A Letter from
the Director

CEERES has an exciting schedule of workshops, cultural events, and outreach programs planned for the 2013-2014 academic year. Already this year, we have sponsored several cultural events that highlight the CEERES region. In October, we co-sponsored a book-reading by Mircea Cărtărescu with the Seminary Co-Op Bookstore. Cărtărescu shared selections from his newly translated novel Blinding and, afterward, Delia Ungureanu from Harvard University responded and led a lively and rich discussion examining Cărtărescu’s work. On November 17th we welcomed Alash, the Tuvin throat singing ensemble, back to Chicago as part of the International House Global Voices program. We also began a new year of programming on Central Asia with the first talk in the Central Eurasian Studies Committee’s lecture series. As always, new events are added to our schedule throughout the year, so check our website or subscribe to our weekly eBulletin for updated information on our activities.

In early November, CEERES came together with twelve other university organizations to co-sponsor the 6th Annual UChicago International Education Conference. The theme of this year’s conference was Global Citizenship and the event was attended by 78 Chicago area teachers and administrators. The keynote address, entitled “Filming the World: How ProjectExplorer.org Brings the World into Your Classroom,” was given by Jenny Buccos, Founder/Director of ProjectExplorer.org. Following the keynote, attendees participated in a variety of workshops on how to teach global citizenship through such means as object-based methods, world history, and editorial cartoons. Pictures, video and resources from this conference are now available online at http://cis.uchicago.edu/iec2013.

CEERES has several events in store for the winter quarter. In early January we will sponsor a coffee break with the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures during the 2014 meeting of the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages (AATSEEL). The conference will be held January 9th – 12th at the Drake Hotel in downtown Chicago; grab some caffeine on us on Friday, January 10th from 3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. More information on the conference and program can be found at http://www.aatseel.org. We will also host Elsie Dunin, Professor Emerita of Dance Ethnology at UCLA, who will be giving a talk entitled “Forty-Five Years (1967-2012) of Romani Spring Events in Skopje, Macedonia.” This event is co-sponsored with the Ethnoise! Workshop and will take place on January 23.

In Spring 2014, CEERES is happy to announce that we will host the 19th Biennial Conference on Balkan and South Slavic Linguistics, Literature, and Folklore at the University of Chicago from April 25th – 27th. This series of conferences, initiated in 1978 here at Chicago, showcases research in South Slavic (Bulgarian, Macedonian, Slovene, Bosnian/Croatian/Montenegrin/Serbian), Romance (Romanian, Aromanian, Meglenoromanian, Judezmo), Greek, Albanian, Romani, and Turkic (Turkish and Gagauz) languages, literature, and folklore. Throughout the year we will continue to co-host the Central Eurasian Studies Committee (CESC) lecture series. Devin DeWeese gave the first talk in the series on November 15th, and subsequent talks will bring to campus: Thomas Barfield, Vera Tolz-Zilitinkevic, Christian Gruber, Peter Perdue, and Isenbike Togan. For more information please visit the CESC website (http://centraleurasia.uchicago.edu).

We at CEERES are looking forward to these exciting events and hope to see you there. We appreciate your support, feedback, and ideas and wish you a happy 2014.

--Victor Friedman, Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the Humanities, Departments of Slavic Languages and Literatures and Linguistics and CEERES Director
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Giving to CEERES

Every gift allows CEERES to do something that we would not be able to do otherwise, whether it’s an additional lecture, further community outreach or extra support for our students and faculty. Your contributions do make a difference.

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Thank you for your generosity!

CEERES News is the biannual newsletter of The Center for East European and Russian/Eurasian Studies at The University of Chicago.

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Socialism and the Psy-ences: The Past, the Post-, and the Beyond

By Dörte Bemme
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(Note: this article is an excerpt from a lengthier discussion originally published on Somatosphere (http://somatosphere.net), a website covering science, medicine and the social sciences)

The conference “From the New Socialist Person to Global Mental Health: The Psy-ences and Mental Health in East Central Europe and Eurasia” (April 29-30 2013, University of Chicago) set out to examine the shifting objects of knowledge and programs of intervention associated with the psy-ences in the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe and Eurasia. Coined by Elizabeth Lunbeck, Emily Martin, and Louis Sass in the title of their seminar series at NYU, and similar to what Nikolas Rose has called the “psy-disciplines” (1998), the “psy-ences” comprise the multitude of sciences and fields of therapeutic interventions that target the human mind, behavior and the brain. There are, of course, the obvious candidates of psychiatry, psychology, psychoanalysis, and psychopharmacology, but also adjacent disciplines such as addiction medicine, sexology and more recently emerging, neuroscience.

In Eastern Europe and Eurasia, these formations of expertise were strongly affected by socio-political changes spanning the state-socialist and post-socialist periods, throughout which these disciplines’ relationship to the state, their modes of knowledge production and the epistemic order and subjectivities they contributed to underwent dramatic ruptures. It would be easy to describe these processes through a commonly-used script that pitches the imaginaries of homo sovieticus against an emerging homo oeconomicus, and explores their distinction, and metamorphosis in time. Such tracing of the ever-shifting social, spatial, epistemic and material assemblages is often abridged as post-Soviet “transition” or “transformation”, both of which assume to varying degree a linear trajectory from A to B, from then to now. It is this kind of uni-linerarity that most of the presentations during this conference sought to unsettle and complicate, while still accounting for and delineating concrete forms of change. While the interest in the variance and divergence of trajectories in Eastern and Western psy-ences was
central to many presentations, their locus, expression and political stakes became visible through different conceptual lenses and historical vantage points - some of which I revisit in this review. I will not follow the structure of the panels here, but try to put into conversation different themes that emerged from the two-day conference.

