From the Coordinator

As we gather for the consortium’s spring faculty meeting on Friday, March 30, I would call your attention to some significant developments that confirm both the great promise and the potential peril posed by regional and area studies programs such as that sponsored by our Russian and East European Studies Consortium.

Because of the important priority that regional studies has always given to area-related language study, we are particularly delighted to note below the contribution of Gregory and Emma Melikian to Armenian language and cultural study at Arizona State University. Not only do we celebrate the fact that The Melikian Fund will make possible Armenian language study in the annual REESC Critical Languages Institute beginning in the summer of 2002, but in doing so we note the symbolic significance of this gift in reinforcing regional Eurasian and Transcaucasian studies at Arizona State University. The addition of early musicologist Alexander Lingas to the School of Music is further evidence of the growth and vitality of Russian and East European regional studies at ASU. Lingas’s research interest in Byzantine and early Slavic chant brings a new and important component to a promising university program in musicology. Please note that Professor Oldani’s “Russian Music” course will also again be offered in the fall of 2001.

But, even as we celebrate these important new developments in language and area-related Russian/East European programming at ASU, we also note the recent serial titles cutback in the ASU Libraries. This cut has fallen disproportionately hard upon non-English language serial holdings in the humanities and social sciences. Regional studies programs such as our own have a special burden to protect the university against those who would seek to refashion ASU Libraries into a monolingual English-language undergraduate collection.

There is a similar mixed message that comes from recent REESC research efforts related to issues of transition in Eastern Europe and Eurasia. The recent national research conference at ASU on “Christianity and Islam in Modern Eurasia” demonstrated the research strength of our own REESC faculty and graduate students as we collaborate in efforts to address the complicated phenomenon of religious identity recovery in Eastern Europe and Eurasia. Yet, at the same time, the very issues of religious and ethnic identity that we are addressing in our own research can at times conspire to undermine our own international programming. In this context, we are saddened that recent violence in Macedonia has forced the early closure of the 2000-01 “Study Abroad at UKIM” program, and the return of our two NSEP fellows (Debra Neill and Wendy Gerster) studying at the University of Ss. Kiril and Metodij in Skopje.

As we continue to redefine the role of Russian and East European regional studies in the ASU institutional context, there is cause for us to celebrate the renewed strength of our interdisciplinary programming, even as we work together to overcome the occasional setbacks that we confront.

SKB

New Faculty Affiliates and Staff

REESC is pleased to extend greetings to new faculty affiliates Stephen Pyne, Thomas Keil, and Laurie Manchester. Stephen Press (Ph.D. Russian Musicology, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill) is a one-year visiting assistant professor in the School of Music. He is a specialist on the work of Prokofiev. The current REESC research graduate assistant is Jeff Gaydish, who is completing his M.A. thesis this spring following return from an NSEP-funded fellowship year in Namibia. Welcome aboard all!

We are pleased also to announce that Dr. Alexander Lingas has accepted the position of assistant professor of music history in the ASU School of Music. His appointment begins with the fall semester of 2001. Dr. Lingas is currently a member of the Faculty of Music, Oxford University, and a British Academy postdoctoral research fellow at St. Peter's College, Oxford. He is the musical director of the Portland-based professional vocal ensemble, “Cappella Romana.” He holds a Ph.D. in historical musicology from the University of British Columbia, and a B.A. in music composition and Russian from Portland State University. His research, reflected in a number of published articles, focuses upon
Graduate Research Conference

The program for the national research conference, "Rediscovering Religious Identity: Christianity and Islam in Modern Eurasia," March 9-10, was distributed under separate cover and is also available at the consortium web site. Among visiting scholars participating in the conference were Gregory Freeze (History Department, Brandeis University), Robert Geraci (History Department, University of Virginia), Edward Luzzerini (History Department, University of New Orleans), Georg Michels (History Department, University of California-Riverside), Andrei Pliguzov (Research Scholar, Dumbarton Oaks), Roy Robson (History Department, University of the Sciences, Philadelphia), Vera Shevzov (Department of Religion, Smith College), and Theofanis Stavrou (History Department, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities).

The Melikian Fund

As of February 2001, Gregory and Emma Melikian have created The Melikian Fund to support the study of Armenian language and culture at ASU. Armenian language instruction will be offered through the annual Critical Languages Institute beginning in the summer 2002. This is a major new development in REESC programming, and we look forward to the development of this important curricular offering. The Melikian Fund, established in the ASU Foundation, welcomes matching contributions from REESC affiliates and friends.

