The talk outlines the perspectives and visions that shaped empirical and historical work on the great post-1989 transformation in Central and Eastern Europe. The study of post-communism was influenced by three such paradigms and analytical lenses: the first focused on the immediate communist past and its impact on post-1989 transformations; the second attempted to move beyond the region’s specific features and integrate the study of Central and Eastern Europe with the general comparative politics enterprise; and finally, the third signified the return to the exploration of the region’s historical and cultural contexts and their role in shaping the outcomes of transformations.

Grzegorz Ekiert is a professor of government, Director of the Center for European Studies (CES), and senior scholar at the Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies. His teaching and research interests focus on comparative politics, regime change and democratization, civil society and social movements, and East European politics and societies. He is the author of *The State Against Society: Political Crises and Their Aftermath in East Central Europe* (1996); *Rebellious Civil Society: Popular Protest and Democratic Consolidation in Poland* (with J. Kubik, 1999); *Capitalism and Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe: Assessing the Legacy of Communist Rule* (co-edited with S. Hanson, 2003). He is also co-editor of *Open Forum*, the interactive CES working papers series. His current projects explore civil society development in new democracies in Central Europe and East Asia and patterns of transformations in the post-communist world.

**Friday, May 1, 2015**
2:00 pm – 3:30 pm
Voesar Conference Room
1957 E St. NW, Suite 412
Please RSVP at http://go.gwu.edu/ekiert

*This event is on the record.*