**Tracing trajectories of medical concepts through East & West**

A number of presentations illuminated the fascinating institutional and epistemic histories of the psy-ences as they evolved quite differently in emphasis and direction in (post-) socialist Eastern Europe and Russia compared to Western Europe and North America. For example, Benjamin Zajicek (History, Towson University) followed the historical trajectory of insulin shock therapy for the treatment of schizophrenia, which he described as a “Soviet peculiarity”. Introduced to the USSR, North America and England in 1936 and abandoned by the West in the mid-50s, the treatment continued to be central in Soviet psychiatry until the 1970s (Zajicek 2009). The talk focused particularly on the early years of its introduction, when insulin shock therapy, according to Zajicek, was perceived as a step into medical modernity as it required specialized spaces, staff and equipment that transformed psychiatry’s dingy hospital spaces into modern clinical environments. The rather harsh treatment method that induced seizures and a temporary coma through high doses of insulin was one of the first “active” treatments of mental conditions, aiming to cure, instead of simply housing and feeding, the mentally ill. Quoting from sources and reports of psychiatric staff at the time, Zajicek highlighted the gratifying effect this had for the staff as hospital routines normalized, time and place came to be neatly structured, and patients were calm and quieted. The effects of the treatment were palpable: psychiatry for the first time appeared to be a modern and objective medical institution.

Eugene Raikhel’s (Comparative Human Development, University of Chicago) work on the treatment of alcohol addiction in Russia explored the differential historical trajectory of hypnosis and suggestion-based treatments in the former Soviet Union, which resulted in the rather unusual addiction treatment method known as “coding” (kodirovanie). The treatment that seeks to induce sobriety through the performative act of a charismatic healer/clinician creates the suggestion that the patient’s body does not tolerate alcohol for a distinct period of time; “If you drink - you die.” Such stress- and fear-based psychotherapies evolved after the Great Patriotic War (WWII) in Russia and their continued use today, Raikhel argued, could easily be perceived as dovetailing with Soviet ideas of authority, social control and modes of subjectification (Raikhel 2010). However, a careful analysis of contemporary professionals who are practicing “coding” reveals a more complex picture of claims, clinical encounters, conceptions of the individual/customer and the effects of “coding” in Russia’s contemporary “therapeutic economy”. For example, the resurgence of the Orthodox Church in the 1990s has led some practitioners to reframe “coding” in religious terms. In combination with a widely perceived crisis of institutional authority, different kinds of authority became appealing. The authority invested in “coding”, Raikhel argued, contains a tension between the harnessing of a “cult of personality” and a standardized aspect of the method that can be learned by anyone. Interestingly, “coding”, hypnosis and other suggestion-based therapies have often been identified with the term “psychotherapy” in Russia (particularly during the Soviet period), contrasting with the Western use of the term that commonly references some form of talk therapy, underpinned by notions of interiority and subjectivity.

Following an equally intriguing pattern of incongruence between Eastern and Western development of the psy-ences, Kateřina Lišková’s (Sociology, Masaryk University) analysis of sexology advice literature in communist Czechoslovakia revealed a reversed historical tendency in the normative texts on gender relations and sexuality. The advice literature evolved from an imperative for gender equality and sexual liberty during early communism (1948 - 1959) to a more repressive family model based on unequal gender roles in the 1970s following the failed Prague Spring. Hence, the history of sexuality in Czechoslovakia, Lišková argued, did not follow a linear path of steady liberalization marked by the rise of consumerism, the introduction of the pill, and social movements for more liberation as had occurred in the West; most of these elements were absent in Eastern Europe. Instead, sexology under early communism promoted a more “progressive” program of sexual education than it did in the 70s when sexual liberation and education were at their height in the West.

Similar in theme, but very different in focus and approach was a presentation by Sonja Luehrmann (Anthropology, Simon Fraser University) on the emergence of “post-abortion syndrome” in Russia in which she explored the trajectory, uptake and transformation of a Western psychological concept within Orthodox pro-life organizations. Despite references to the differential construction of “post-abortion syndrome” in the West, Luehrmann emphasized how the syndrome emerged in Russia at a moment when women’s past reproductive choices needed to be aligned with a changing post-Soviet moral and political framework. Throughout the Soviet era, pregnant women were subject to denouncing themselves as human beings in the 80s. In the 90s, Luehrmann argued that discourses of abortion were framed in terms of abjectness, and teaching women to “post-abort” was presented as a means of rehabilitating them as suitable citizens. Through a focus on the rise in the number of pro-life organizations in the 80s, she highlighted how the Orthodox Church supported this campaign, using religious terms. In combination with a widely perceived crisis of institutional authority, different kinds of authority became appealing. The authority invested in “coding”, Raikhel argued, contains a tension between the harnessing of a “cult of personality” and a standardized aspect of the method that can be learned by anyone. Interestingly, “coding”, hypnosis and other suggestion-based therapies have often been identified with the term “psychotherapy” in Russia (particularly during the Soviet period), contrasting with the Western use of the term that commonly references some form of talk therapy, underpinned by notions of interiority and subjectivity.

