legacy of the Ottoman Empire is so very different from the Western ones.

**Felix Kaputu** | Many people would like to turn the clock back because they benefitted from the regime and colonialism. In the case of Africa, some aspects of colonialism like well-being and welfare system might be remembered positively. But the legacy of Belgian colonialism is different to others and until today Belgium refuses to accept what was done in the past. That becomes a real international problem.

As for a question concerning money, we have to look at that through the proxy wars that we have in Africa today. This is about a lot of money, mineral exploitation, land, etc. Those Western politicians who would like to get a lot of money would agree with politicians of the South to start a war somewhere, get people displaced and then start mining, exploitation etc. and getting billions. That still needs to be addressed.

**Patrycja Sasnal** | Speaking about the negotiations of imperial legacies in the Middle East, I think they have been negotiated only partially, with a certain awareness. It happens much more subconsciously; I will give you an example. We were sitting with a friend of mine in Zamalek, which is a richer, Westernised part of Cairo, in a cafe sipping coffee that costs 4 dollars and actually he, educated in an American school, speaking great English, looks down upon those who follow the Muslim Brotherhood and drink coffee a kilometre or two away that costs 20 cents. He is very anti-American at the same time. He does not know that it is he who is a victim of imperialism and a product of imperialism, not those people whom he considers as the crazy ones.

As for new technologies, I have always seen new media as an amplifier. Penetration of the Internet in Egypt is 50% – quite a lot. Let me give you two examples. Amr Khaled and Mustafa Hosny – these are TV evangelist-type celebrities in Egypt. Each of them has at least 15 million followers on Facebook. Can you imagine what you can do with 15 million followers? It is like a political party – you could win elections!

**Lukasz Fyderek** | Closing our debate I would like to share with you one concern. Namely that even in Kraków discussing imperialism might become dangerous. As Isaiah Berlin said, “Ideas may have consequences.” Perhaps you know the name of the man who contributed the most to imperialism, both theoretically and in practice? He was Vladimir Lenin. When he was imprisoned in this city, three or four kilometres from here, and was laboriously thinking about imperialism all that time.

Ideas have consequences and we need to be aware of this fact.

# The Time of the Empire – Multimedia Exhibition

**Tomasz Kizny** | *The Time of the Empire* is an attempt to bring back the picture of the Gulag Archipelago through historical photos of Soviet camps and current documentation on their remains.

In the 1990s, I was wandering around the spaces of the fallen empire seeking remnants of the “camp civilisation” (M. Heller) in the Russian landscape. Besides travelling through twelve time zones of the former Soviet Union, I engaged in a photographic enquiry in the post-soviet archives which at that time were open to researchers and journalists. Those travels, both geographically and on journeys to the past that have remained captured on old photos, were an attempt to find the image of “the evil empire” or perhaps the core of the evil empire. “In order to know these we must imagine for ourselves (...) Let us not invoke the unimaginable. Let us not shelter ourselves by saying that we cannot, that we could not by any means, imagine it to the very end. We are obliged to that oppressive imaginable”. With these words Georges Didi-Huberman begins his essay concerning four photos that he had secretly taken in Auschwitz in 1944. It can be applied to the crimes committed by other totalitarian regimes as well. Apart from the memories of the former prisoners, camp literature and historical works, the photographic image of Gulag, even if deformed and not complete, might serve as an incentive to an effort to imagine ourselves in “that oppressive imaginable” and to attempt to understand it.

The aim of the project was to commemorate 18 million of people who went through the hell of the Soviet camps, and first and foremost those 2 million 750 thousand victims of the Gulag. I do hope that with my work I can contribute to the creation of a non-mendacious historical identity and collective memory as significant elements in civil society in Russia. The current return of Russian imperialism and the authoritarian regime that is supported by the vast majority of Russian society only proves that our hope from the 1990s, that the fallen empire of the Soviet Union would successfully transform itself into a liberal democracy, was premature.





**12th Awards Gala  
of the Polish Prize of Sérgio Vieira de Mello  
Granted in Memory of the United Nations  
High Commissioner for Human Rights (2002–2003)**

# Welcome

**Danuta  
Glondys**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to the 12th annual Awards Gala of the Polish Sérgio Vieira de Mello Prize, named after the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Sérgio Vieira de Mello was sent by Kofi Annan to negotiate peace in Iraq and died in a terrorist attack on the UN headquarters in Bagdad. We still remember this August 2003 when, for the first time in history, the UN became a target of terror and violence.

At that time, together with the late Paweł Świderski, who was the Honorary Consul of Brazil, and Jan Piekło, the director of the Znak Foundation, we decided to establish a prize that would commemorate this eminent man. From that time on, together with the Panel of Judges, we have awarded the Prize annually to persons and organisations that promote the peaceful coexistence of societies, religions and cultures.

Now let me welcome the Panel of Judges of the Polish Sergio Vieira de Mello Prize: Her Excellency Inga Eriksson Fogh – Ambassador of the Kingdom of Sweden to Poland, His Excellency Alfredo Leoni – Ambassador of the Federative Republic of Brazil to Poland and Anna-Carin Öst – UNHCR Representative to Poland, Wojciech Ponikiewski – Director of the Department of United Nations and Human Rights at the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Wojciech Kolarski – Undersecretary of State at the Chancellery of the President of Poland, Adam Bodnar – the Human Rights Defender, Łukasz Kamiński – President of the Institute of National Remembrance, Henryk Woźniakowski – Deputy President of the ZNAK Foundation and Jan Piekło – Director of the Polish-Ukrainian Cooperation Foundation (PAUCI).

I welcome very warmly those Members of the Panel who are also the Sponsors of the Prize: Wiesław Nowak – President of the Board and Director General of the ZUE SA, Jan Pamuła – President of Kraków Airport, Jacek Weremczuk – Regional Director of PZU in Kraków.

Now let me welcome the Guests of the Gala, the Consular Corps of France, Germany, Ukraine, the United States, Austria, Brazil and the Representative of the Kurdistan Regional Government in Poland. I extend my welcome to Andrzej Kulig, the Deputy President of Kraków for Culture and Krzysztof Markiel, the Director of the Culture Department, representing the Office of the Marshal of Małopolska Region.

Let me welcome all the experts of the conference who participate in our ceremony today. They have come here from Congo, Cyprus, Georgia, the Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Spain, Turkey, the US and the United Kingdom.

Let me also welcome all those kind people and institutions who have been supporting us and are co-financing our event, which are: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, Municipality of Kraków, Małopolska Region and Kraków Airport, PZU Group, ZUE SA, Polish Steel Group SA, Donimirski Boutique Hotels and Villa Decius Restaurant. I would like to thank all media patrons, and last but not least, I express my gratitude to Robert Piaskowski, Programme Director of the Kraków Festival Bureau and Wojciech Przybylski, editor in chief of Res Publica Nowa for their excellent cooperation and help.

Finally my words of deep gratitude go to our Honorary Patrons – Jacek Majchrowski, the President of Kraków, Her Excellency Inga Eriksson Fogh, Ambassador of Sweden, His Excellency Alfredo Leoni, Ambassador of Brazil and Anna-Carin Öst, the UNHCR Representative to Poland.

**Bogusław  
Sonik**

Chair of  
the Panel  
and President  
of the Villa Decius  
Association

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Guests,

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to one person in particular, Sergey Kovalev, who is here with us today. When I was a member of the European Parliament, I had the opportunity to be present when you were awarded the Sakharov Prize and I am very happy that we are able to meet today.

A few words that probably best render the nature of our Association and this moment. This is taken from the description of the Polish Sérgio Vieira de Mello Prize which has become for us a symbol of those universal values that we believe in and that we want to promote: respect for human rights, courage, international solidarity and responsibility – this is the important aspect of the activities of the Villa Decius Association. We started to build the forum for respect of human dignity and promote international responsibility and solidarity with the victims of political and ethnic conflicts – all the time having Sérgio Vieira de Mello as the Patron.

I would like to thank Danuta Glondys, the Director of the Villa Decius Association who has conducted this initiative from the very beginning and every year dedicates a lot of effort and attention to this annual event which celebrates all defenders of human rights.





# Opening

**Anna-Carin  
Öst**

Secretary of State, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As UNHCR Representative to Poland it is my privilege and honour to be with you today to participate in the 12th Gala Award of the Polish Sérgio Vieira de Mello Prize awarded in memory of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Some of you may know that he was also a colleague of mine when he was working at UNHCR.

Ten years ago there were 30 million people displaced by conflict and persecution but at the same time the UNHCR was helping one million people to return home. At that time global refugee numbers were declining and old wars ended in Angola, Liberia, Sierra Leone and South Sudan to make way for reconstruction and hope. Today, however, there are more than 60 million refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced people worldwide. The global number of people displaced by conflict has nearly quadrupled in that time from almost 11 thousand in 2010 to 42500 every day last year.