Gregory and Emma Melikian have long been leaders in metropolitan Phoenix. Gregory Melikian was the former owner of the San Carlos Hotel and a founder of Great Western Realty Co. He is a past president of the Arizona Opera Company. He has served on the Board of Directors for Channel 8 KAET. Mr. Melikian has worked with historic site preservation, both in metropolitan Phoenix and Tucson. Emma Melikian has been a prominent leader in the metropolitan arts community. She is the founder and president of "Thank You, America Foundation," an organization devoted to the support of immigrants and their positive contributions to American life. She has been awarded the George Washington Medal of Honor from the Freedom Foundation of Valley Forge, and the Certificate for Outstanding Community Service by the national society of the Daughters of the American Revolution. As leaders of the Armenian-American community in the American Southwest, the Melikians have played a key role in the development of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Scottsdale, Arizona, and its Educational and Social Center (AESC).

Lectures

On February 6, Stephen Bernard presented a photographic review entitled, "Reconstruction Efforts in Bosnia and Hercegovina." The presentation showed efforts currently underway in Bosnia and Hercegovina to rebuild the region since the 1995 Dayton Accords. Bernard is the proprietor of Bernard Real Estate & Development, Inc., of Phoenix. He was in Croatia and Bosnia last September meeting with participants of a June 2000 USAID/World Learning seminar conducted by REESC for construction executives from Bosnia and Hercegovina.

Vladimir Miladin, executive director of the Open Society Institute-Macedonia and professor in the Faculty of Theatre Arts at the University of Ss. Kiril and Metodij, was the 2001 Mary Choncoff Fellow. He presented the annual "Mary Choncoff Endowed Lecture in Balkan Studies," on January 25. The lecture, “Interethnic Relations in the Republic of Macedonia,” outlined the demographics and culture of interethnic relations in contemporary Macedonia. His emphasis upon prospects for interethnic understanding was also combined with a review of some of the obstacles to understanding, including a critique of geo-politics in the Balkans, Macedonian domestic politics, and the Kosovo crisis. He highlighted personal and family examples of inter-ethnic cooperation and stressed the importance of one-to-one relationships and the role of civil society in the newly independent Macedonian republic. Professor Miladin’s lecture was the fourth annual Choncoff Lecture, an event that has become a highlight of the REESC spring calendar.

Critical Languages Institute (CLI) and Related Study Abroad Opportunities

The 2001 CLI will offer students more options than ever before. Elementary and intermediate level instruction will be available in all three CLI languages: Macedonian, Serbian/Croatian, and Tatar. ASU Summer Sessions has provided full
tuition waivers for all CLI students. The Social Science Research Council will offer fellowship support for Tatar language students on a competitive basis. Students studying Serbian/Croatian will have an optional three-week practicum in Petrovac, Montenegro that parallels the practicum for Macedonian language students offered each August in Ohrid, Macedonia.

REESC has established a new study abroad program with Kazan State University (KSU), in the Republic of Tatarstan (Russia). The program, launched by ASU Tatar instructor Agnes Kefeli, was recently cosigned by Evgenii Kniazev, KSU Vice-Rector for International Relations, and William Davey, ASU Director of International Programs. The on-site director of the program in Kazan will be Professor Flera Safiullina, head of the department for Tatar language instruction to foreigners at KSU. The program will be the first American academic program operating out of a non-Russian language in the Russian Federation (see the write up regarding the program in the March issue of the AAASS NewsNet). In addition to advanced instruction in Tatar, students will be able to continue their Russian language study and take specialized courses in Tatar history and Islamic art. The initial group of students will travel to Kazan in the fall of 2001.

NSEP

Good luck to five REESC area-related students who are applying for National Security Education Program (NSEP) fellowship support for 2001-02. They are:

Andrew Cocchia, undergraduate major in Russian and Economics, who has applied to study in Tatarstan.

Wendy Coursen, undergraduate Communications major, who has applied to study in Macedonia.

Collin Raymond, undergraduate Mathematics and Economics major, who has applied to study in Mongolia.

Danielle Ross, undergraduate Russian major, who has applied to study in Tatarstan.

Eric Strachan, graduate student in Political Science, who has applied to undertake research and study in Tatarstan.