While presentations of medical anthropology opened up to the world of medical psychiatry in the 1980s, a reaffirmation of the medical enterprise in Eastern Europe and Russia in the 1990s was often more difficult. Against the backdrop of the collapse of the Soviet Union and falling apart of state institutions in the region, many public health organizations struggled to maintain their infrastructure and sought new ways to contribute to the societal and economic changes that were taking place. While many presentations unfolded far-reaching narratives spanning the political history of Eastern Europe and Russia, many others focused on the practical aspects of these changes and how they were felt on the ground.
era, abortion was the most accessible form of birth control resulting in an average of five abortions per woman during the 70s and 80s. In the post-Soviet period, however, the growing influence of the Orthodox Church in conjunction with Western psychological discourses on trauma and PTSD resulted in a shifting perception of abortions engendering individual practices of penance as well as public reflections on the collective history of the Russian nation. “Post-abortion syndrome” in contemporary Russia has become a means of denouncing the abortion practices of the Soviet period as state-fostered genocide, while at the same time demonstrating patriotism for the current state that is seeking to increase birthrates in the midst of a demographic crisis.

While Luehrmann emphasized the mediation and transformation of Western psychological truth claims, Jack Friedman (Anthropology, University of Oklahoma) found more of a replacement of Soviet with Western standards in his examination of psychiatric paradigms in Romania (Friedman 2009). Through an examination of how psychiatric treatment models interlink with models of citizenship and nation building, Friedman argued that Romania’s recent desire to “mimic the West” and its treatment standards reflects that country’s aspiration—throughout the 1990s and early 2000s—to join the European Union. Of course, this was not always the case. During the early communist period mental illness was marked as a Western phenomenon and its existence in Romania was downplayed. Even in the 70s and 80s, when new epidemiological data showed prevalence rates similar to those of the West, Romanian psychiatry remained focused on the social causes of mental illness and a model of care geared towards rehabilitating the workforce. This, Friedman argued, maintained the identification of a person as a worker beyond diagnostic categories. It was in the post-socialist period, when Romanian psychiatry sought to erase its complicity with the communist state, that a full adaptation of Western nosologies (ICD) and pharmacological regimes were embraced. According to Friedman, this development had the effect of thoroughly “flattening” the social dimensions of mental illness and mental health care in Romania. Through the story of Lenuța, a psychiatric inpatient diagnosed with schizophrenia, he impressively showed how the undifferentiated labels and pharmacological treatments she received fully disregarded her harrowing personal history and social context within the clinical context.

The problem of “history”

While many presentations unfolded far-reaching narratives spanning long periods of institutional, epistemic, moral and political change in Eastern Europe and Eurasia, the modes of historiography themselves and the analytical operations that bring into being Soviet and post-Soviet lineages were also examined during this meeting. In his commentary on the panel “Politics and the Clinic,” discussant Tomas Matza (Anthropology, Duke University) stressed the “tricky relationship between historical comparison and socio-political critique”, or in other words, how studies of post-socialism are confronted with the task of carefully exploring the feasibility of a critical project of the present that builds on comparison with the past. He cautioned against falling into a mode of analysis in which aspects of late-socialism appear as a “lost possibility”, or a “promise” that was then disrupted by neoliberal processes, leading into a present that warrants a critique. Drawing on arguments made by Tatjana Thelen (2011), Matza suggested ways in which such comparison could be avoided – for example by looking for continuities that “span moments of political rupture” or for “continuities merged with breaks”.

Such an approach was taken by Jessica Robbins (Anthropology, University of Michigan), whose analysis of Polish universities for seniors – so called “universities of the third age” (UTA), problematized a historiography that centers on a pre-/post-1989 division. Although these institutions appear seamlessly embedded in the blossoming promotion of the “active senior” or “active aging” all over contemporary Europe, they have a tradition in Poland that reaches back into the 70s. Universities of the third age might seem like Western, pan-European phenomena harnessing “self-care” and “education” as an antidote to the looming increase in dependence of seniors that threatens to burden the healthcare system, but upon closer examination, Robbins argued, UTAs “bely any easy understanding of them as representative of either socialism or post-socialism.” Instead, she suggested, markers and meanings of class, associated with the attendance of these universities, might lend themselves to more complex interpretations (Robbins 2013).

Keynote speaker Alexander Etkind (History and Civilization, European University Institute) also reflected on modes of historiography following his talk on the events surrounding the death of Trotsky’s daughter Zina. Her suicide in 1933 at a time when she was receiving intense psychiatric treatment by a Russian emigrant psychiatrist in Berlin, carries many signs of an assassination, he suspected, not unlike the death of Trotsky’s son Lev Sedov, who died five years later at the hands of a Russian emigrant surgeon in Boston. Etkind unfolded an intricate story exploring the concrete historical trajectories of actors surrounding Zina’s treatment at the clinic of German psychiatrist Arthur Kronfeld (who later emigrated and practiced in Moscow), as well as the political circumstances
that may have led to her suicide as a way to avoid her return to Russia, where she would have been forced to testify against her father. (Etkind’s article about this case has since been published in the Times Literary Supplement (Etkind 2013)). During the discussion following his presentation Etkind responded to questions about his particular historiography, explaining that he prefers to trace Soviet history through contingent, small-scale links between people, places and events rather than utilizing epochal categorizations and broad concepts.

