



ISR 2016: The Invasion of Poland

By Emily Scammell (MA 16)

In March of 2016, close to 50 students, faculty, and distinguished visitors travelled to Germany and Poland to study the 1939 Invasion of Poland. Throughout the trip, participants witnessed first-hand the diplomatic games that characterized the pre-war period, the overwhelming strength and tactical advantage of German and Soviet armies during 1939, and the devastating effect both had on the Polish nation.

The trip started in Berlin, beginning presentations at the Brandenburg Gate mere hours after landing in Germany. The massive protest on refugees that interrupted presentations throughout Berlin reminded participants all that the historic sites visited continue to hold political meaning to this day. Staff riders spent a short 24 hours in the German capital, with presentations at the Reichstag and the Topography of Terror, before travelling by train to Gdansk.

The time in the former “Free City of Danzig” was characterized by memorable presentations at the Westerplatte and Gdansk Post Office. Poles at both locations fought back against German bombardments in what they knew would be a hopeless struggle and likely lead to death. Yet, despite this knowledge, they fought for their city and country because, to them, there was no other choice.

The third day led participants out of the Polish city and into the countryside, where they visited the small town of Kutno and its Battle of Bzura museum before following the battle lines into a small cemetery in the Kampinos Forest. This cemetery was dedicated to the Polish soldiers who died on the final days of the Battle of Bzura in September of 1939. A presentation by Zbigniew Szacherski (played by Ross Hurwitz MA 17) showcased the bravery of soldiers during the battle and moved many of us to tears. That night,

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Witnessing Diplomacy in Ireland

By Nick Fimek (MA 17)

On a rainy afternoon in Dublin, I took my seat behind the Taoiseach, the head of the Irish government, and anxiously awaited Vice President Biden to take the stage at Dublin Castle. My colleagues and I spent countless late nights at the embassy planning for this event and as I looked out at the crowd I was filled with a great sense of accomplishment. This was just one of the many rewarding projects I was able to take part in during my summer internship with the State Department in Ireland.

Often times I was exhausted, working on tight deadlines with the many offices in the embassy, but I can confidently say that my time in Dublin is my most rewarding professional experience. I was able to forge important professional connections and hone vital skills, all while applying knowledge of subjects I have studied at SAIS.

As the summer developed I was able to shape my internship to suit my interests more, in-

cluding drafting the upcoming Human Rights Report for Ireland. Projects like this allowed me to look into the life of Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) and understand what FSOs do for citizens of both the United States and their post country.

At times, the long hours and large to-do list were intimidating, but throughout my time in Dublin I was grateful to have such a formative internship. This experience cemented my desire to pursue the Foreign Service and prepared me for any professional environment. Working in the embassy was hectic, tiring, and demanding but my position was immensely rewarding and I would not have traded my time in Ireland for any other opportunity.

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Note from Prof. Keaney

Dear Alumni of the Strategic Studies Program,

It has been my honor to have been a part of Strategic Studies, but this will be my last as its associate director. I am completing my nineteenth year at SAIS, during which time I have met, taught and otherwise associated with many of you, so this change is a difficult one. I say change, not retirement; I have trouble with that word. I hope to continue teaching at SAIS in some capacity, but all associate director duties will go to someone else.

Teaching at SAIS, of course, has

brought me great satisfaction. Beyond that satisfaction, my best memories of my time here come from seeing all of you move on to productive careers in and out of government while maintaining a sense of community with one another. That quality can only come through a sense of shared commitment to service fostered while at SAIS by activities both in and out of class. My proudest achievement will have been that I have played some part in developing that spirit.

Tom Keaney, Associate Director

Below: Professor Tom Keaney, who started at SAIS in 1998.



Discussion with Prof. Todd Harrison

Gillian Evans (MA 17)

Todd Harrison, who also serves as director of the Aerospace Security Project and the director of Defense Budget Analysis at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), is an adjunct professor of Strategic Studies currently in his third year teaching at SAIS. At SAIS, Professor Harrison teaches two popular half-semester courses: Basics of the U.S. Defense Budget, and Military Space Systems and the Space Domain.

Designing a course that meets only six times is a challenge, so Professor Harrison structures his courses as practical introductions that make students “conversant and cognizant” of the core issues.