Now Europe is facing its biggest refugee influx. Close to 600 000 people have risked their lives crossing the Mediterranean Sea this year and over 3 thousand did not survive the dangerous crossing. After arriving on European shores and borders, they continue their journey, facing chaos and suffering indignity, exploitation and danger along the way. The selfless generosity of private citizens and civil society organisations reaching out to welcome the new arrivals is truly inspiring. There has also been exemplary political and moral leadership from a number of countries, but overall Europe has failed to find an effective common response and people have suffered as a result.

The European refugee crisis has highlighted the human values that define who we are as individuals and as societies and how we respond to the challenges. It has shown the crucial importance of preserving the fundamental principles of tolerance, respect for diversity and solidarity for those in need. These principles, and not backward narrowness or xenophobia, will give us the tools to manage the present and the future challenges facing humanity.

Sérgio Vieira de Mello was always deeply involved in humanitarian issues and was a strong supporter of those who were working to achieve peace in conflict, in all war situations of the globe. Today's event

is dedicated to the recognition of people and organisations whose primary aim is to deliver assistance to those who need it most and to promote peaceful coexistence.

**Alfredo** | Mr. Secretary of State, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

**Leoni** | Brazil is proud to be a supporter of such an exceptional initiative as the Polish Sérgio Vieira de Mello Prize whose aim is to recognise the actions of people and institutions in favouring peaceful coexistence and cooperation between societies, religions and cultures. It is an honour for the ambassador of Brazil to be invited every year by the Villa Decius Association to take part in this ceremony along with Sweden, the UNHCR, the authorities of Kraków and the Prize sponsors.

Twelve years ago, after Sérgio Vieira de Mello's tragic death during a terrorist attack against the UN mission in Baghdad, Paweł Świdorski and Danuta Glondys had the idea of naming the prize after him. From the start the Embassy of Brazil in Warsaw was touched to learn that here in Poland Sérgio Vieira de Mello's ideals would live on through the recognition of the works done by other remarkable people.

By all accounts Sérgio Vieira de Mello was a unique person who, in the words of his biographer, tirelessly tried to save the world. Instead of isolating himself in the UN headquarters in Geneva or New York, he always wanted to go to the field missions to reach out to the ones who most needed help. He is remembered for outstanding accomplishments in Africa and South-East Asia. Sérgio Vieira de Mello is remembered fondly in Brazil and his importance as an inspiration for young people is continually increasing. We can always learn from his capacity to establish relations with both sides of the conflict using dialogue to build bridges and reach peaceful solutions. He was a believer in the UN system, in multilateralism and in respect for international law.

We, Brazilians, deeply miss Sérgio Vieira de Mello and it is with great joy that we can see that his work continues to inspire other people. In this spirit may we praise and congratulate the Laureates of this year's Prize as well as the Villa Decius Association, their sponsors and collaborators in this important activity.

**Inga  
Eriksson Fogh**

Mister Secretary of State, Your Excellencies, Dear Guests,

I am here with my husband, who until a few years ago was a legal advisor to the UN peacekeeping operations at the UN headquarters in New York. Both of us knew Sérgio Vieira de Mello. By that time I was the Deputy Permanent Representative at the Swedish UN mission in New York. As a matter of fact it was my husband who called me on the telephone on that day in August 2003 when this horrible terrorist attack on the UN headquarters in Baghdad took place and, among others, Sérgio Vieira de Mello was at that time injured, and later he lost his life.

I first met Sérgio on a field mission in Zagreb during his mission in former Yugoslavia, when he was the Director of Civilian Affairs. He was a pioneer in developing the idea of paying attention to civilian issues in what traditionally had been very military, peacekeeping operations.

The Swedish Embassy in Warsaw is proud to be a part of the Jury. We do this as a token of our commitment to the promotion of human rights and look forward to meeting the Laureates of the Prize.

**Danuta  
Glondys**

Ladies and Gentlemen, we have heard the words of the Honorary Patrons of the Polish Sérgio Vieira de Mello Prize. Now we move on to the most important part of this ceremony, which is announcing the Verdict of the Panel of Judges of the Polish Sérgio Vieira de Mello Prize. Adam Bodnar, the Human Rights Defender, will present the Communiqué of the Jury.

**Adam  
Bodnar**

Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Guests,

I would like to thank Danuta Glondys for inviting me here and giving me the honour to read out the results of the work of the Jury of the Polish Sérgio Vieira de Mello Prize. But before I do this, let me add that this is a very important event for me not only for the official reasons but also by reason of some connections with Sérgio Vieira de Mello and his tragic death.

In Geneva in front of the UN headquarters you can see a statue that reminds us of how much sacrifice is involved in the promotion of human rights. There, apart from Sérgio Vieira de Mello, are

also commemorated, those others who died in this bomb attack in Baghdad. Let me mention just one person – Jean-Sélim Kanaan, a UN worker from Egypt. He was killed in the bomb blast and left his wife and a child. Over the last 2 years we have been cooperating with Laura Dolci-Kanaan, the wife of Jean-Sélim, who now works for the UN heading the Secretariat for victims of torture. Let us remember that it was not only Sérgio Vieira de Mello, but also other outstanding people, members of his team, who lost their lives there.

Now, let me read out the communique of the Panel of Judges of the Prize.

# **Communique from the session of the Panel of Judges of the Polish Sérgio Vieira de Mello Prize, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2002–03)**

The session of the Panel of Judges of the Polish Sergio Vieira de Mello Prize, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2002–03), was held on 9 September 2015 in the Villa Decius in Kraków. Its aim was to select the Laureates of the 12th annual Prize and award persons and a nongovernmental organisation for their activities in support of the peaceful coexistence of societies, religions and cultures.

Participating in the session were:

1. Giuliano Moreira Ventura – Secretary of the Embassy, Head of the Culture Section, representing His Excellency Alfred Leoni, Ambassador of the Federative Republic of Brazil to Poland
2. Janusz Kahl – Honorary Consul of Sweden in Kraków, representing Her Excellency Inga Eriksson Fogh, Ambassador of the Kingdom Sweden to Poland
3. Maciej Janczak – Deputy Director of the UN and Human Rights Department, representing Wojciech Ponikiewski, Director of the UN and Human Rights Department at the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
4. Krzysztof Persak – Director of the Office of the President of the Institute of National Remembrance, representing Łukasz Kamiński, President of the Institute of National Remembrance
5. Jakub Beczek – representative of Wojciech Kolarski, Undersecretary of State at the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland
6. Maria Pamuła – representative of Anna-Carin Öst, UNHCR Representative in Poland
7. Grzegorz Krawczyk – coordinator for sponsoring, prevention, and CSR at PZU, representing Jacek Weremczuk, Director of the PZU Regional Branch in Kraków – prize founder

8. Karolina Wilkojć-Żesławska – director of the Office for Management and Promotion at ZUE SA, representing Wiesław Nowak, President of ZUE SA – prize founder
9. Sylwia Gajownik – representative of the ZNAK Christian Culture Foundation
10. Danuta Glondys – Director of the Villa Decius Association.

The following members of Panel were unable to participate in the session for important professional reasons:

- Jan Piekło, Director of PAUCI Foundation, who authorised Danuta Glondys to cast his vote
- Jan Pamuła, CEO of Kraków Airport, who nominated Candidates in writing
- Walter Braunohler, US Consul General in Kraków, who nominated Candidates in writing
- Dr Adam Bodnar, the Polish Human Rights Defender, who nominated Candidates in writing, and
- Bogusław Sonik, Chair of the Panel and President of the Board of the Villa Decius Association

The Panel of Judges confirmed receiving 35 award recommendations altogether, of which 25 were recommendations in the category Person, and 10 recommendations in the category Non-Governmental Organisation. One of the recommendations in the latter category failed to meet the formal criteria, as the candidate (Radio France Internationale) was not an NGO.

The list of Candidates nominated for the 12th annual Prize was as follows:

Category – Person:

1. Adam Dieng
2. Aleksander Henryk Laks
3. Aleksander Podrabinek
4. Carl Gershman
5. Dariusz Paczkowski
6. Father Antonios Papanikolaou
7. Fatou Bensouda

8. Grażyna Dremaitė
9. Henri Goldberg
10. Irena Dawid-Olczyk
11. Ivan Šimonović
12. Iwetta de Koster-Glowczynska
13. Evgieniy Zhovtis
14. Jose Ramos Horta
15. Krystyna Starczewska
16. László Rajk
17. Lubomíra Slušná
18. Maria Książak
19. Markas Zingeris
20. Morten Kjærum
21. Pietro Bartolo
22. Rabbi Barry Marcus
23. Rabbi Herschel Gluck
24. Kateryna Semenova
25. Sergey Kovalev

Category – Non-Government Organisation:

1. Ankizy Gasy – Children of Madagascar
2. HumanDoc Foundation
3. Polish Migration Forum Foundation
4. Polish German Cooperation Foundation
5. Grupa Zagranica Association
6. Committee Against Torture
7. La Strada Foundation against Trafficking in Persons and Slavery



8. Radio France Internationale
9. Free Word Association
10. PROVEA Venezuelan Program for Action and Education in Human Rights

The Panel of Judges began its operation by selecting the Laureates of the prize in the Person category. Members of the Panel presented their candidates and justified their choices. The positions of the absent members of the Panel were read aloud.