Hannah Proctor’s (Humanities, University of London) presentation reflected on history as a tool to critique the present. Coming from a perspective of “critical neuroscience” she stressed that history provides the means to denaturalize the current moment and thereby enable imaginations of alternative futures; a project she deemed particularly pertinent in the face of a contemporary neuroscience that produces a conception of the human consciousness that is largely ahistorical and depoliticized. In contrast with this conception, she drew on the work of Lev Vygotsky, a Russian psychologist of the 1920s and ’30s, whose work, she argued, could provide an alternative paradigm as it situates human consciousness as emerging in a social and historical context. Vygotsky’s original aim to bridge the dynamics between materialism and idealism, between object and subject through a “dialectical psychology” provided Proctor with an angle from which to question the contemporary object-centered neuroscience, and what she perceived as an equally apolitical social science (i.e. actor-network theory) that erases the distinction between object and subject. Instead, Proctor insisted on the importance of maintaining a political subject that has the capacity to resist domination and articulate radical critique, which to her also meant insisting that the world can still “consciously be altered.”

Global vs. Local Idioms of Distress: Trauma Care in Humanitarian Settings

Through the additional lens of a global dimension in the production of psy-knowledge, the lines of difference were no longer predominantly drawn between an Eastern/Western legacy, but rather shifted towards the dichotomy between “local” vs. “global” forms of psy-interventions, and towards the study of their encounter, renegotiation and effect within concrete, situated settings. As exemplified in a number of presentations, humanitarian interventions provide a typical site in which GMH models of care engage with local forms of knowing, experiencing and therapeutically addressing mental distress and suffering.

Hanna Kienzler (Social Science, Health and Medicine, King’s College London) referred to Global Mental Health as a global “project” in Elizabeth Povinelli’s sense, by which she describes how diverse “projects” of world-making confront and engage one another, while at times they override and foreclose each other’s possibilities (Povinelli 2011). Approaching such conflicting projects through the rarely asked question of accountability for “lost” possibilities, foreclosed alternatives, and “missed encounters”, Kienzler drew a multifaceted picture from her fieldwork in post-war Kosovo where the encounter between war widows and humanitarian mental health interventionists led to a reframing of their suffering into narratives of post-traumatic-stress-disorder (PTSD). Locally existing therapeutic “projects” and strategies thus went unrecognized in their own potential for productive change. Kienzler further showed how these women, in the face of social inequalities and structural violence imposed by their families, communities and the Kosovo state, often felt humiliated by the psychiatric diagnoses and treatments they received (Kienzler 2012). Thus, she argued, we as researchers need to ask ourselves “who then is accountable for repressing alternative voices and projects” in such messy global settings, and we need to reflect on the role our own research plays in realizing or foreclosing other people’s projects and ways of meaningful world-making.

Similarly, Peter Locke’s (Anthropology/Global Health, Princeton University) work on post-war Sarajevo drew the attention to the attention of traumas and experiences that exceed and escape a classification of trauma and PTSD. Such labels, he argued, render complex forms of affect in the postwar milieu of Bosnia-Herzegovina “less visible – or at least less politically potent – by defining them as symptoms of past damage.” Psychiatric categories do not capture the continued social and economic suffering that has turned into a chronic, routinized and seemingly endless crisis. Drawing on rich ethnographic examples from his fieldwork Locke called for the exploration of the unrecognized possibilities for care and political transformation to develop a new understanding of post-war forms of suffering (Biehl and Locke 2010). In response, one audience member wondered about the often-assumed imaginary of an endless crisis in post-socialist countries. Locke’s response was that it is precisely the task of the anthropologist to explore the spaces between and beyond a uniformly depressed rhetoric, to highlight new possibilities of becoming. He added that we as researchers need to be aware of how we help to produce the imaginary of such crises, by asking particular kinds of questions which our informants know how to order in access resources. Atraumatic narrative
in such a context can become a unit of exchange.

Namrita Singh’s (Department of International Health, Social & Behavioral Interventions, Johns Hopkins) qualitative study on the informal mental health support system among internally displaced persons (IDP) in Georgia foregrounded the people’s strength, resources and priorities within their own community in the temporary housing complexes they had been living in for many years. Emphasizing the importance of notions such as “belonging” for refugee mental health, Singh moved beyond the markers and approaches commonly used in public health. One of the audience members reflected on the way in which public health in general, but Global Mental Health in particular, classifies people and populations as “low resource”, not recognizing that people often have many social resources that amount to an “incredible possibility to do things, to be each other’s support system and care for each other.”

