Letter from the Director

Last fall REEEC kept busy. Geopolitics was the theme of a student roundtable with Stephan Minikes, US Ambassador to the OSCE, and the Current Events Forum, on the US decision to cancel the missile shield in Central Europe.

Directions speakers Barbara Engel (University of Colorado) and Douglas Rogers (Yale University) addressed respectively the status of the personal in late imperial Russia and that of Old Believers in today’s Russian provinces.

Our Distinguished Speaker was Russian foreign policy expert Andranik Migranyan, who gave a provocative talk on Russian-American relations following President Obama’s decision to press that famous re-set button.

Richard Tempest
Director
Russian, East European, and Eurasian Center

Russia’s Migranyan provides insight on US-Russia relations

REEEC Distinguished Lecturer Andranik Migranyan, Director of the Institute for Democracy and Cooperation, is a prominent expert on Russian foreign policy and has held several key advisory positions at the Russian State Duma and Federation Council. Migranyan’s December 3 talk was entitled, “Is a New Agenda for Russian-American Relations Possible?” His simple answer was yes, but the complex answer was much more nuanced.

Migranyan pointed out that August 2008 was the lowest point in Russia-US relations since the Cold War, dropping furthest during the conflict between Russian and Georgia. However, relations had been worsening for sometime. Migranyan highlighted mistakes of the Clinton administration, followed by the Bush administration, including alienating Russia and unilaterally expanding NATO, thereby changing the boundaries of power in the former Soviet space.

Migranyan referred Putin’s Munich speech as the turning point in which Russia has begun to assert itself more confidently, standing up to the West. Putin represented a Russia that is now consolidated with the capacity and resources to have a place in international relations, and he set “red lines” that cannot be crossed. Russia’s goals are now being consolidated and advanced.

Continued on page 3
**Current Events Forum:**

**Dropping the Missile Shield**

In light of President Obama’s decision to halt plans for a missile defense interceptor and radar in Poland and the Czech Republic, “Dropping the Missile Shield: the US, Russia, & the New Stage of Geopolitical Swordsmanship,” aimed to cover the issue from multi-disciplinary and cross-regional perspectives.

Carol Leff (Political Science) stressed that changes announced by President Obama on September 17 are not necessarily a cancellation of plans, but a reconfiguration. Obama plans to install a first phase of sea-based defense capabilities, possibly followed by land-based capabilities after 2015.

George Gasyna (Slavic) said Polish media has framed the recent announcement by Obama not as a cancellation of plans, but a reconceptualization, stressing that the deal still stands, merely for shorter range missiles.

Richard Tempest (REEEC) discussed Russia’s role, emphasizing that Russia had viewed the plans as one more piece of evidence of a hostile US attitude toward Russia.

**Remembering the Fall of the Berlin Wall**

At “Remembering 1989,” campus faculty reflected on their personal experiences and thoughts on November 9, 1989. The professors hailed from the GDR, Hungary, and the US.

Anke Pinkert (Germanic) shared about growing up in East Germany, which Pinkert suggested supported a third way, other than the communist East or the capitalist West, focusing more on nationalism and annexation with West Germany. Pinkert does not consider the events of 1989 a revolution. In fact, following 1989 she had trouble discarding the ideology with which she grew up. Its foundation on humanist utopia and anti-fascism still seemed “better” than the new ideas of the capitalist West in many ways.

In 1989, Diane Koenker (History) was in Moscow, Prague, Australia and Tanzania. As a historian, she describes Gorbachev’s rise as a time when moves toward perestroika and glasnost were drawing people to the party to join the excitement. Today, it is much easier to conduct research in the region, particularly in Russia.

Zsuzsa Gille (Sociology) shared about participating in the peace and environmental movements in Hungary, beginning in 1982. She saw the 1980s as a time when Hungarians were finding their voice. Gille suggests post-Soviet movements were more influenced by MLK, Jr. and Gandhi than Friedrich Hayek or Adam Smith. Gille was in the US in 1989 and almost shrugged off the fall of the Wall because she was certain it was reversible and was interested in change on a deeper level than the takeover of the state. The post-Communist binary views of democracy versus authoritarianism eventually began to be blurred, which did appeal to Gille. There was a new desire for policy more sensitive to local needs and culture. Unfortunately, what Gille once saw and experienced as sprouts of indigenous local spheres were never fully realized.

Ed Kolodziej (Global Studies) addressed 1989’s implications for the academy, suggesting that its intellectual significance lies in the emergence of a truly global society and an awareness of humanity’s shared destiny. In 1989, the Russian military and KGB were still a formidable force, so there was another explanation for the new movements. He argued that free exchange is not a free good, and people began to realize it had to be fought for and protected. He called on academics to understand “species-wide” problems with a global awareness of humanity’s shared problems, through interdisciplinary cooperation.

