

FROM THE DIRECTOR

This abbreviated spring newsletter serves as a guide to special events at the Melikian Center this spring. In collaboration with other academic units in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the Melikian Center is pleased to cosponsor a series of sessions that address timely historical and cultural issues in Eurasian and East European studies. The sessions highlighted here began already in January 2015 with the visit of an Armenian delegation from the Yerevan State University Center for Gender and Leadership Studies. There followed in early February the visit to ASU of Stephen Kotkin, Birkelund Professor of History and International Affairs, Princeton University. Kotkin's presentations addressed his recently published biography of Josef Stalin (*Stalin: Vol. I, Paradoxes of Power*, Penguin, 2014) and a special evening discussion on the future of Russian-American relations.

The programming you will find described below addresses, among other topics, the crisis in Ukraine, nationalism in the Balkans, and a centenary marking of the 1915 Armenian Genocide. Join us this spring for a series of unforgettable programs at the Melikian Center. A sequential listing of programs can be found on the third page of this abbreviated newsletter.

– Stephen Batalden

MELIKIAN CENTER GUEST SPEAKERS



**Serhii Plokhii on the
Crisis in Ukraine**

Professor Serhii Plokhii, Hrushevs'kyi Professor of Ukrainian History, Harvard University, opens this series with a presentation on Thursday, February 19, "The Empire Strikes Back: The Dissolution of the USSR and the Ukraine Crisis." Professor Plokhii is well known to students of Ukrainian history, having published widely on the Cossacks and religion in early modern Ukraine. His most recent volume, *The Last Empire: The Final Days of the Soviet Union* (Basic Books, 2014), focuses on the modern period and the dissolution of the USSR. His presentation at ASU uses the *Last Empire* volume as a point of departure for interpreting the contemporary crisis in Ukraine.

**Keith Brown on Identity
in the Balkans**

Professor Keith S. Brown will be the guest speaker at the fifteenth annual Mary Choncoff Endowed Lecture in Balkan Studies to be held on Thursday evening, March 8, at 7:30 p.m. in Coor Hall 174. Brown is director of professional programs for the Thomas J. Watson Institute for International Studies at Brown University. His 2013 volume, *Loyal Unto Death: Trust and Terror in Revolutionary Macedonia* (Indiana University Press) revisits the question of ethnic identity in Balkan history by focusing on the bonds of solidarity that linked remote villagers and their leaders in the Macedonian Revolutionary Organization at the end of the nineteenth century. His earlier volume, *The Past in Question* (Princeton University Press, 2003) explores the relationship between national history and contemporary politics in twentieth-century Macedonia. Professor Brown is returning to Arizona State University for the first time since he was among the original class of Macedonian language students who launched the ASU Critical Languages Institute in 1991. His lecture, "Identity and Commitment in the Balkans" draws on his award winning volumes on the cultural anthropology of southeastern Europe.



The Choncoff Lecture honors the memory of one of Arizona's early Macedonian-American residents, the former state librarian of Arizona and out-of-print bookseller, Mary Choncoff. In the years preceding her death in 1996, Mary Choncoff welcomed a generation of visiting Macedonian scholars to Arizona State University. Her home in Tempe became a gathering place for participants in the longstanding academic exchange between Arizona State University and the University of Ss. Kiril and Metodij in Skopje, Macedonia.

Music of Survival

The Phoenix valley will serve as the site for the U.S. premiere of the emotionally riveting documentary film, *Music of Survival: The Ukrainian Bandurist Chorus*. The film premiere will be held at the Musical Instrument Museum in Scottsdale on

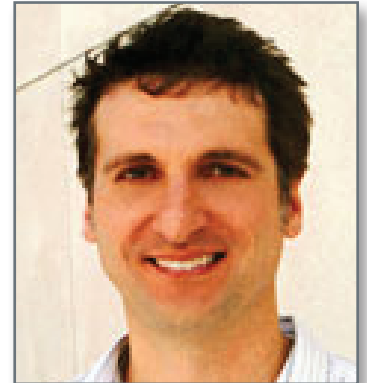
Sunday, March 8, at 2:00 p.m. The filmmaker, Orest Sushko, will be present for the weekend premiere celebration.



Maria Sonevytsky



Adriana Helbig



Orest Sushko

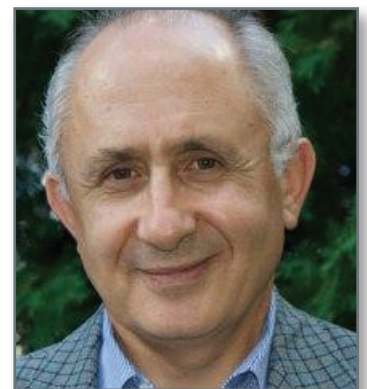
On Saturday, March 7, the Melikian Center will be pleased to join the ASU School of Music in hosting a special panel discussion addressing the historical context for the film. The panel will include visiting ethnomusicologists from Bard College (Professor Maria Sonevytsky) and the University of Pittsburgh (Professor Adriana Helbig), along with Arizona State University colleagues. The panel discussion and film premiere are being brought to Phoenix thanks to the leadership of Melikian Center faculty affiliate, Professor Mark von Hagen, an historian of modern Ukraine.