For discussant Michael Rasell (Health and Social Sciences, University of Lincoln), these three papers came together in their focus on how lived social experiences of suffering are irreducible to existing psychiatric illness categories. To him, this raised the ethical question of the extent to which we, as social scientists, are not only contributing to a critique, but also to the construction of something positive. Rebecca Reich wondered in this regard whether psychiatric language, such as the notion of “trauma” gives people a language to express an already existing experience of distress, or whether mental illness categories are truly imposed. Hanna Kienzler responded that trauma must be recognized as a “learned category” that was brought to Kosovo by international humanitarian agencies and subsequently became a vehicle that shaped suffering. Kosovar widows found themselves in a situation where they had to learn to express themselves in this language to be recognized by psychiatric practitioners (and by extension, resources). If they reported other forms and idioms of distress the women were regularly constructed as uneducated “somatizing village women” who are not “health literate” enough to express mental suffering and thus retreat into symptoms of the body.

Stepping entirely out of the secular realm of psy-treatments, Khayyayr Beigi (Anthropology, University of California—Berkeley) presented an analysis of video footage showing a spiritual healing session that sought to interrogate and evict a jinn from a Tajik migrant in Russia. Over the course of the interrogation – in which two clergy engage verbally with the jinn inhabiting the restrained man on the ground - the three are seen negotiating and translating between Russian, Tajik and Arabic. But, as Beigi argued, such interrogative speech “neither unites strangers nor mediates exchange among them”. The increasing primacy of Russian that emerges from this exchange, however, “actualizes the Soviet ideal of inter-ethnic harmony” and produces the “shared linguistic and cultural heritage as the site for emergence of madness, alterity, and religious subjectivity.”

Contemporary stakes

As underscored by the rich presentations and discussions at this conference, the psych-ences form complex assemblages with the institutional, political, and scientific legacies and infrastructures within the countries of Eastern Europe and Eurasia. And as such, psy-knowledge practices continue to play a crucial role in the articulation and negotiation of contemporary stakes. Drawing on a very recent example, Rebecca Reich observed that the increasing popularization of psy-discourse in Russia became apparent in the discourses surrounding the arrest of the band Pussy Riot. Not only were all three women diagnosed with mixed personality disorder, which may bring back questions of punitive psychiatry, but witnesses watching the performance – in real life, or on YouTube – reported having experienced a “light state of shock” through which the events were further framed in psychological language (Lipman 2012). (Most recently, the specter of politically-motivated psychiatric diagnosis has been further raised in the case of Mikhail Kosenko who was arrested during a 2012 protest march and subsequently sent by a court for compulsory in-patient treatment in a psychiatric hospital, after having been diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia by specialists from the Serbsky Psychiatric Institute (Yaffa 2013)).

Tomas Matza, in response to Reich, drew attention to the ambiguity and maybe even potential subversive effect of psy-knowledges: psychological discourses — in contrast to psychiatric discourses — also provide new “flowering spaces of interiority” which are less desired by the system. Sonja Luehrmann added to this that in the case of Pussy Riot the cooperation between the Orthodox Church and the state showed the church’s refusal to provide a space for such newly emerging interiority, from which political critique can be articulated (in this case against Putin).

Dörte Bemme is a PhD student in the Department of Social Studies of Medicine and Anthropology at McGill University. Her doctoral work focuses on the emerging concepts and infrastructures that facilitate the globalization of psychiatric knowledge.
Recent Events

Vladimir Pištalo, Professor of Liberal Arts at Becker College and acclaimed contemporary Serbian writer visited with University of Chicago students in South Slavic languages and literatures on Friday October 18. Later in the day, students were invited to attend an evening with the guest writer at the Ladybug Book Café on the North side of Chicago. Nada Petković, lecturer in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian languages introduced the distinguished guest and spoke about his literary works that range in genre from poetic prose to novels. Pištalo is the winner of many prestigious prizes and awards, including the 2009 NIN Award for best novel. His most recent books Tesla, A Portrait Among Masks, (transl. by Bogdan Rakić) and Stories from Around the World (transl. by Nada Petković) will soon be available in English.

CEERES and the Central Europe Workshop welcomed world-renowned Romanian novelist Mircea Cărtărescu to the University of Chicago for a reading of his newly translated novel Blinding. The reading was held on October 15, at 4:30 at the Franke Institute, with an introduction and questions from Delia Ungureanu (Harvard University, University of Bucharest) followed by a more general discussion.

Eric Lohr (Associate Professor of History and Director, Initiative for Russian Culture, American University) presented his new book, Russian Citizenship: From Empire to Soviet Union on October 18 at the Seminary Co-Op Bookstore. The event, organized by Faith Hillis (Department of History), was sponsored by CEERES, Center for International Studies’s Norman Wait Harris Fund, and the Seminary Co-Op Bookstore.

Works cited


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Upcoming Events

19th Biennial Conference on Balkan and South Slavic Linguistics, Literature and Folklore
April 25-27, 2014

This series of conferences on Balkan and South Slavic Linguistics, Literature, and Folklore was initiated in 1978 by Howard I. Abelson and Bill J. Darden at the University of Chicago. The conference has been held every two years since then, and this year’s conference returns to the UoC. The conference will be held at the Franke Institute and the Gordon Center for Integrated Sciences. A conference website will be available at ceeres.uchicago.edu in January with travel information and the conference schedule.

During the 2013-2014 academic year, CEERES is collaborating with the Central Eurasian Studies Committee to hold a lecture series on topics in Central Eurasian history and culture.