“Remembering 1989” was co-sponsored by REEEC and the ELI Center.
THE ARCTIC: Global Security & Climate Change

The Arctic Symposium, “Global Security, Climate Change, and the Arctic: Implications of an Open Northwest Passage” was co-sponsored by REEEC, the EU Center, and ACDIS. Panelists discussed the effects of global warming on climate and positions of coastal states. Panelists included Michael Byers, Political Science, Univ. of British Columbia; William Chapman, Atmospheric Sciences, UIUC; Klaus Dodds, Geopolitics, Univ. of London; and Ingrid Lundestad, Research Fellow, Centre for Transatlantic Studies, Norwegian Institute for Defense Studies.

There has been more warming in the Arctic than anywhere else in the past 50 years, but also the Northern Sea Route has been open 4 of the 5 last years and the Northwest Passage was open in 2007. These “openings” are caused by melting sea ice. Byers believes all multi-tier Arctic sea ice will melt by 2013. This would allow shipping to take place year-round, straight across the North Pole or through the Northwest Passage. More traffic of cargo ships creates the possibility of another Exxon Valdez in a region where marine life is fragile. More cruise ship traffic creates the need for additional search and rescue efforts for which coastal states do not have the capabilities or finances. There is also the chance of illegal immigration (i.e. through Canada’s north) and WMD trafficking between the Pacific and Atlantic.

U.S. national security interests in the Arctic Region include both security priorities (Law of the Sea Treaty, missile defense, etc.) as well as climate change-related priorities (energy and environmental security). Russia has a substantial military presence in the region, a long shoreline, and petroleum resources. Lundestad suggested that the Arctic region will remain largely cooperative.

Panelists agreed that Arctic coastal states do not want other states involved in Arctic issues. Further, NATO has been looking for new issues to address, and the Arctic may become part of NATO’s new platform. All of these recent events globalize the Arctic and increase the involvement of states that may not otherwise have paid the region much attention.

Migranyan, cont’d.

For Russia, the near abroad is the most sensitive area (historically, culturally, politically, etc.). Currently, over 20 million ethnic Russians live abroad, many living in Russia’s neighboring states. This is one of several priorities of Russia that do not coincide with those of the US. Likewise, America’s vital interests are not in Europe, but rather in places like Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Middle East. These priorities have nothing to do with Russia, although the US needs Russia for them, so Russia becomes a natural ally in that sense.

Migranyan stressed the irrelevance and inefficiency of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and suggested that the obsolete security organization should be reconsidered. In fact, Migranyan encourages a reassessment of all security infrastructure in the region.

The problems the new US administration needs to confront, in light of US-Russia relations, are 1) NATO and 2) the question of whether US policy is made in Washington, based on its own national interest, or in Warsaw, Kiev, or Tbilisi.

The concessions he suggested included the US signing documents agreeing not to enlarge NATO further and not to have military bases in post-Soviet states, and also to organize a security structure that includes Russia.

In conclusion, Migranyan stressed that US rhetoric of a “reset” on relations with Russia has resulted in nothing but the same “zero sum” game that has plagued the relationship since the Cold War. If the US begins to offer concessions, Migranyan believes there is a still a chance for a new agenda for US-Russia relations.
Aft after studying BCS domestically this summer, I continued studying the language during a three-week practicum in Bosnia to cap off my hybrid language program. To me, Bosnia seemed polarized between sobering reminders of the wars of the 1990's and the sentiment that those years of strife should be respectfully, yet resolutely, tucked away into its past. And although many were willing to discuss the conflicts, I surmised that remaining aloof was the best option for a foreigner such as myself who, comparatively speaking, knew virtually nothing of it, focusing instead on discovering Bosnia in the here and now, not in its there and then. Bosnia, I believe, should be defined not so much by the challenges of its past, but by its impressive ability to overcome such challenges.

Many of my experiences in the country reflected this dichotomy. After my initial week in Sarajevo, our small group departed for Neum on the Bosnian coast, and the quaint seaside villages and towns dotting the Croatian coast further south. Along the way, we stopped to take in the historic areas of Jablanica, Konjic, Mostar, and Pochitel’, exploring elements of Ottoman influence which ornament mosques, stunning hand-crafted wares, and distinctive architectural styles impressively reflected. To be sure, the coast was as picturesque, wealthy, and hot as advertised. The cool blue of the Adriatic offered a relaxing respite from the heat. After a unique class held on the idyllic shore, we headed for Dubrovnik, a city of inestimable historic importance to the region and, with its orange-tiled roofs, fortressed walls, and spectrum of cathedrals, museums, and historical archives, also a city of inestimable contemporary importance for the artist, explorer, and historian alike.