100 Years Later: The ASU Armenian Genocide Conference



Peter Balakian

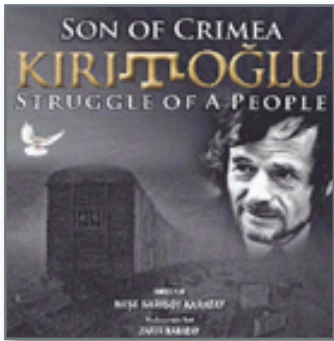
One-hundred years ago, hundreds of thousands of Armenians and Assyrians were deported by Ottoman armies from their villages and towns in Anatolia in one of the most devastating genocidal massacres of the twentieth century. On March 21-22, a group of Arizona State University College of Law students, supported by the Melikian Center, are inviting the public to a conference commemorating the Armenian Genocide. The conference will feature two distinguished keynote speakers, Professor Taner Akçam (Kaloosdian & Mugar Chair in Armenian Genocide Studies, Clark University) and Professor Peter Balakian (Donald M. & Constance



Taner Akçam

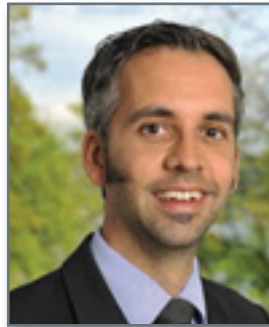
H. Rebar Humanities Professor, Colgate University). Taner Akçam is a fearless Turkish historian known for his documentation of the genocidal events of 1915. His recent volume, *The Young Turks' Crime Against Humanity: The Armenian Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing in the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton University Press, 2012), is the latest in a series of historical accounts chronicling the violence in Anatolia during World War I. Professor Balakian is known both for his poetry volumes and for his contributions to Armenian history. His most recent work is a translation of the memoir left by his great uncle Grigoris Balakian, a genocide survivor (see *Armenian Golgotha* [Vintage, 2010]). For a complete conference program, see <http://conferences.asucollegeoflaw.com/azarmgenocide/>.

April Fridays at the Melikian Center: Hold the Dates



In April, the Melikian Center will return to its Friday afternoon series, including presentations by international scholars who are this semester in residence at Arizona State University. The

Friday series is tentatively scheduled for 1:30 p.m. on April 10, 17, and 24, in Coor Hall. One of the events will be a screening of the award-winning documentary film by the Turkish director, Nese Sarisoy Karatay, *Son*



Michael Mayer

of Crimea: Struggle of a People. There will also be presentations by Professor Michael Mayer, visiting scholar from the Academy for Civic Education, Tutzing, Germany, and Professor Jillian Porter, visiting scholar in Russian literature from the University of Oklahoma. For updates on presentation times and places, consult the Melikian Center website, <https://melikian.asu.edu/events>.



Jillian Porter

SPECIAL EVENTS LISTING (TIMES & LOCATIONS)

Thursday, February 19, 4:30 p.m.
Memorial Union Gold Room (207)

“The Empire Strikes Back:
The Dissolution of the USSR and the Ukraine Crisis”

Professor Serhii Plokhii Hrushevs’kyi Professor of Ukrainian History, Harvard University

Thursday, March 5, 7:30 p.m. Coor Hall 174

The 15th Annual Mary Choncoff Endowed Lecture:

“Identity and Commitment in the Balkans and Beyond:
The Macedonian Revolutionary Organization after the Ilinden Uprising”

Prof. Keith Brown, Director of Professional Programs
Thomas J. Watson Institute for International Studies
Brown University

Saturday, March 7, 2:00-4:00 p.m.,
Recital Hall, ASU School of Music

Panel Discussion Contextualizing the Film, “*Music of Survival: The Ukrainian Bandurist Chorus*”

Prof. Mark von Hagen, History and Global Studies, ASU (panel chair), **Prof. Maria Sonevsky**,

Ethnomusicology, Bard College, **Prof. Adriana Helbig**, Ethnomusicology, University of Pittsburgh, **Prof. Anna Holian**, History, Arizona State University, **Dr. Bliss Little**, Barrett Honors College, Arizona State University

Sunday, March 8, 2:00 p.m.

Museum of Musical Instruments, Scottsdale

U.S. Premiere Showing of the Film: *Music of Survival: The Ukrainian Bandurist Chorus* with **Orest Sushko**, Ukrainian-Canadian filmmaker

Saturday/Sunday, March 21-22

ASU Sandra Day O’Connor Law College,
Armstrong Hall

ASU Armenian Genocide Conference: “100 Years Later” (for conference details, see <http://conferences.asucollegeoflaw.com/azarmgenocide/>), featuring keynote speakers:

Prof. Taner Akcam, Kaloosdian & Mugar Chair in Armenian Genocide Studies, Clark U., **Prof. Peter Balakian**, Donald M. & Constance H. Rebar Humanities Professor, Colgate U.

The Melikian Center Tel. 480-965-4188
Coor Hall 4451 Fax: 480-965-1700
PO Box 874202 melikiancenter@asu.edu
Tempe, AZ 85287-4202 <http://melikian.asu.edu>

2015 ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY CRITICAL LANGUAGES INSTITUTE

STUDY AT ASU

June 1–July 17

Albanian

Armenian

BCS

Persian

Russian

Turkish

Uzbek

Hebrew

Macedonian

Polish

THEN STUDY ABROAD

July 20–August 14

Tirana, Albania

Yerevan, Armenia

Sarajevo, Bosnia

Samarqand, Uzbekistan

Kazan, Russia

Izmir, Turkey

Samarqand, Uzbekistan

SUMMER ABROAD

June 22–August 14

Armenian in Yerevan

Russian in Kazan

Advanced Russian
in St. Petersburg

Tatar in Kazan

all programs contingent upon funding and enrollment

ROLLING ADMISSIONS UNTIL MAY 15

TUITION WAIVERS & FUNDING AVAILABLE

[HTTP://CLI.ASU.EDU](http://cli.asu.edu)

The Critical Languages Institute
Arizona State University, Box 874202
Tempe, AZ 85287-4202