Acting in compliance with the rules and regulations, and following discussions and voting, the Panel of Judges decided that the Prize in the Person category will go to Doctor Pietro Bartolo.

The Panel of Judges also decided to present the Honorary Prize, which will be awarded to Sergey Kovalev in recognition of outstanding achievements and dedication in the field of human rights.

Subsequently, the Panel of Judges embarked on selecting the Laureate in the Non-Governmental Organisation category. Each member of the Panel presented their position concerning the candidates, and the positions of the absent members were delivered.

Acting in compliance with the rules and regulations, and following discussions and voting, the Panel of Judges decided that the Prize in the Non-Governmental Organisation category will go to La Strada Foundation against Trafficking in Persons and Slavery.

This ended the session of the Panel of Judges.

Signed by Members of the Panel.

**Danuta Glondys** | Justification of the verdict of the Jury in the category Person will be delivered by Wojciech Ponikiewski, Director of the Department of United Nations and Human Rights at the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

**Wojciech Ponikiewski** | **Laudatory Speech in Honour of Dr Pietro Bartolo**  
**Polish Prize of Sergio Vieira De Mello (United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights 2002–03)**

Distinguished Laureate, Director, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,  
on behalf of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Grzegorz Schetyna, I have the honour to share with you a couple of words to explain why this year's Sergio Vieira de Mello Prize, in the Person category, was awarded to Doctor Pietro Bartolo.

Doctor Pietro Bartolo has actively helped migrants and refugees from Africa and the Middle East, who arrive on the Italian island of Lampedusa after a very dangerous voyage across the Mediterranean. It is his modest attitude, far away from the media hype, combined with a profound eagerness to help that gives the doctor the power to continue his life's mission and makes Pietro Bartolo a man especially worthy of the Prize. Therefore, it is a true honour for me to present the achievements of the Recipient.

Lampedusa, the most southern Italian island, situated only a hundred kilometres away from the African shore, has a special attraction for migrants escaping poverty, war, and mass violations of human rights. Lampedusa is the locus of one of the most severe contemporary humanitarian crises. The inhabitants of the island witness plenty of human disasters, unimaginable for other Europeans. They happen when the overburdened and primitive rafts and boats bringing refugees from Libya, Somalia, Eritrea, Mali, other countries of Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East reach – or, God forbid, fail to reach – the island. Until recently, the people of many European states have not realised the scale and dramatic nature of the crisis.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

beginning in 1994, being responsible for medical care in the temporary centre in Lampedusa, Doctor Pietro Bartolo has given medical aid and extensive medical support to over 250,000 immigrants. On behalf of the Italian government, he manages a team of physicians and paramedics, that is the public health care service, Red Cross medical personnel, the Doctors Without Borders organisation, and volunteers participating in rescue operations in the high seas and on the island.

For over 20 years, Doctor Bartolo has treated and supported immigrants, assisted women exhausted with the hardships of sea crossing when they give birth. Many a time has he reanimated and saved human lives in dramatic circumstances.

But the doctor is also responsible for confirming the deaths of numerous victims of tragedies that have taken place on the sea. He was often forced to confirm officially the death of children and pregnant

women who died in mass disasters, including perhaps the most tragic one on 3 October 2013, which claimed over 360 lives.

Dear Laureate,

The award of the Sergio de Mello Prize, named after the man who did not hesitate to pay the highest price to bring aid to the weakest and those devoid of protection, is a proof of our recognition of your long-term activity in service of the protection of human rights, especially those most fundamental including the right to life and to be healthy. Your activity, full of devotion, your uncontested efforts for the sake of bringing nations and cultures together, and first of all your sensitivity to the human misery and suffering and the difficult fate of the refugees made the Award Committee name you unanimously this year's Laureate. Do let me express my sincere recognition on behalf of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland and in the name of the Award Committee.

Caro Dottor Bartolo,

Chi salva una vita salva il mondo intero. Questa frase, forse perché troppo spesso citata, suona quasi banale. E' come certi proverbi che ripetiamo meccanicamente senza pensare più al loro significato. Ci sembra fin troppo ovvio. E ci sorprendiamo quando qualcuno li prende sul serio e gli da un senso per niente scontato.

Lei ha salvato tante vite umane nel posto che è diventato una postazione di frontiera tra due mondi separati: un mondo dove la vita umana spesso non ha valore; e il nostro mondo. La nostra Europa, la patria dell'umanesimo, che ha posto l'uomo, la vita e la dignità della persona umana a fondamento del suo sistema di valori. Anzi, ha fatto di questo sistema di valori la sua vera ragione di essere, la forza propulsiva di quel grande progetto storico e politico che è l'Unione Europea.

E' questa l'Europa che sognano i migranti. Uno spazio dove la loro vita verrà protetta e la loro dignità rispettata. Per arrivarci sopportano umiliazioni e violenze, rischiano – e spesso trovano – la morte. Tutto nella speranza di essere accolti da noi come persone umane. Eppure l'Europa ne ha paura. Europa ha paura di essere all'altezza del proprio sistema di valori. Preferisce chiudersi nell'egoismo dell'opulenza. Così rischia di perdere la propria identità, la sua vera anima.

Per fortuna, non tutti hanno paura. Lei, non ce l'ha. Salvando le vite de migranti, allo stesso tempo salva anche il nostro mondo. Dimostra che in Europa c'è ancora qualcuno che al nostro sistema di valori ci crede per davvero.

Perché dare un premio polacco a un italiano che vive su un'isola che vista da qui sembra il punto più distante, e poco significativo, dell'Europa? Di fronte alle tragedie dei migranti Italia ha organizzato e condotto una grandiosa operazione marittima di ricerche e salvataggio, chiamandola "Mare Nostrum". E' un nome che sembra evocare le memorie dell'Impero Romano. E quindi epoche e storie di cui Polonia non fece parte. Eppure oggi Il Mare Nostrum è veramente il mare di tutti noi. Nel senso che proprio lì, lungo le rotte dei profughi, sulle coste delle isole italiane e greche si decide oggi il futuro dell'Europa. Futuro che avrà senso solo se si ritorna ai valori dell'umanesimo. Lei da speranza che questa Europa dei valori esiste.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

The recipient of the Sergio Vieira de Mello Prize, Dr Pietro Bartolo is a hero bringing aid and consolation to those in need. He returns dignity and hope to refugees irrespective of their origin, creed, culture, and beliefs.

Let this year's Prize awarded to Doctor Bartolo be a message to the people of Poland and Europe that – faced with the misery of hundreds of thousands of people fleeing terror, violence, and torture and in search of freedom and safety – one cannot remain indifferent.

The awarding of the Sergio Vieira de Mello Prize to Doctor Pietro Bartolo is also an expression of the solidarity of the Polish people with the attitude of a man who valiantly fights for the dignity of people fleeing to 'a better world', a world that, unfortunately, is still not always capable of accepting them within itself.

**Danuta** | Ladies and Gentlemen, let me welcome Doctor Pietro Bartolo.

**Glondys** | The award ceremony will be conducted by Andrzej Kulig, Deputy President of Kraków, who will present congratulations from the authorities of the city, and Wojciech Kolarski, Undersecretary of State at the Chancellery of the President of Poland together with Wiesław Nowak – President of the Board and Director General of ZUE SA who will present the Prize.

**Pietro** | Good evening, I thank all of you who have come here. Let me thank:  
**Bartolo** | the Award Committee of the Sérgio Vieira de Mello Prize  
the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Rome, Mr Tomasz Orłowski  
Ms Danuta Glondys – President of the Villa Decius Association

I would like to thank for addressing a problem at an unprecedented scale. To thank you for thinking about a physician from the Mediterranean island of Lampedusa, who takes care of these people. Yes, people – people like you and me, none of whom have two heads or four legs – people like you and me, of a different colour of skin, but this cannot be the problem I believe, for if it is otherwise, I find continuing this subject groundless.

I would like to tell you about what I feel at the moment, and I feel honoured and moved by being awarded a prize of such a magnitude, the prize of Sérgio Vieira de Mello – a great man who on the one hand inspires me and who I do not expect to be worthy of. I don't think I am a hero doing great deeds. I confine myself to my duty of helping others, helping people experiencing disastrous difficulties, fleeing from wars, torture, persecution, and poverty, in search of salvation and better life. I must admit that due to the countless difficulties of logistic nature, we sometimes find it difficult to help efficiently. Nevertheless, I can assure you that since 1991, when the first transports reached Lampedusa, and when I began to take care of them as a volunteer, we have always made every effort, even if they often called for major sacrifices.