November 15: Devin DeWeese
(Indiana University, Bloomington)

January 31: Thomas Barfield
(Boston University)

February 21: Vera Tolz-Zilitinkevic
(University of Manchester)

March 7: Christine Gruber
(University of Michigan)

April 18: Peter Perdue
(Yale University)

May 9: Isenbike Togan
(Middle East Technical University)

For more information on the Central Eurasian Studies Committee visit centralasia.uchicago.edu.
Library News

By June Farris
Bibliographer for Slavic, E. European & Eurasian Studies
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New Databases

Iskusstvo Kino Digital Archive 1931-2012
Offers reviews of Russian and foreign movies, articles on filmmaking and cinema culture, criticism, and essays, tracing Russian arts and culture from the "socialist realism" era--when film became the prime propaganda tool (agitki) for instilling Communist fervor in the masses--all the way through contemporary filmmaking

Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics
With over 850 entries and approximately 400 contributing scholars, offers a systematic and comprehensive treatment of all aspects of the history and study of the Hebrew language from its earliest attested form to the present day

Mango Languages
Includes courses in more than 60 languages, including Armenian, Azerbaijani, Croatian, Czech, Finnish, Greek, Hebrew, Hungarian, Kazakh, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Slovak, Ukrainian, Yiddish

Winston Churchill Archive
Brings together online nearly a million documents amassed by Winston Churchill throughout his lifetime, including hand-written notes and private letters. Many thousands of these documents relate to Eastern Europe and Russia/Soviet Union

New Reference Materials: A Selection

Archiwum Państwowe w Katowicach, Oddział w Gliwicach: informator o zasobie archiwalnym / Izabela Frołow et al. (2012)
Slovar’ drevnerusskich lichnykh imenovanii XI-XIV vekov = Dictionary of Old Russian Personal Names/ Marian Wójtowicz (2012)
Rusul-k’art’uli leksikoni= Russko-gruzinskii slovar’ / R. Gagua (1985)
Dzvelberdznul-k’art’uli leksikoni / T. Giorgobiana (2008)
Krátûk rechnik na literaturnite i lingvistichnite termini / A. Licheva et al. (2012)
Dicționarul etimologic al limbii române v. 1- (2012-)
Bibliografia Kaszub: artykuly z czasopism / A. Chelchowska (2012)
Eesti entsüklopeedia. 8v. (1932-1937)
Hrvatska enciklopedija Bosne i Hercegovine v. 1- (2009-)
Gdzie był Bóg w Smolensku? Film Grzegorza Górnego i Tomasza Terlikowskiego.
Vina s sobachkoi. A film by Iosif Kheifitsa, based on Chekhov's story.
Licheva et al. (2012)

World News Connection
Provides news from around the world, translated into English, typically within 24-72 hours from the time of the original publication or broadcast. The information is obtained from newspaper articles, television and radio broadcasts, online sources, conference proceedings, periodicals, and non-classified reports, with information collected and translated by and for the U.S. Government. Regions covered include all of the regions and countries of Central & Eastern Europe, Russia and the countries of the former Soviet Union. Our subscription to this important resource has been reinstated (from a new provider), after having been cancelled for several years.

New Exhibits

Image from page 10: Mansueto Library. Courtesy of Juliana Brodsky.

New Films and Documentaries

The Lady with the Little Dog (Dama s sobachkoi). A film by Iosif Kheifitsa, based on Chekhov's story.
The Pianist by Roman Polanski.
Voina i mir by Sergei Bondarchuk based on Tolstoy's novel.
Kino Eye and Three Songs about Lenin by Dziga Vertov.
Gamlet = Hamlet by Yosef Shapiro, based on Shakespeare's play.
L’chayim, Comrade Stalin! A film by Yale Strom.
Hamlet = Hamlet by Yosif Shapiro, based on Shakespeare's play.
Zerkalo = The Mirror by Andrei Tarkovsky.
Cinema Komunisto. A journey through the crumbling remains of Tito's film industry, exploring the rise and fall of the cinema culture, criticism, and essays, tracing the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the 1980s.


Roman Polanski’s Zidni Dom. The 9th Company by Yuru Korotkov. Based on a true story of the 9th company during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the 1980s.


Rusul-k’art’uli leksikoni= Russko-gruzinskii slovar’ / R. Gagua (1985)


New Exhibits

Image from page 10: Mansueto Library. Courtesy of Juliana Brodsky.
**New Films and Documentaries**

Image Before My Eyes. [Jewish life in Poland in the 1920s-1930s]


Gdzie był Bóg w Smolensku? Film Grzegorza Górnego i Tomasza Terlikowskiego.


L’chayím, Comrade Stalin! A film by Yale Strom.

André’s Lives. [Andre Steiner, who saved thousands of Slovak Jews, discusses his life and the Holocaust]

Cinema Komunisto. [A journey through the crumbling remains of Tito’s film industry, exploring the rise and fall of the cinematic illusion called Yugoslavia]

Vražda ing. Čerta. [Feminist film about one variant of a relationship between a man and a woman is the directorial debut and concurrently the only feature film by screenwriter and artist Ester Krumbachová]

Marketa Lazarová. [Based on a novel by Vladislav Vančura, a depiction of a feud between two rival medieval clans is a fierce, epic, and an evocation of the clashes between Christianity and Paganism, humankind and nature, and love and violence.]