Despite the temporary setbacks in Macedonia, we continue to advertise the academic-year Study Abroad at UKIM and related exchange programs with the University of Ss. Kiril and Metodij (UKIM) in Skopje, Macedonia. The UKIM exchangee for the spring semester is Jana Andreevska. Jana is studying sonology, the science of sound, at ASU’s School of Music. Sonology is an area of specialization that is to this point virtually untaught by Faculties of Music in the Balkans, and Jana is especially enthusiastic about learning the technical aspects of sound generation, processing and recording while working on electronic music composition at ASU. She will be returning to deploy these newly won resources as a composer and graduate assistant at UKIM. REESC joins the ASU School of Music in extending her a warm welcome.

REESC has forwarded the names of Adnaan Ahmed and Wendy Coursen to the University of Ss. Kiril and Metodij for placement as the ASU exchangees for academic year 2001-02. Adnaan completed elementary Macedonian during the summer 2000 CLI and will take intermediate Macedonian this summer. Wendy will take first year Macedonian in summer 2001.

Adnaan proposes to prepare a formal description of the practice of history in Macedonia for his ASU honors thesis. In collaboration with the UKIM history department (Philosophical Faculty) and the Institute of National History, he will trace the development of the discipline of history in modern Macedonia.

Wendy will address issues that affect the media during the transition process, including privatization problems posed by the difficulty of obtaining market support for information media previously funded and controlled by government authorities. Her undergraduate research project, which is also intended to serve as her honors thesis, will address the wider international implications of the transition process for media in southeastern Europe.

Faculty News

Josef C. Brada taught a course at the Leon Kozminsky Academy in Warsaw and was on hand at the first annual meeting of the Czech Economists Association, during which he participated in a roundtable on Czech economic policy.

Fred Giffin, who retired at the end of 2000 after thirty-three years at ASU, was awarded in December
the state’s highest honor for professional achievement in Slavic Studies, the Joe Malik, Jr. Award for Arizona Slavic Studies. The award was presented at a reception in his honor. Dr. Giffin is one of the founders of REESC, which has grown to thirty faculty in fifteen disciplines. A former department chair and assistant dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, he has received numerous awards for mentoring both undergraduate and graduate students and for excellence in teaching and scholarship.

Stephen Pyne was elected a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Individuals are elevated to this prestigious rank as a result of their efforts toward advancing science or fostering applications that are deemed scientifically or socially distinguished.

Ann Hibner Koblitz is one of eight ASU Faculty Fellows for Academic Year 2000-01. Faculty Fellows support programs and services that link students to faculty outside the traditional classroom and serve as liaison with their home departments and other faculty. Please note that Professor Koblitz’s recently published book, Science, Women, and Revolution in Russia (Amsterdam, 2000), will be the subject of a special REESC session later this spring.

Laurie Manchester is a Faculty Grant-in-Aid Program awardee. The fund is designed to provide support for the initiation of creative research programs of junior faculty and academic professionals in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Eric Thor hosted a reception for a US-Russian Global Executive Group from the Tuva region of Russia in early October.

Faculty Publication and Paper Presentation News


Lee Croft has just published an article entitled "Mnemonotactics and Linguistic Iconicity," in the anthology, The Learning and Teaching of Slavic Languages and Cultures, a tome of over seven hundred pages edited by Olga Kagan and Benjamin Rifkin (Slavica Publishers, Bloomington: 2000). Former Russian baccalaureate student and REESC alumnus Timothy Riley has an article in the same volume entitled "Resources for Teaching Polish." Furthermore, Margaret Beissinger, University of
Wisconsin-Madison, in her “Teaching South Slavic Languages: A Survey of Textbooks and Reference books,” positively mentions Critical Languages Institute Macedonian textual materials (prepared by Eleni Buzarowska, Liljana Mitkovska, and Marija Kusevska, former REESC scholars in residence and CLI instructors), while also acknowledging the aid of Stephen Batalden in a footnote.


Tamarra Kaida curated an exhibit, “New Era/New Work: Russian Photography,” at the Northlight Gallery at ASU.

Laurie Manchester was invited to give two scholarly presentations during the spring semester:
"The Religious Origins of the Modern Self: A Lesson from 'Backward' Russia" at the University of Arizona History Department on February 2, 2001; and

Friends of REESC

The Russian and East European Studies Consortium gratefully acknowledges the contributions of supporters of the Mary Choncoff Foundation. The Mary Choncoff Fund honors the memory of Temple librarian and rare book distributor, Mary Choncoff, and her commitment to Macedonian-American understanding and exchange. Recent contributors include:

Dr. George Georgieff
Antone and Constance Fileff
Richard and Florence Baum
Sotir and Athena Nitchov

REESEC extends a special thank you to Carl Goldberg for the contribution of three hundred books to the REESC holdings in the Ambrazhevich Memorial Library.