Saving human lives, helping people who experience problems is our human duty after all. When we successfully do what we should do, we are happy and satisfied, and we feel appreciated for all the effort taken. It is therefore with the greater pain that I am compelled to admit that sometimes it is impossible to save everyone. This is a reason for much bitterness within me. When this happens, I'm always summoned to something that inspires the greatest horror in me – the post-mortem. I have conducted plenty of them, perhaps too many. Please believe me, this is a real torment. I feel my eyes filling with tears, I feel empty inside, and my stomach jerks.

What hurts the most is to see the bodies of children, sometimes newborn. During the tragic events of 3 October 2013, I decided not to separate a mother connected to her child with the umbilical cord, and I made sure that they were buried in the same coffin. What remains is fury and memories you cannot erase.

All this often comes back to me in dreams. Nightmares. Some may say ‘you have got used to it, you have seen so many deaths’. Believe me, this is not true. Can one get used to such horrors at all?

Luckily, midway between suffering and sadness, there is also space for a moment of joy. This joy is saving someone, it is giving them a new life. Sometimes I happen to assist at birth. Many times I have participated in ultrasound examination of pregnant women who have only just made the shore. I showed them the life that they carry in their wombs. For these women this is an exceptional, if only fleeting, moment of joy.

I’ve got plenty to tell you, but I wouldn’t like to go on for too long. I am interviewed by journalists from all over the world. Talking about these things gives me no joy, it rather reopens sad and painful memories. Yet I always agree to talk in hope that these articles will awaken conscience. That they will draw the attention of those who can really do something; who have the power to put an end to this suffering, to this tragic and shameful page in the history of humanity.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity, and thank you behalf of all the people of Lampedusa, who I greatly respect and admire.

**Danuta  
Glondys** | May I now ask Bogusław Sonik to present the justification of the verdict in the category of Non-Governmental Organisation.

**Bogusław  
Sonik** | The La Strada Foundation against Trafficking in Persons and Slavery was registered in February 1996, and this year is celebrating the 20th anniversary of its operation. The Foundation is the most important Polish organisation specialising in prevention and the support of the victims of trafficking in human beings and slavery, and plays a significant role in international initiatives focused on the deterrence of this major violation of human rights. The profound commitment and meticulous work of the La Strada team have helped greatly in setting up a system to offset trafficking in human beings in Poland, and to develop methods for the identification of victims and to provide them with appropriate forms of assistance.

As part of its operation, the Foundation is persistent in expounding the problem of trafficking in human beings to authorities and public opinion, informs girls and women about the potential dangers, and trains police officers, border guards and other civil servants. On the other hand it provides ex-prostitutes, people forced into begging, and other forced labour with safety, legal and medical assistance, psychotherapeutic care, and also financial support.

The Foundation is a member of La Strada International, an international network operating in eight countries: Belarus, Bulgaria, the Netherlands, Macedonia, Moldova, Poland, Czech Republic, and Ukraine. The Foundation actively supports the establishment of a Polish network of preventive organisations that would provide support for victims in all the country's regions, and shares its experience. It is the largest and the most important Polish organisation providing support for the victims of this form of modern slavery, supporting victims irrespective of their origin, creed, or any other factor.

Even though the La Strada team is not large, the activities that the organisation undertakes cover nearly the entire world. The Foundation also runs preventive activities for people going abroad, and provides direct support for the victims of trafficking in human beings and forced labour, manages a 24/7 helpline, and provides hundreds of legal and preventive guidelines each year. Moreover, the Foundation organised Poland's only secret shelter for women who have managed to regain their freedom.

From the earliest days of its operation, the Foundation has gradually improved the system for aiding victims. Its initiative has been the establishment of the National Centre for Intervention and Consultation, so it can be said that La Strada first shared its own experience with the state and then convinced it to set up a special institution for the victims.

It needs emphasising that the Foundation initiated the presentation of trafficking in human beings as a serious violation of human rights and started to act in support of the victims' rights even before the state. It has been thanks to La Strada's initiative and the meeting of the Round Table in Support of Fighting Trafficking in Human Beings, that the National Programme Against Trafficking in Human Beings was set up in 2004, and the Team for Preventing and Fighting Trafficking in Human Beings was set up.

Besides prevention, education, and direct assistance to the victims, the Foundation also undertakes advocacy activities. It has been an initiative of the Foundation to introduce a special right for foreign victims of trafficking who decide to testify, and the victims received the option of support. One of the

most significant achievements of the Foundation has been the triggering of breakthrough changes in the Polish Criminal Code: the removal of trafficking in human beings from the paragraph on obligatory notification, and the introduction of its definition, which helps to prosecute perpetrators of the crime.

La Strada often speaks out publicly and is regularly present in the media, where it emphasises the rights of victims and tries to fight their stigmatisation. In the realm of non-governmental organisations, the Foundation is known for its creative approach to problem solving, the great passion and involvement of the entire team, and an unwavering belief in human beings even in the most dire of circumstances.

**Danuta Glondys** | Ladies and Gentlemen, let me welcome the Representatives of the La Strada Foundation.

The ceremony will be conducted by Andrzej Kulig, Deputy President of Kraków, who will present congratulations from the authorities of the city, and Pamela DeVolder, Consul of the United States of America in Kraków, together with Jacek Weremczuk – Regional Director of PZU in Kraków, who will present the Prize.

**Joanna Garnier** | On behalf of the La Strada Foundation, I would like to thank the Jury and the Villa Decius Association for awarding us this prize. For our Foundation this is something absolutely unbelievable, especially that this year marks our 20th anniversary. It is such a marvellous surprise. This is something that is very constructive and inspiring for us. We have got plenty of fire in our hearts for this work, indeed we have always had it, but I believe that now there is going to be even more of that fire.

For the last 20 years we have been trying to work to respect human rights although the name of the organisation is not always associated with human rights. We are rather associated with people who are really unseen, imperceptible. People who failed in their lives, sometimes they did something wrong. People who are perceived as the ones who don't match regular society: immigrants, prostitutes, former prostitutes. People who are very weak, who absolutely no one cares for. People who are victims of the crime of trafficking are especially difficult because very often they are not ready to receive any help and in many cases they fight to not receive that aid believing that they know better.



Our social workers try to be with all these people, to make their lives better. We are trying to talk about them and to be with them 24 hours a day every day of the week, which I believe is unique. There are many organisations that are ready to answer the phone 24 hours and to talk to or assist others, but for not our groups. I do not know why, perhaps nobody cares about them because they do not participate in elections. But I do hope that one day they will and they will also gain attention from others not only from us.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank Irena Dawid-Olczyk, my friend and the President of La Strada Foundation with whom I have worked for the last 20 years and, to a great extent together, have built up the things that work, what goes on. Sometimes in the company of various emotions, sometimes bickering, sometimes agreeing. I would like to thank her very, very warmly. She would like very much to be here with us but she couldn't. I wish she were here to share her happiness with all of us.

**Danuta Glondys** | Ladies and Gentlemen, this year the Panel of Judges also decided to present an Honorary Prize. Now Łukasz Kamiński, President of the Institute of National Remembrance, will read the justification of the decision of the Panel.

**Łukasz Kamiński** | Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,  
“... and Russian, and Chinese, and North Korean barbarism (and all the uncountable other ones) – they are all our common cause, and indifference carries a threat of a global catastrophe”. These are the words of Sergey Kovalev that those gathered at the ceremony to celebrate 15 years of operation of the Polish Institute of National Remembrance could hear at the Warsaw Royal Castle. I find it an honour to be able to present to you the profile of a man who, irrespective of the turmoil of history and the price that he has had to pay for his attitude, does not remain indifferent.

Sergey Kovalev is a biophysicist. It is a particular phenomenon of the Soviet dissident movement that so many representatives of the sciences became involved in it. Kovalev first took a public position when opposing the theories of Trofim Lysenko, absurd from the scientific point of view yet favoured by the

Communist Party. In 1966, in his Research Institute, Kovalev initiated a number of letters in defence of the writers, Andrei Sinyavski and Yuli Daniel, who had been tried. In the years that followed he became involved in a succession of protests, including the ones in defence of participants in demonstrations against the intervention of the Warsaw Pact armies in Czechoslovakia in which a banner was carried with a slogan so close to the Polish heart: “for our freedom and yours”.

In 1969, Sergey Kovalev became a member of the Action Group for the Defence of Human Rights in the USSR, and in 1974, a member of the Soviet section of Amnesty International. He was an editor of the most important samizdat (self-published) bulletin, the “Chronicle of Current Events”, and he also supported the editors of the “Chronicle of the Catholic Church” in Lithuania.