The space class, which the Strategic Studies department will offer this spring, generates considerable student interest each year—a fact that doesn’t surprise Professor Harrison in the least. “Space is a relatively new domain of warfare where the rules are still being written and one that affects operations in all other domains. There is also a lot of new commercial interest in space from the billionaires (Musk,

Bezos, and Branson) that is making space ‘cool’ again.”

Both classes routinely hit their enrollment caps each semester, but Professor Harrison notes that teaching the space class is, “a bit more fun (at least for me) because we get to talk about real world operations and things that blow up.”

But that’s not to discount his Defense Budgets class. To current students and young alumni, Harrison has one piece of advice: “No matter what area of national security you plan to work in, understanding the budget and the budget process is a key to success in Washington. Just about everything you do in national security requires resources, so those who understand how the budget works and how to get something funded have an advantage over those who don’t.”

Unsurprisingly, then, former students and recent alumni cite his courses as uniquely applicable to their careers.

But of their successes, Harrison still maintains, “I won’t be completely satisfied until I see former students in senior national security positions!”

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Above: Professor Todd Harrison, who joined the Strategic Studies faculty in the fall of 2013.

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travelers drove into Warsaw, exhausted and humbled by the heroism demonstrated by Poles during the invasion. This feeling was only compounded by the incredible presentation given by the Mayor of Warsaw, Stefan Starzynski, played by Dr. Jakub Grygiel. Starzynski broadcast radio messages to the citizens of Warsaw during September of 1939, urging them to defend the city “for the freedom of their own country” and “for the freedom of Europe”. Varsovians did just that, barricading themselves in the city, before a lack of supplies, food, and water forced their surrender on September 27. Mayor Starzynski, the spearhead of the city’s defense, was arrested by Germans and killed in Dachau one month later.

The final day was spent in Warsaw, visiting first the Modlin Fortress on the Narew River before returning to the city for presentations at the Mausoleum of Struggle and Martyrdom and the Monument to the Polish Underground State and Home Army. Eerie presentations from Hans Frank (Sergio Guzman MA 16) and Lavrentiy Beria (Professor John McLaughlin) shed light on the horrors of Nazi-occupied Poland, while presentations from Witold Pilecki (Anna Sarnek MA 17) and Anna Smolenska (Marilyn Fuhrmann) told the story of Polish underground resistance.

The final presenter in front of the Royal Castle, Wladyslaw Sikorski (Jeb Benkowski MA 16), acknowledged that while the future of Poland appeared

grim, the Polish people were strong and would continue to fight, no matter the costs.

The incredible presentations by participants over the week showcased the horrors of the Third Reich, the weaknesses of Britain and France as allies, and, most importantly, the optimism that prevailed in Poland despite it all. This year’s ISR was at many times sad, and oftentimes overwhelming, but showcased a level of heroism and hope that is not often witnessed in present day life. Such hope and heroism, for one’s family, for one’s city, for one’s country, is something participants will continue to learn from for the rest of their lives.



Above: ISR 2016 participants in Warsaw, Poland in front of the Monument for the Polish Underground State and Home Army. The symbol on the monument, the Kotwica, was the symbol for the Polish resistance during the war. (Photo courtesy of Emily Scammell MA 16)

SSR 2016: Following the American Victory at Yorktown

By Elias Stahl (MA 16)

As participants stood looking out over the field where Lord Cornwallis' army had surrendered to the Allied armies of Rochambeau and Washington, Lord North spoke of the pivotal effect this battle had on the halls of power in London. "This war came to an end in London, and not on this field before you," Lord North (who looked suspiciously like Professor Mahnken) bemoaned, as he recounted his resignation as Prime Minister following the British surrender at Yorktown.

While this campaign may have been tactically unexciting, with little dynamism and few bayonet charges, it was a fitting example of a tactical engagement's reverberations through the halls of history and its effect on grand strategy.

While the British continued to hold key positions on the American coastline,

the American resistance was bankrupt, held together primarily by a few larger-than-life personalities, and sustained nearly exclusively at this point by French aid and assistance. Despite this, the British were exhausted and internationally isolated. Parliament had lost the will to continue the fight, and was more focused on financial losses and the latent threat to their colonies in the Caribbean. Their war with the Americans had ended, for the time being.