Ninochka.

Kino Eye and Three Songs about Lenin by Dziga Vertov.

Marina Abramović: The Artist is Present.

The Pianist by Roman Polanski

The Lady with the Little Dog (Dama s sobachkoi). A film by Iosif Kheifitsa, based on Chekhov’s story.

9th Company by Yuru Korotkov. [Based on a true story of the 9th company during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the 1980s]

Voina i mir by Sergei Bondarchuk based on Tolstoy’s novel.

Zerkalo = The Mirror by Andrei Tarkovsky.

Gamlet = Hamlet by Yosef Shapiro, based on Shakespeare’s play.

**New Exhibits**

Serf and Slave: Liberation and Emancipation: Russia 1861 & the United States 1863 [Regenstein 2nd Floor Reading Room, through December 2013]

In commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, this exhibit highlights a very few of the vast number of narratives and studies focused on the history and analysis of serfdom in Russia and slavery in America, and the abolition of both. The 1861 Emancipation Manifesto of Tsar Alexander II and the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation of President Abraham Lincoln are two seminal documents which underscore any discussion of the great social and political upheavals and reforms that took place in mid-19th century Russia and America.

The ceremonial preamble, Alexander II’s Emancipation Manifesto of 1861 (drafted by Metropolitan Filaret of Moscow), preceded hundreds of pages of statutes spelling out the terms of the abolition of serfdom (worked on since 1858 by dozens of gentry committees and governmental commissions). Through it, more than 23 million serfs were freed, allowed to own property, to buy land assigned to them from their previous owner’s estates, to marry without consent, to trade freely and own businesses, to sue in courts, and to vote in local elections.

In contrast, the Emancipation Proclamation, an executive order of the Commander in Chief, was issued as a war measure, and limited to freeing more than 3 million slaves in the ten states that were still in rebellion. It was only with the ratification of the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that slavery and involuntary servitude were abolished (1865), followed by the 14th Amendment (citizenship rights and equal protection under the law, 1868) and the 15th amendment (prohibition of the denial of the right to vote based on race, color or previous condition of servitude, 1870).

-June Farris

*Bibliographer for Slavic, E. European & Eurasian Studies*
Aleko Konstantinov 1863-1897 [Regenstein, 2nd Floor Reading Room, through January 2014]

Aleko born in 1863 in Svish-tov, Bulgaria, into a prosperous merchant family was of the first generation that grew up in the newly independent Bulgaria. His group of friends called themselves of “Jolly Bulgaria” for their carefree attitude. Aleko enjoyed their joyful living while observing the contrast of New Bulgaria with the Old.

Bitten with the travel bug, Aleko became entranced with World’s Fairs. He traveled to Paris and then famously journeyed though America to Chicago’s World Columbian Exposition in 1893. An acute observer, his “Do Chikago i nazad” [To Chicago and Back] was and still is a rich telling of the encounter of the two cultures. To this day, many Bulgarians gain their first knowledge of the United States through Aleko’s works. His visit also gave Aleko the inspiration of his much beloved character, Bai Ganyo.

Honoring Aleko’s journey and book, the Bulgarian Government presented the University of Chicago Library with not just a handsome reproduction of Jeko Spriridov’s bust, but also nearly 600 monographs and 20 newspaper subscriptions. Here is just a small sample of some of Aleko’s works and the influences he has had on Bulgarian Society.

This small exhibit is located in the Second Floor Reading Room of Regenstein Library. It will run through January 31, 2014.

-Sandra Levy, Associate Slavic Librarian

To read an example of Aleko Konstantinov’s work in English, see Konstantinov’s Bai Ganyo: Incredible Tales of a Modern Bulgarian, ed. by Victor A. Friedman and transl. by Victor A. Friedman, Christina E. Kramer, Grace E. Fielder, and Catherine Rudin was published by U. Wisconsin Press in 2010.

Image above: Spiridov’s bust of Aleko Konstantinov in the Regenstein. Photo Courtesy of June Farris.
Dr. Kosmala received a “Chicago Studies Course Connection Grant” and took students to the Polish Film Festival in Chicago, November 16, 2013.

**Susanne Wengle (Political Science)**

**Awards**

Advanced Post-Doctoral Fellowship of the Swiss National Science Foundation to continue her post-doc at the University of Chicago.

Dr. Wengle also taught a new course in Fall quarter on the Political Economy of Food

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**Associate Member News**

### Mikhail Grachev (Western Illinois University)

**Publications**

**Articles**


### William R. Veder

**Publications**

**Articles**


New Faces at Chicago

Cori Anderson

Cori Anderson, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, serves as the Coordinator of the Slavic Language Program. Anderson received her Ph.D. in Slavic and theoretical linguistics from Princeton University earlier in 2013. Her research in linguistics has focused on Lithuanian and Russian morphosyntax, particularly case alternations. In addition, she is interested in proficiency-based foreign language curriculum development, and technology in the foreign language classroom. She has also consulted on materials to prepare students for study abroad in Russia.

Eleonor Gilburd

Eleonor Gilburd, assistant professor of history, studies modern Russia and the Soviet Union, with particular interest in Soviet culture, society, and their international context. She earned her Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley, where her dissertation was awarded the James H. Kettner Dissertation Prize from the History Department and the Robert C. Tucker/Stephen F. Cohen Dissertation Prize from the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies. Before coming to the University of Chicago, she taught at New York University.