The price for his courage was first the forced discontinuation of his scientific career, his subsequent detention in December 1974, and the sentence— seven years of hard labour in a camp, and three years of internal exile, conferred a year later. The camps in which Kovalev served his sentence included Perm-36, which until recently operated as Russia’s only museum of the gulag.

Kovalev returned to Moscow in 1987 to become immediately involved in a developing civil movement. He was a co-founder of the Glasnost press club and Memorial society. In March 1990, he became, for the first time, a People’s Deputy of the Russian Federation (still then part of the USSR). Elected the chairman of the Human Rights Committee of the Supreme Council of the Russian Federation, he succeeded in having all political prisoners released and in passing an act on the rehabilitation of victims of the repressions.

For three terms, Sergey Kovalev was a deputy to the State Duma. He was elected Russia’s first Human Rights Commissioner, and Boris Yeltsin nominated him chairman of the President’s Human Rights Commission. He was, however, soon removed from the first of these functions, and stepped down from the latter. This was linked to his involvement in the defence of human rights during the first Chechen war. From that moment, Kovalev became an enemy not only to the powers in the Kremlin but also to many self-appointed Russian “patriots”. And yet it was he who at the time proved the greatest patriot in his homeland. Opposing the cruel war, he defended the future of democratic Russia as he knew the moment to be the turning point in the country’s history. Unfortunately, at the time both he and many other Russians of noble mind lost that battle.

In the following years, Kovalev became one of the most famous critics of the Kremlin. Among other projects, he became involved in an attempt to explain the Moscow bombings of 1999 and protested against the aggression in Georgia and Ukraine. In the latter case, he issued, among other documents, a letter to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, whose member he himself was for many years. He appealed to the deputies that “voting on the resolution on the threats caused by contemporary Russia, they remember Munich and Yalta, and the tragic consequences of both conferences.”

This is another characteristic trait of Sergey Kovalev, who continually reminds us that one of the most important sources of the Russian drama lies in the failure to settle accounts with communist totalitarianism. Kovalev reminds us all that, should we be unable to draw a major lesson from the past, we should at least try to learn what we shouldn't do. And one of these lessons reads: “one mustn't indulge the aggressor, one mustn't pay with somebody else's life and future for their own safety and security.”

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with joy and emotion that we award the Honorary Sergio Vieira de Mello Prize to Sergey Kovalev. This is an expression of recognition to an outstanding defender of human rights, who for five decades has remained faithful to the values that he first upheld standing his ground in the defence of the persecuted. Let us also remember that this award is at the same time an obligation for us, because everything that Sergey Kovalev has been preoccupied with remains “our common cause; and indifference carries a threat of a global catastrophe.”

**Danuta Glondys** | Dear Sergey Kovalev, please step forward. The Deputy President of Kraków will present you the congratulations of the city and Henryk Woźniakowski, Deputy President of the ZNAK Foundation, together with Jan Pamuła, President of Kraków Airport, will hand over the Prize to you.

**Sergey Kovalev** | Ladies and Gentlemen,  
This award is a big honour for me. I would like to say why I consider this prize so very special and so valuable. First of all, it is because I am receiving this prize here in Poland. Why is it so important for me

to receive this prize in this country? In my view this is a sign of appreciation from Polish society. There is a certain feeling of guilt for Poles. I admit here. If you decide to grant this prize to me – it means that you are ready to accept my apologies on behalf of myself and my whole nation. I think this feeling of guilt is quite obvious. It is not only about the crimes of Katyń but also about the Warsaw Uprising and the Soviet armed forces that stopped before reaching the centre of Warsaw and waited for the two months which Germans needed to kill the soldiers of the Home Army and destroy the whole city of Warsaw. It is impossible to live without this feeling of guilt on behalf of the country where you were born. I do my best to live in accordance with my conscience.

But there is yet another circumstance that makes this prize very special for me. The reason is that this is named after Sérgio Vieira de Mello, the man who protected universal values. He was working for the rights of the individual and died protecting human dignity. This award is so important because in this way you support what we are trying to do in our country. In despair we are trying to protect our constitution which is not obeyed. Perhaps it is not a perfect one but still there are two chapters there which have been drafted in a very good way. However, in an arrogant way our legislation is very much opposed to those two chapters of our constitution. We, on our part, are trying to speak about those problems and to act. As you decided to give this prize to us – we see that we are moving in the right direction. That strengthens our actions.

I am now working for the Sakharov Centre and Memorial. These two organisations have recently been labelled as foreign agents in Russia and there is a threat that they will be closed down. It is a kind of torture executed by the authorities over their citizens. This is the type of country we live in. This is the task that is in front of all of us. The international community is not always supporting us. The politicians sometimes are not able to solve such problems. For these reasons your efforts are indispensable.

Thank you very much for your support.

**Danuta  
Glondys**

Now the Consul General of Ukraine, Oleg Mandiuk, has asked for the floor.

**Oleg** | Ladies and Gentlemen,  
**Mandiuk** | I would like to thank you very much for awarding this Prize to Sergey Kovalev. On behalf of the Ukrainian nation I would like to express my gratitude to you for your work.

I do hope that the Russian nation will hear your words and the words of your friends. I hope that the Russian nation will understand your views. I do hope that relations between Russia and Ukraine will soon improve and they will be based on friendship.

Thank you very much.

Standing Ovation









# Round table debate:

## The rise and fall of the 21st century societies

**Opening speech:** The Challenges of Society in the 21st Century, Hans Kolstad

**Moderator:** Michal Vašečka

### Experts:

Samuel Abrahám (Slovakia)

Emel Akçali (Cyprus/Turkey)

Joanna Bar (Poland)

Jeannette Bougrab (France)

Metin Bulut (Cyprus/Turkey)

Asli Erdoğan (Turkey)

Łukasz Fyderek (Poland)

Olga Glondys (Poland/Spain)

Danuta Glondys (Poland)

David Jones (USA)

Felix Kaputu (Congo)

Dominika Kasprowicz (Poland)

Marcin Kędzierski (Poland)

Tomasz Kizny (Poland)

Paweł Kowal (Poland)

Beata Kowalska (Poland)

Sergey Kovalev (Russian Federation)

Scott Lucas (United Kingdom)

Robert Piaskowski (Poland)

Jan Piekło (Poland)

Wojciech Przybylski (Poland)

Janusz Majcherek (Poland)

Ziyad Raoof (Kurdistan/Poland)

Agnieszka Rozner (Poland)

Hans Ingvar Roth (Sweden)

Irakli Samkharadze (Georgia)

Patrycja Sasnal (Poland)

Giles Scott-Smith (Holland)

Michał Sutowski (Poland)

Elżbieta Świącicka (Sweden)

## Experts

**Samuel Abrahám** (Slovakia) – associate professor, PhD Educated in Political Science and Political Philosophy at the University of Toronto and the Carleton University in Canada. Since 1996, publisher and editor-in-chief of the journal “Kritika & Kontext” and founder of the Society for Higher Learning educational institution based in Bratislava. For almost two decades he taught political science courses at Comenius University in Bratislava. Author of numerous publications incl.: *An Attempt to Analyze Slovak Society* (2002), *A Crisis of European Identity* (2012) and *Slovakia in Reset Mode: Pure Theory vs. Political Reality* (2012). Co-founder and managing director of ECOLAS – European Consortium of Liberal Arts and Sciences, a network of over twenty liberal arts schools and programmes in Europe. Since 2006, Professor and Rector of Bratislava International School of Liberal Education (BISLA).

**Emel Akçali** (Cyprus/Turkey) – holds Turkish and Cypriot nationality. She graduated in International Relations at the American University (Paris, BA) and the Université de Galatasaray (Istanbul, MA) and obtained her PhD in Political Geography at Paris IV-Sorbonne. She worked at the University of Birmingham as a visiting lecturer and taught at Franklin College, Lugano, Switzerland before joining CEU’s Department of IR as an assistant professor in 2011. Her teaching and research interests cover i.a. the state, society and politics in the Middle East and North Africa, social movements, limits of neoliberal governmentality, and non-Western and alternative globalist geopolitical discourses. Author of: *Chypre, un enjeu geopolitique actuel* (l’Harmattan, 2009). Her articles were published in *Political Geography*, *Security Dialogue*, *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, *Antipode*, and *Annals of the American Geographers*.

**Joanna Bar** (Poland) – historian and ethnologist; associate professor at the Institute of Political Science of the Pedagogical University in Kraków, Chair of International Relations. In 2001 – 2005 she participated in the FOROST project, dedicated to recent political, historical and social changes in the East and Middle-East countries (University in Munich). Currently, her research concentrates on social and political

change in East Africa, with a particular focus on contemporary Rwanda and its unique model of post-conflict reconstruction. Author of numerous publications incl. a monograph *Po ludobójstwie. Państwo i społeczeństwo w Rwandzie 1994–2012* (*After a Genocide. State and Society in Rwanda 1994–2012*).