Two days after their last finals and for many, their last days at SAIS, students and professors traced the Yorktown campaign through southern Virginia to its bannered denouement on the fields of Yorktown. From St. Johns Church in Richmond where Patrick Henry delivered his famous "Give me liberty or give me death" speech, SAIS' Strategic Studies Spring Staff Ride traced the arc of the Revolutionary War's final campaign, hearing from diplomats, states-

men, generals, and a freed slave along the way.

At the staff ride's closing dinner, Professor Cohen could not help but find a meaningful lesson from this war that would have special provenance to those SAIS students now beginning their own careers as future statesmen, generals, and diplomats. "This was a war of cocktail personalities," Cohen offered.

Throughout the campaign, the clash of personalities between Clinton and Cornwallis led to miscommunication and disunity, while Rochambeau and Washington handled what was an awkward situation leading an allied army together with grace and aplomb. The Allied forces were able to suddenly concentrate themselves exactly when they needed to, precisely when the British were at the apogee of their own internal infighting.

As SAIS students go out into their professional fields, Cohen urged them not to neglect the effect of personality on the outcome of events. "You can count all the soldiers and guns you want," he continued, "but there is another more personal side to war." That stood out clearly on this campaign, and will continue to play a role in the numberless interactions of personalities, large and small, which like so many pebbles, ultimately divert history's current.

In an age when our own interactions have multiplied exponentially in their reach and number on a daily basis, this is a meaningful lesson not to be taken for granted. The sum of so many smaller and larger interactions propels the relationships which continue to define history, and we should not take them lightly.

Left: Prof. Keaney, portraying Benjamin Franklin, and Prof Cohen during SSR 2016: Victory at Yorktown

(Photo courtesy of Kate Sliney MA 16)



FSR 2016: The Battle of Gettysburg



Above: FSR 2016 participants in Gettysburg, PA. Group photo at the Gettysburg Soldiers' National Monument (top). Participants walking Pickett's failed charge (bottom).

(Photos courtesy of Steven Nowak MA 17)

By Jacob Grunberger (MA 18)

This year's fall staff ride focused on the Battle of Gettysburg. During the two days in Pennsylvania, the group of students, professors, and distinguished visitors examined the decisions made on the battlefield by the Union and Confederate armies in the summer of 1863, a time when the United States was truly divided.

Led by quartermasters Elias Stahl (MA 17) and Chris Czerwinski (MA 17), participants travelled to Gettysburg to cover all three days of the engagement. Through presentations and question and answer sessions, the group discussed the perspectives of political leaders, generals, ordinary soldiers to better understand the motivations for the orders given during the battle. Students heard from notable leaders such as Frederick Douglass and Robert E. Lee as well as lesser-known heroes like Joshua Chamberlain, a former professor who led a bayonet charge against advancing Confederate forces.

Despite early rain, the weather conditions were clear during the trip, which allowed the group to clearly view the topography of the battlefield, adding another layer of depth to their study of Gettysburg. The participants gained an appreciation for the difficulty of Confederate assault on the heavily defended Little Round Top and the futility of Sickles' charge on the Peach Orchard. Most dramatically, the group reenacted Pickett's failed charge on the Union lines, marching in formation while hearing accounts of the men who survived. The group concluded its study by reflecting on the importance of the battle, visiting the Gettysburg cemetery and hearing an account from the point of view of a civilian and Lincoln's famous address on the moral justification of the battle.

Outside of the presentations, our group bonded during the campout over home-brewed beer, mead, and ghost stories.

**The Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies
The Johns Hopkins University**

You are cordially invited to the:

***2017 SAIS Strategic Studies
Alumni Dinner & Reception***

Thursday, February 9
6:30pm - 7:30pm cocktails
7:30pm dinner

The JW Marriott Hotel
1331 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC

**Keynote Address by
Professor Thomas Keaney**

Associate Director of Strategic Studies and Executive Director of the Philip Merrill Center

****Upon the occasion of his upcoming retirement****

And Comments from Professor Eliot A. Cohen

*Robert E. Osgood Professor of Strategic Studies, Director of the Strategic Studies Program and
the Philip Merrill Center for Strategic Studies*

****[RSVP](#) by 25 January 2017****

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