Gilburd is completing her first book, a comprehensive history of the Soviet opening to the West during the 1950s and 1960s. She seeks to understand how this period, known as the Thaw, transformed the story of Russia’s westernization. The book examines

Student and Alumni News

Andrew Graan (Ph.D. Anthropology 2010)

Andy has returned to Chicago and the University as the Assistant Director of the Center for International Studies, following teaching appointments at Wake Forest University and the University of Virginia. (He remembers fondly his early stint as the CEERES outreach coordinator.)

Publications

Articles

Recent Ph.D.s

Dana Akanova, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures
Petia Alexieva, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures
Tatiana Chudakova, Department of Anthropology
Andrew Dombrowski, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures and Department of Linguistics
Alan Greene, Department of Anthropology
Erik Houle, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures
Marta Napiorkowska, Department of Comparative Literature
Katherine Hill Reischl, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures
Eleni Staraki, Department of Linguistics
Andrew Westerhaus, Department of Music

Sunny Yudkoff

Sunny Yudkoff teaches Yiddish language and culture to students at all levels. Previously, she has taught Yiddish and Hebrew at Harvard University, where she earned her Ph.D. in Comparative Literature and French. Her dissertation, titled "Let it Be Consumption!": Modern Jewish Writing and the Literary Capital of Tuberculosis," was completed at the University of Chicago. She is currently working on a book-length project on Yiddish writing during the interwar period, focusing on the literary and cultural contexts of Yiddish literature in the United States and Europe. Yudkoff is also engaged in research on the history of Yiddish literature and its role in the formation of modern Jewish identity. Her recent articles have appeared in journals such as Di Velt and Yiddishkayt.
what happened in this encounter to entrenched ideas of class morality and cultural supremacy, familiar ways of looking at paintings, as well as the established languages of literature and cinema.

**Daria Khitrova**

Daria Khitrova received her Ph.D. in Russian Literature (nineteenth-century lyrical poetry) in 2005 from Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow. After two years of post-doctoral studies in Munich, Germany (the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation) and another two years at University of Chicago (the Mellon Foundation) Daria Khitrova spent two years as visiting professor at the Slavic department at UCLA and is now Visiting Senior Research Associate at the Neubauer Collegium, University of Chicago. Her 13 scholarly articles range from Russian literature to film and the history of dance; two of the latest are: “Eisenstein’s Choreography in Ivan the Terrible” (Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema 5:1, 2011, 55-71) and “This Is No Longer Dance:” The Politics of Choreography in The Steel Step (1927)” (forthcoming in Critical Inquiry).

**Sunny Yudkoff**

Sunny Yudkoff teaches Yiddish language and culture to students at all levels. Previously, she has taught Yiddish and Hebrew at Harvard University, where she is currently completing her dissertation entitled, “Let it Be Consumption?: Modern Jewish Writing and the Literary Capital of Tuberculosis.” This dissertation, situated at the methodological intersection of Comparative Literature and the History of Medicine, recuperates tuberculosis as a mediator of Jewish literary history. Her project explores the texts and lives of such writers as Sholem Aleichem, H. Leivick, Yehoash, Rahel, David Fogel, and Aharon Appelfeld and ranges across sites from Badenweiler to Tel Aviv to Denver. Her most recent article theorizes the concept of “tubercular capital,” as it pertains to the production and dissemination of Yiddish literature (Literature and Medicine, Winter 2013, forthcoming). She has also written on the self-fashioning of the American Jewish writer Mary Antin (Studies in American Jewish Literature, Spring 2013). Her interests include: comparative Jewish literature, the cultural experience of illness and disease, the sanatorium as a space of literary production, the sociology of literature, and the maintenance of literary networks. Sunny is currently a member of the Posen Society of Fellows and is a recent recipient of the Vivian Lefsky Hort Memorial Fellowship from the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. In Winter, she will offer a new course, “Reading Yiddish for Research” (YDDH 29800/39800), a rigorous course that will introduce students to the components of Yiddish grammar necessary to read Yiddish texts.

**Alexandra Garfinkle**

Alexandra Garfinkle recently joined CEERES as a student assistant, working primarily on the blog and the eBulletin. She is a third-year in the College, majoring in English and Russian Studies; Alexandra is also involved in University Theater as a stage manager, production manager, director, and playwright. Accordingly, she is baffled and excited to be employed.

**Maureen E. Marshall**

Maureen Marshall joins CEERES as the Outreach and Campus Programs Coordinator. She is a PhD candidate in Anthropology at the University of Chicago. Marshall’s research investigates political subjectivity and the emergence of early complex polities in the South Caucasus by examining the lived experiences of individuals, particularly through mobility, violence, diet, and health. Her research interests also include the history of physical anthropology in Armenia and Russia, and the methods and epistemology of the Soviet approach to ethnogenesis.
American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages

AATSEEL Conference 2014
January 9-12, Drake Hotel

Coffee Break
Friday, January 10, 3:30-4:00pm

sponsored by the University of Chicago’s

Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures and
the Center for East European and Russian/Eurasian Studies

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