**Jeannette Bougrab** (France) – a French lawyer and politician. She served as the junior minister for Youth and Community Life from 2010 – 2012 and is a member of a supreme court in France, Conseil d'État. Prior to this, she was the Chair of the French Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Commission (HALDE) from 16 April 2010 to 14 November 2010. She has a Masters (DEA) in Law from the University of Orléans and she is Doctor of Law. She has been Professor of Law at Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris and the Sorbonne. She has been a member of the Haut Conseil à l'Intégration, the Administrative Board of the Arab World Institute and the diversity oversight of the Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel. In 2010, she became Chair of the Administrative Board of the Agence pour la Cohésion Sociale et l'Égalité. She is also a writer and film director (*Ma République se meurt* 2013, published by Grasset, *Maudites*, 2015, published by Albin Michel and *Interdites d'école*, 90 min, broadcast by Canal+). She works as Counsellor for Cultural Affairs for the Embassy of France in Finland and Director of the French Institute in Finland.

**Metin Bulut** (Cyprus/Turkey) – graduated from the Turkish Military Academy as an infantry officer in 1993 and from the Infantry School in 1994. He served as a company commander, section chief and branch chief at various units and headquarters including the Turkish General Staff. He also served as an instructor at the Army Command and Staff College and was posted abroad as a staff officer in the intelligence division in NATO HQ ISAF/Kabul Afghanistan, in 2005 and 2006. From 2005 to 2010, he was Military Assistant to the Land Forces Commander; he also served as the Tactical Psyops Officer. He was subsequently posted as an operations information officer – Northern Iraq (Team Commander) 1994 to 1996, Cyprus (Contact Of.) 2006 to 2008, Lebanon UN Military Unit (Media Consultant) 2008–09. On 17 January 2011, he took voluntary retirement. Awarded the Courage and Self-Sacrifice Medal by the Turkish General Staff due to his achievements in internal security operations and the NATO Medal and Legion of Merit in Afghanistan during the NATO ISAF Operation. He holds an MA degree from Selcuk University in Konya, Turkey.

**Asli Erdoğan** (Turkey) – a resident of the ICORN programme in Kraków. She studied Computer Engineering (BS in 1988) and Physics (MS in 1993) and worked as a high energy research physicist at CERN, Geneva and completed her thesis in Higgs Physics there. After a 2-year stay in South America, she returned to Istanbul and started to live as a free-lance writer. Asli has written several books: novels, novellas, collections of short stories and poetic prose, and selections from her political essays. She has worked as a columnist and a journalist since 1998, mostly for “RADİKAL”, a left-wing intellectual newspaper and “Özgür Gündem”, a bilingual paper of the Kurdish press, for which she is still writing regularly. She has treated controversial topics such as state violence, discrimination and human rights. Asli’s books have been translated into several languages, including English, French, German, Italian, Swedish, Norwegian, Arabic and Bosnian.

**Lukasz Fyderek** (Poland) – PhD, a political scientist, focused on the politics and governance of non-democratic regimes. He researches the comparative politics of authoritarian states and countries under political transition, mostly in Western Asia and North Africa. He undertook numerous field researches in countries such as Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Egypt. He currently teaches at the Institute of the Middle and Far East of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. Previously, he held the posts of Visiting Scholar at the American University of Beirut and Visiting Associate Professor at the University of Northern Malaysia.

**Danuta Glondys** (Poland) – director of the Villa Decius Association. She holds a PhD degree in the Humanities, MA in English Philology and in Political Science. Former director of the Culture Department of the Municipality of Kraków and regional director of the USAID programme in Poland. She was a European Commission expert, selecting and monitoring all European Capitals of Culture since 2009 until 2017. Her research field covers relations between culture and politics and European integration. She is also an academic teacher and an avid traveller.

**Olga Glondys** (Poland/Spain) – MA in Spanish Philology from the Jagiellonian University in Kraków and PhD from the Autonomous University in Barcelona. A visiting researcher at the Center for Latin American Studies at the University of Chicago, the Hoover Institution at Stanford University and BISLA

in the Slovak Republic. Since 2005, a member of the Research Group for Study of Literary Exile (GEXEL) at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. Postdoctoral researcher at the Carlos III University of Madrid and currently a holder of the Juan de la Cierva postdoctoral fellowship. Her book *The Cultural Cold War and Spanish Republican exile: Cuadernos of the Congress for Cultural Freedom (1953–65)* is the first monographic study of the activities of the Congress for Cultural Freedom within the anti-Franco opposition in Latin America and Spain. In addition to the Cultural Cold War, her main interest is the comparative history and theory of European cultural exiles.

**David Jones** (USA) – holds a PhD in Management from the Rockefeller College of Public Affairs & Policy, State University of New York. His research interests are: Artificial Reproduction, The “New” China and International Trade, A “Critical” Analysis of the US Legal System, Critique of 21st Century US Foreign Policy. He lectures on United States Foreign Policy, the American Legal System, Civil Liberties, Constitutional Law, Corporate Governance, International Management, the Redeemer Nation: US Foreign Policy since 1914, The Pentagon: the US Military Industrial Complex since 1945. Author of numerous publications and papers incl. *Four Eagles and a Dragon: Successes and Failures of Quixotic Encirclement Strategies in Foreign Policy, An Analysis, Hybrid Conflict and Encirclement: the Reconfiguration of Eastern Europe by NATO, Trade Barriers, and a Chinese Solution for Greece.* Currently a professor at the American Studies Centre of Warsaw University.

**Felix Kaputu** (Congo) – PhD in Comparative Literature from the Université de Lubumbashi in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and recipient of numerous scholarships incl. US Fulbright Scholarship in Religion and Pluralism at the University of California Santa Barbara and a Japanese Government Scholarship at the Nanzan University. He worked for different academic institutions in the United States of America, Japan and in Belgium contributing to African Studies, African Politics, Literature (Mythology), Gender, Religion, Diaspora, Art, Community Development and Pedagogy. His main axes of expertise have grown within comparative structures that put African experiences and studies, on the one hand, and respectively other continents especially Asian, European and American, on the other, for global comparative presentations and understanding of socio-political, religious, literary and artistic productions.

**Dominika Kasprowicz** (Poland) – PhD in Social Sciences, associate professor at the Institute of Political Science Pedagogical University in Kraków, Poland. Analyst and commentator on the politics of CEE, author of numerous articles. Her research area includes populist radical right movements, party politics in the CEE region, electoral behaviour and social innovations in politics. Recently co-authored volume: *SPACE – socio-political Alternatives in Central Europe*, Warsaw 2014. Coordinator of *SPACE* and *Barometr Wyborczy* projects. Since 2015 deputy director of the Villa Decius Association, Kraków.

**Marcin Kędziński** (Poland) – researcher and teaching assistant at the Department of European Studies of the Kraków University of Economics. MA in International Relations and European Studies and in Economy and Public Administration (PhD); Research Director at the Centre for Analyses of the Jagiellonian Club. He covers Polish internal and foreign policy, European integration processes, EU institutions and EU sector policies with special focus on economic and foreign policy issues.

**Tomasz Kizny** (Poland) – independent photographer and journalist, co-founder of Dementi Photography Agency, which was started in 1982, after the introduction of martial law in Poland, and operated in the underground until 1989. In the 1990s he carried out a photo project on the Gulag camps in the USSR. In 2003 his book *Gulag* containing the most important motifs of this project was published and translated into seven languages. He worked on “The Great Terror” project in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus from 2008 to 2011, which resulted in *La Grande Terre en URSS 1937–38*, an album published in French and Polish in 2013.

**Hans Kolstad** (Norway) – philosopher and researcher. He holds an MAS in philosophy from the University of Strasbourg and a PhD in philosophy from the University of Oslo. From 1987–94 he was secretary to the Ambassador of Norway to the Council of Europe, Strasbourg. From 1994–2001 he held a teaching position at the University of Oslo. In 1993 he co-founded Collegium Humaniorum in Oslo where he served as daily manager until 2003. His research focuses on philosophical analysis and its application to epistemology, human rights and democracy, philosophy of nature, ethics, art as well as economy and society. He has published more than 25 books on philosophy and different transdisciplinary topics. He

is affiliated with Aarhus University, Business and Social Sciences (Denmark), the Centre for Ecological Economics and Ethics, Bodø Graduate School of Business, University of Nordland Bodø (Norway) and Rudolf Steiner University College in Oslo. He is a member of Senior Common Room of Grey College, University of Durham (England), of the board of the International Consortium for Social Development, European Branch, and an honorary member of the International Network for Traditional Building, Arts & Urbanism organisation of The Prince's Foundation, London. He is a member of the Board of Editors of the Journal of Environmental Justice and Social Psychology (Singapore) and of the board of Seminar on Philosophy of Nature (Oslo).