REESC Students and Alumni

Allison Bryce is a recent ASU/REESC alumna who majored in Agribusiness. She was an ASU/UKIM exchangee (98/99) who received NSEP fellowship support. After a summer that included travel in China, Allison accepted employment with an agricultural cooperative in northern California. She will reside in Stockton.

Kuvatbek Bupaev is currently director of the Agricultural Projects Coordination Unit, Ministry of Agriculture, Bishkek, Republic of Kyrgyzstan. He is currently seeking assistantship support to pursue his Ph.D. in agricultural economics. Kuvat and his wife, Saida, just celebrated the first birthday of their daughter Aidana in February.

Violeta Cepujnovska, the fall 1999 UKIM faculty exchangee to ASU, has been appointed Vice Rector for International Programs at the University of Ss. Kiril and Metodij.

Elisabeth Elliott, who received her B.A. at Arizona State University in May 1990 (M.A., Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, University of Arizona, May 1995; Ph.D. Slavic Linguistics, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, University of Toronto, forthcoming 2001), will be visiting professor of Russian in the fall of 2001 at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota.

Jeff Gaydish, graduate student in the ASU History Department and current REESC graduate research assistant, presented a paper on the Swakopmund Concentration Camp at the University of Namibia in August. He was cited in an article about Herero genocide (1904-08) in a recent European edition of Newsweek.

Christos Iakovou, a Critical Languages Institute graduate, is teaching at Cyprus Intercollege, an institution of higher learning in Nicosia.

Stephanie Larson will be interning in the political/economic section of the US Embassy in Sofia, Bulgaria this summer. Stephanie’s duties will include assisting with implementing and reporting on projects related to the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe and other projects that deal with regional economic development. Stephanie is a journalism and political science major and REESC certificate student who participated in the CLI and the study
Dmitry Tartakovsry, a Critical Languages Institute participant who earned his M.A. in history from ASU in 1998, is working as an attaché/vice-consul with the U.S. Embassy in Moldova. Dmitry was a recipient of both NSEP and Fulbright support while at ASU.

Letters

This section is a new addition to the Newsletter. It will feature letters from alumni or friends, and will highlight achievements of our graduates. This semester’s missive was sent on 31 January 2001 via e-mail to Professor Croft and comes from Captain James R. Sekelsky, US Army.

“...I am a 1991 ASU graduate with a BA in Russian with the REESC certificate. My memories of the department are great and I’ve had opportunities to use my degree. Moreover, the very areas of academic exposure and intellectual interest that I gained from ASU have continued to shape my professional experience since graduation. I just wanted to express my thanks and share what I have been doing with my Russian degree and REESC certificate.

The simplest manifestation of my ASU Russian & REESC memories was of flowers, dinner, and song in the Arbat section of Moscow -- a place that I learned of in Professor Ekmanis’ Soviet Lit. class. But beyond that, I enjoyed the exposure and exploration of other academic areas. Professor Croft, you helped me along in my study of semiotics. My understanding of sign and meaning was revived while listening to a Polish officer converse with a Czech colonel in a language that was neither's mother language. I understood via Russian. This occurred in a Mingrellian speaking area of the break-away Abkhazia, the former ASSR in the Republic of Georgia. There, all official conversations are conducted in Russian.

When I was the project officer for a Partnership-for-Peace exercise in the Pomeranian area of Poland, I could understand Polish when it was spoken to me, but refrained from speaking Russian to linguistically proud Polish officers [who equated] Russian with Soviet and English with NATO. To shorten the story: a Polish Colonel and an ASU educated American Captain communicated in Russian in order to be most productive, because neither of us could speak the other's language.