**Paweł Kowal** (Poland) – Assistant Professor in the Institute of Political Studies at the Polish Academy of Sciences, lecturer at Warsaw University, research fellow at the College of Europe (Natolin Campus). Political scientist, historian, columnist and expert on the EU's eastern policy. In 2009–14 he was a Member of the European Parliament and served i.a. as chair of the EU delegation to the EU-Ukraine. Former member of the Sejm (Poland's parliament) and the National Security Council. In 2006–7 he served as Secretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Author of numerous publications on political transformations in Central Europe and member of the board of “New Eastern Europe” and Platform of European Memory and Conscience. Co-founder of the Museum of the Warsaw Uprising in Warsaw.

**Beata Kowalska** (Poland) – Professor of the Jagiellonian University. In recent years her research has focused on the situation of women in Middle Eastern countries. This topic has permitted her to combine her academic fascinations with experience working on programmes for gender equality in Poland and abroad. Major scholarships and lectures abroad include the University of Cambridge, the Institute for Human Sciences in Vienna, the American Centre for Oriental Research in Amman, New School for Social Research in New York, Rutgers University, and the University at Buffalo.

**Sergey Kovalev** (Russian Federation) – Russian human rights activist, a former dissident, a biophysician, a penal colony prisoner. A member of the independent Action Group for the Defence of Human Rights, a co-founder of the human rights society Memorial and the Moscow branch of Amnesty International.

In post-Soviet Russia, he was a member of parliament, a member of the Supreme Council of the Russian Federation, the chairman of the parliamentary Human Rights Committee, the chairman of the President's Human Rights Commission, the Human Rights Ombudsman, and a member of the Russian delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. He has criticised authoritarian tendencies of the administrations of Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin. He protested against the war in Chechnya in public. In April 2014, he made an appeal to the international community in an open letter to stop the Russian expansion in Ukraine. Nominated three times for the Nobel Peace Prize. A laureate of the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought awarded by the European Parliament. Decorated with the Great Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland.

**Scott Lucas** (United Kingdom) – Professor of International Politics and Professor of American Studies at the University of Birmingham. Began his academic career as a specialist in US and British foreign policy, but his research interests now range from current international affairs (especially North Africa, the Middle East, and Iran) to new media to public and digital diplomacy to intelligence services. His books include *Divided We Stand: Britain, the US, and the Suez Crisis*; *Freedom's War: The US Crusade Against the Soviet Union, 1945–56*; *Orwell*; *The Betrayal of Dissent: Orwell, Hitchens, and the American Century*; *Trials of Engagement: The Future of US Public Diplomacy*; and *Challenging US Foreign Policy: America and the World in the Long 20th Century*. Scott's most recent academic articles, all due for publication this year, range from "US Foreign Policy in the 1956 Election" to "The Regional and the Challenge to Israel-Palestine Negotiations" to "Preparing for a Post-Assad Syria" to "What's in a Name? The US Government's Labeling of the Islamic State". A professional journalist since 1979, Scott is the founder and editor of EA WorldView, a leading website in daily news and analysis of Iran, Turkey, Syria, and the wider Middle East, as well as US foreign policy. EA WORLDVIEW ([www.eaworldview.com](http://www.eaworldview.com)): "Those Who Know, Know EA".

**Janusz Majcherek** (Poland) – philosopher and sociologist, professor at the Pedagogical University in Kraków. His main interests include the philosophy and sociology of culture, philosophy of politics, ethics. Author of several books concerning these areas, among them: *Democracy, contingency, relativism* (*Demokracja, przygodność, relatywizm*), *Ethics of oughtness* (*Etyka powinności*). Commentator on



political and social affairs in Polish media (mainly “Gazeta Wyborcza”, TVN24, TVP Info). His analyses and commentaries were or are currently published in leading Polish newspapers, including “Gazeta Wyborcza”, “Rzeczpospolita”, “Newsweek” (Polish edition), “Tygodnik Powszechny”. Frequent guest on radio and TV programmes and debates (Radio TOK FM, Radio Kraków, TVN24, Superstacja and others).

**Robert Piaskowski** (Poland) – MA of the Jagiellonian University in Polish Studies and Sociology, as well as the Collegium Civitas in Cultural Diplomacy. Cultural manager and promoter. As the Director of Programming at the Kraków Festival Office he is responsible for the coordination of Kraków’s most important cultural events. Actively involved in the development of the cultural and promotional strategy of the City. Co-author of Kraków’s UNESCO Creative Cities Network application and the chief executive of the Kraków UNESCO City of Literature programme. He is responsible for the literary policies of the city and programmes that link literature, human rights, freedom of expression and speech.

**Jan Piekło** (Poland) – director of the Polish-Ukrainian Cooperation Foundation (PAUCI) which manages trans-border projects with Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and Armenia. Previously programme director for the ZNAK Foundation in Kraków and the editor of “Tygodnik Powszechny”. As a journalist, he covered the Romanian Revolution and war in the former Yugoslavia. Author of two documentary books on the Balkans and a novel Scent of the Angel which is based on his work experience in the Balkans and Eastern Europe. He has been working for the Polish and international media. As a trainer on conflict resolution journalism and media consultant he co-operated with the Rutgers University of New Jersey, MU Columbia School of Journalism, the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, IREX Pro Media, Groningen University and other institutions. He was involved in journalism training in Bosnia, Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania and Poland.

**Wojciech Przybylski** (Poland) – president of the board of the Res Publica Foundation (Warsaw). Editor-in-chief of “Eurozine” (Vienna) a European network magazine and the “Visegrad Insight” magazine. Political commentator, lecturer and social entrepreneur. Graduated from the University of

Warsaw (MISH), and the European College of Liberal Arts in Berlin majoring in the history of political thought. Previously junior research fellow on modern politics in Vienna (2003–04), and research fellow at CEFRES in Prague (2013). He has initiated the City DNA programme empowering local communities and researching cultural policies. In 2014 he launched the New Europe 100 project – a list of innovators from the region prepared by Res Publica together with Financial Times, Google and the Visegrad Fund.

**Ziyad Raof** (Kurdistan/Poland) – Representative of the Kurdistan Regional Government in Poland. The director and co-founder of the Kurdish Centre for Information and Documentation in Kraków. Member of Council of the National Museum in Kraków, on the management boards of the Foundation of the International Cultural Centre and the Children’s Health Foundation. He has been awarded many distinctions including the title of Patron of Kraków Culture in 2002 and the Honoris Gratia medal in 2011 from the President of Kraków.

**Agnieszka Rozner** (Poland) – graduated in Philosophy and Political Science, current PhD student at the Department of Political Science, Pedagogical University of Kraków, Poland. Focused on the latest concepts of democracy and democratisation. Preparing PhD thesis on the cultural determinants of democracy in the contemporary discourse on political philosophy. Reviewer and publicist cooperating with the Museum of Polish History and “Liberté!” magazine. Assistant editor of “Res Publica Nowa” magazine.

**Hans Ingvar Roth** (Sweden) – Professor of Human Rights at the Stockholm University Institute. He holds a PhD in Ethics from Lund University and a Master of Letters in Philosophy from Oxford University. His main research interests are human rights, minority rights, freedom of religion, affirmative action, multicultural education and discrimination. Professor of Human Rights Studies at Lund University (chair), Linköping University, researcher at Uppsala University, senior advisor at the Ministry of Justice, as Human Rights Officer for OSCE in Bosnia and as secretary in the parliamentary committee on discrimination laws. Among his publications: *Conceptions of Knowledge and Scepticism*,

The Multicultural Park – A Study of Common Values in School and Society, Identitet och pluralism (Identity and Pluralism), and Är religion en mänsklig rättighet (Is Religious Freedom a Human Right).

**Irakli Samkharadze** (Georgia) – a double MA holder in International and European Public Law at Erasmus University Rotterdam, currently working on his PhD dedicated to the Europeanisation of Law, and lecturing the theory of law at the Tbilisi State University. He worked in the Brussels-based International Organization as the Vice-President and international board member of the European Law Students' Association. Prior to this he served as the head of the Youth Programmes Division at the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia. Nowadays he is the National Key Expert of Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

**Patrycja Sasnal** (Poland) – head of the Middle East and North Africa Project at the Polish Institute of International Affairs in Warsaw, and a member of the advisory European Working Group on Egypt. Fulbright scholar at SAIS, Johns Hopkins University in Washington DC in 2010 and a Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science. She was associate at the American University in Beirut and lectured at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Poland from where apart from the PhD she also holds an MA in International Relations and MA in Arabic Language and Culture. She has written on US and EU policies in the Middle East, the challenges of transition in the Arab world, the Arab-Israeli conflict, modern Arab thought, and published in “Al-Ahram”, “LeMonde.fr”, “Insight Turkey”, “EUobserver” and “Polityka”.