While I was in Bosnia, my ability to comprehend [the language] was challenged. Specific nouns and verbs were similar, but the Southern Slavic case declension halted my syntactic understanding. Their verbs are similar to OCS. Seven or eight years after I graduated, I was reminded of the "History of the Russian Language." Professor Batalden had also pointed out potential [political] problems in Yugoslavia in 1989. I had kept an assigned book, East Central Europe between the Two World Wars, and an anthropological study set in a Serbian village in historical perspective (about the extended family). Professor Batalden or Professor Giffin had spoken about the different paradigms of historical records (i.e., one from the church, one from the communists, etc). I referred to this when trying to explain to others the fractures in Bosnia like the same language depicted in both Latin and Cyrillic letters. Professor von Lilienfeld taught about Orthodoxy and how Roman Catholic and Orthodox demographics just about met in Bosnia, yet there was [still] a firm Islamic culture in Sarajevo. I used my understandings from ASU and the book "A Serbian Village in Historical Perspective" when discussing [with colleagues] the resettlement of Brcko in Bosnia. An idea was presented to build "trailer-type" housing, which would get both Bosnians and Serbs into homes. I related that Brcko [was composed of] multiple villages with plots that had been handed down throughout the years. Extended families occupied these villages. To settle one family in a house was not as important as that same family's location relative to its family (kin). They didn't want buildings, they wanted their villages.

Lastly, in Abkhzia, I went to a village to check on the condition of a man whom I had aided when he was wounded. Well, as the first house and then the second turned out not to be Givee Zhengeliya's, it became apparent that this certainly was his family's village. I was soon followed by a hundred Zhengeliyas down the muddy cart trodden

M. Edward McNally, former REESC graduate research assistant, successfully defended his M.A. thesis in December 2000. The thesis addressed issues of identity construction arising out of the Bulgarian Uprising of April 1876 and the subsequent war in the Balkans.

Kami Rynish, a REESC alumna and second year graduate student in political science at Emory University, was awarded a five-year fellowship for completion of her Ph.D. studies at Emory.

Sally Smith, an ASU and Critical Languages Institute graduate, is finishing her post-graduate study at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies (SSEES) of the University of London. She has been focusing on energy matters in the Ukraine, including the Chernobyl issue.

...
road. Once again, seven or eight years after graduating from ASU, I was very glad to have had the opportunity to study Slavic history, religion, geography, music, anthropology, and literature.

Just when I was disappointed in my opportunities to use Russian in the army I was selected to be one of two US Army officers to work with the United Nations in the Republic of Georgia. I spent six months in breakaway Abkhazia, living in the historical area of Mingrellia (city of Gali).

REESC studies at Arizona State have been a solid base for me, such as in Bosnia when I had a position with the Joint Military Commission carrying out the military portions of the Dayton Peace Accords. Present realities sort of eclipsed some of my studies with Professors Batalden or Giffin, like "detente" and Mutual Assured Destruction, but they're still important. I have sponsored Hungarian, Slovak, Macedonian, Slovenian, Czech, and Polish military exchanges. Each of these nations possesses a different history and cultural fabric that craves individual recognition, study, and understanding. I'm proud of my degree and appreciate the room I was afforded to grow and study Russian with REESC at ASU. My experience very much prepared me for my real-world experiences -- it made me curious. I'd be happy to speak to anyone about my experiences or provide help in any way.

I'm currently an Army Captain and an Instructor at West Point. I received an appointment in the Department of Military Instruction. Thank you and good luck.

Sincerely,

James R. Sekelsky, Captain, US Army
Instructor, United States Military Academy
West Point, New York

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Schedule of remaining REESC events, Spring 2001

**March 30** (Friday), 12:30 p.m., SS 318, REESC Affiliates Meeting. Following the REESC meeting and refreshments, Professor **Thomas Keil**, Professor of Sociology, Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, ASU West, will present, "Eastern Europe: Transition to What?"

**March 31** (Saturday), 9:00 a.m., MU Turquoise Room, **Mary Ellen Smith**, ASU History Department graduate student, "Immigrants and Illness: Acculturation through Health Care, 1890-1920."

**April 5** (Thursday), 1:30 p.m., SS 318, **Ann Hibner Koblitz**, ASU Professor of Women's Studies, "Science, Women and Revolution in Russia."

**April 12** (Thursday), 9:30 a.m., Computing Commons 123, Live Teleconference with the Moscow State Institute of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Russian Federation (MGIMO). Note: please check with REESC to confirm time.

**April 19** (Thursday); 1:30 p.m., SS 318, **Jeffrey S. Gaydish**, ASU Graduate Student, History, "'Die L. ūng der Eingeborenenfrage': The Role of the Swakopmund Concentration Camp in the Development of German South West Africa."
April 27 (Friday), 1:30 p.m., SS 318, Stephen Press, Visiting Lecturer of Music History, ASU School of Music, “Please write music that sounds truly Russian: Diaghilev's influence on Prokofiev's Ballet ‘Skazka pro shuta.’”

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