**Giles Scott-Smith** (Holland) – BA in European and Asian Studies from the University of Ulster in 1988, and an MA in International Relations at Sussex University in 1993. He then moved to Lancaster University for a PhD in International Relations, graduating in 1998. He joined the Roosevelt Study Center in Middelburg in January 2002 as a post-doctoral researcher, and became a senior researcher there in January 2005. In 2008–12 he was Associate Professor at the Roosevelt Academy (Utrecht University) in Middelburg, running the International Relations track. In January 2009 he was awarded the Ernst van der Beugel Chair in the Diplomatic History of Atlantic Cooperation since the Second World War at the University of Leiden, and he joined Leiden full-time in 2015. He has been the Chair of the Transatlantic

Studies Association since 2013. His research interests involve an exploration of the ‘Transnational Transatlantic’ – tracking the governmental and non-governmental linkages that have bound North America and Europe since the Second World War. His recent publications include *Reasserting America in the 1970s: US Public Diplomacy and the Rebuilding of America’s Image Abroad* (Manchester University Press, 2016), and *Western Anti-Communism and the Interdoc Network: Cold War Internationale* (Palgrave, 2012).

**Bogusław Sonik** (Poland) – president of the Villa Decius Association, former member of European Parliament (European Democrats group), chairman of Stowarzyszenie Maj ’77, director of the Polish Institute in Paris and minister plenipotentiary at the Embassy of Poland in France (1990–96). Director of the Kraków 2000 – European City of Culture Festival (1996–2002). Awarded with the Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (1993) and Order of Merit for achievements in the field of Polish Culture (1999). As a member of European Parliament he was involved in Foreign Affairs Committee, Subcommittee on Human Rights, Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, and was in charge of negotiations on REACH directive. His significant success was a report concerning influence of extraction of shale gas on the environment which gave the “green light” to the extraction of shale gas in Europe.

**Michał Sutowski** (Poland) – political scientist, translator and commentator. He obtained his MA at the College of Inter-Faculty Studies in the Humanities at the University of Warsaw in 2009. He has translated numerous high-profile books, including some of Ulrich Beck’s and Ivan Krastev’s, into Polish. As a commentator he writes regularly for online “Dziennik Opinii”, with his main fields of interest being political economy in general, European integration, German and post-soviet politics, the history of ideas, and recent Polish and Central European history. He has been an activist of “Krytyka Polityczna” since 2007; since 2012 has been coordinating the Institute for Advanced Study in Warsaw.

**Elżbieta Świącicka** (Sweden) – MA in Oriental Philology (Turkology) from the Jagiellonian University. Lecturer and senior lecturer at the Uppsala University and the University of Stockholm teaching Turkish

languages, literature and the history of Turkey and the Ottoman Empire. Also a qualified archivist working at the Swedish Military Archives. Since 2013 an associated researcher at SUITS, Stockholm University Institute for Turkish Studies. Author of numerous articles in history, literature and lexicography.

**Michal Vašečka** (Slovakia) – PhD in sociology, assistant professor at the Faculty of Social Studies of Masaryk University in Brno. Former lecturer at the Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences of the Comenius University Bratislava (2005–12), director of the Center for the Research in Ethnicity and Culture (2006–12), and director of the Slovak think-tank Institute of Public Affairs (1999–2005). Cooperated with Academia Istropolitana (1995–98), Open Society Foundation (1997–98), InfoRoma Foundation (1995–96), and was a director of the Documentation Center for the Research of Slovak Society (1991–95). Visiting scholar at the New School University in New York (1996–97) and at the University of London (1998) and former lecturer at the Georgetown University in Washington, DC, and University of Michigan in Ann Arbor (2015). Since 2010 a chairman of the Board of the Fulbright Commission in Slovakia, and since 2010 a non-resident research associate at the European Centre for Minority Issues in Flensburg. In 2012–13 he served as an external advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic on human rights issues. Since 2012 a representative of the Slovak Republic in the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), the human rights body of the Council of Europe.





















# **The Polish Prize of Sérgio Vieira de Mello The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (2002–03)**

## **Honorary patronage:**

Ambassador of the Federative Republic of Brazil to Poland

Ambassador of the Kingdom of Sweden to Poland

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Following the initiative of the Villa Decius Association, the Polish Prize of Sérgio Vieira de Mello was established in the year 2003 with the aim of promoting human rights, and to pay tribute to Sérgio Vieira de Mello, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The Prize is awarded to a Person and an Organization for their merits for peaceful coexistence and cooperation of communities, religions and cultures.

Laureates of the Prize are selected by the Panel of Judges composed of the High Representatives of: the President of the Republic of Poland, HE Ambassador of the Federative Republic of Brazil, HE Ambassador of the Kingdom of Sweden, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Polish Human Rights Defender, Polish Institute of National Remembrance, Consul General of the United States of America to Kraków, and foundations cooperating with the Villa Decius Association in matters related to human rights as well as the Founders of the Prize and the Chairman and the Director of the Villa Decius Association.

Laureates receive a Diploma and a Statuette of Sérgio Vieira de Mello. The Prize also has a financial dimension.

## Laureates

- 2004** Tadeusz Mazowiecki (Poland)  
One World Association (Poland)
- 2005** Rev. Marian Żelazek SVD (1918–2006) (Poland)  
Krzyżowa Foundation for European Understanding (Poland)
- 2006** Alaxandr Milinkevich (Belarus)  
Jewish Culture Festival Association (Poland)
- 2007** Maryna Hulia (Russian Federation/Poland)  
Magurycz Association (Poland)
- 2008** Krystyna Pryjomko-Serafin (United Kingdom)  
Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights (Poland)  
Honorary Prize: Shevah Weiss (Israel)  
Distinction: Michał Żejmis (Poland)
- 2009** Fatos Lubonja (Albania)  
United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (Iraq)  
Honorary Prize: Leopold Unger (Poland-Belgium)
- 2010** Nagy El-Khoury and Mohammad al-Nokkari (Lebanon)  
Memorial Association (Russian Federation)  
Honorary Prize: Andrzej Przewoźnik (1963–2010) (Poland)



- 2011** Hassan Omar Hassan (Kenya)  
Halina Nieć Legal Aid Centre (Poland)  
Honorary Prize: Bernard Kouchner (France)
- 2012** Sister Rafael, Urszula Nałęcz (Poland-Rwanda)  
People in Need Association (Czech Republic)  
Honorary Prize: Arnold Wellman (USA)
- 2013** Myroslav Marynovych (Ukraine)  
Denis Hurley Centre (Republic of South Africa)  
Adam Daniel Rotfeld (Poland)
- 2014** Leyla Yunus (Azerbaijan)  
Amalipe Center for Interethnic Dialogue and Tolerance (Bulgaria)
- 2015** Pietro Bartolo (Lampedusa, Italy)  
La Strada Foundation against Trafficking in Persons and Slavery (Poland)  
Sergey Kovalev (Russian Federation)

# The Villa Decius Association

Kraków, Poland | [www.villa.org.pl](http://www.villa.org.pl)

The historic complex of Villa Decius, a Renaissance palace of Justus Ludwik Decjusz (known also as Iost Ludwig Dietz), who came to Kraków in 1508, has housed a cultural salon in Kraków since the 16th century. Today, it is operated by the Villa Decius Association (est. 1995), a non-governmental organisation which supports and propagates international cultural and intellectual cooperation.

At the heart of the programmes of the Association lies the idea of meetings of representatives of various fields of science and culture, various nationalities and areas of interest, and the promotion of pluralism and tolerance in public life. The Villa Decius Association creates a forum for exchanging thoughts and a forum for searching for mutual inspiration. It cooperates with national and international institutions that aim at developing vital values existing in regional cultures, supporting the processes of European integration, and propagating the humanist heritage of European civilisation.

Writers and translators, but also intercultural dialogue, European integration, protection of cultural heritage, and human rights hold an important position in the Villa's programmes.

For twenty years now, the Association has been running literary scholarship programmes and hosted over 150 young writers from Poland, Germany, Ukraine, Belarus, Switzerland, Belgium, Norway, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Iran, Egypt and Turkey.

For last twelve years, the Villa has been awarding the Polish Prize of Sérgio Vieira de Mello, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in the years 2002–03 – a prestigious distinction to individuals and non-governmental organisations for their activities for peaceful coexistence and cooperation of societies, religions, and cultures.

It is also here that since 2002 the Visegrad Summer School has been taking place – a two-week long series of lectures for young people from the countries of the Visegrad Group and Central-Eastern Europe.

Personalities such as the President of PEN International John Ralston Saul, a Norwegian anthropologist Fredrik Barth, an American intellectual Paul Berman, a Spanish philosopher Josep Ramoneda, a French political scientist Dominique Moïsi, British historians Timothy Garton Ash and Norman Davies, delivered speeches at the Villa Decius conference

Organiser:  
Villa Decius Association



Co-organiser:  
Res Publica Nowa



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