Leaving behind the historicity of Dubrovnik and the Croatian coast in all its lavish, sun-drenched splendor, one of the highlights of the trip, strangely enough, transpired on the ride home. With the tortuous route lulling other students into slumber and Sanja, our Bosnian professor and driver, insisting on answering language-based questions and only conversing in Bosnian, the stage was set for several hours of linguistic discomfort - a prerequisite for shocking my nascent skills into growth mode. Although but a few hours, that midnight ride into Sarajevo seemed to equate to weeks of traditional language instruction in terms of progress. Missing the exit to Sarajevo provided more time for instruction in an attempt to rescue my woefully insufficient language skills out of the abyss. Even more importantly, however, was the multitude of commonalities which we discovered that we shared, notwithstanding formal differences in culture, faith, language, and upbringing.

In contrast to the tranquil beach in Croatia, days later our group met in the foothills above Sarajevo where painful reminders of the recent war were easily and eerily visible. Overlooking the city, we learned of the degree of destitution that inhabitants of the city experienced to merely survive, with our instructor sharing stories of the often demoralizing deprivation which affected her family and friends. Illustratively, she recounted how her grandmother once arrived at home with handfuls of dandelions gathered from a local park which, by that late stage of the siege, had by all accounts become a delicacy. Additionally, near the end of the war, she recalled having been given a small treat - a slice of pumpkin. In expressing gratitude to her mother she responded, “Thank you for the potato.” Such was her level of desensitization during four years of deprivation that she mistook the semi-sweet flesh of a pumpkin for the starchy, grainy taste of a potato.
Contrastingly, we later stepped out of such historical realities and into a major defining feature of Bosnia - its mountains. Having grown up in the highlands of the Intermountain West, spending the weekend in the forested mountains surrounding Sarajevo - the same areas in which the 1984 Winter Olympic Games were held (and justifiably so) - it looked and felt as if my travels had taken me several states west of Champaign, not to east-central Bosnia. In fact, as I stood on narrow ridge tops examining the canyons below, distinct images of more familiar yet virtually identical canyons which I had explored on foot, horse, and snowmobile throughout my youth, easily came flowing into my mind.

That night we hiked into an alpine village bereft of modern amenities and the noise and pressures incident to urban life, yet replete with humility, simplicity, and peace. The rocky little valley served as a rural retreat for perhaps fifty locals whose level of self-sufficiency was enviable to say the least. As the sun disappeared behind distant peaks, we enjoyed the inviting warmth of the fire and the stunning brilliance of a starry canopy above. Bosnian hospitality did not go down with the sun, however. Families in different parts of the valley tended to their own respective fires, singing traditional songs to one another through the otherwise silent darkness.

The next morning we hiked higher still, walking through sub-alpine meadows, past rustic and rickety shepherd huts, and up steep ridge-lines to our destination - a collection of peaks offering sweeping views of the still snow-studded (even in August) Dinaric Alps to the southwest and sleepy Bosnian villages to the northeast. Feasting on wild blackberries, blueberries, and raspberries as we made our descent, stereotypical depictions of Bosnia were sapped of any merit, yielding to the realities of tranquility and strength which the mountains afforded.

During my final week, after taking in the Sarajevo Film Festival, exploring a vast array of churches, mosques, and synagogues, and visiting a number of historical museums in the capital, our group revisited Sarajevo's past one last time before departing - the Tunnel of Hope. The tunnel served as a veritable lifeline for Bosnians throughout the siege. The Sarajevo Airport was essentially the only facility not controlled by Serbs, and thus shipments of food, clothing and other goods were able to make it through to the city's inhabitants to help stave off both individual starvation and national capitulation. Perhaps this adequately epitomizes the inherent polarization of the city's recent past - on one hand uncertainty and impending destruction, while on the other, the optimism of hope and the inevitability of triumph.

Taking a self-guided stroll through the foothills of Sarajevo the evening before my departure, walking past admirably rebuilt homes and finely cultivated gardens and small orchards, I pondered briefly upon the miraculous level of both physical and emotional fortitude which the city and her people - perhaps even the land itself - have exhibited in recovering from the beastliness of war. This, the more peaceful, more scenic, more resolute, yet lesser mentioned side of Bosnia, more accurately epitomizes the country and its people in my estimation - the true side of Bosnia that all should endeavor to experience.

James Keller is a second-year graduate student in Russian and East European Studies, and is also earning a graduate certificate in Global Business Culture. His research interests include Lukashenka’s Belarus and the geopolitics of climate change and energy in Russia and Eastern Europe.
New Affiliated Faculty

Bruce Wicks  
University of Illinois  
Associate Professor,  
Recreation, Sport & Tourism  
Leisure Studies

Tania Ionin  
University of Illinois  
Assistant Professor,  
Linguistics

Ho Yeon Cho  
Kyungnam University,  
Professor,  
Division of Humanities

2010 Conferences

CSAMES/UC/REEEC Conference  
January 29-30, 2010  
The “Violence, Trauma, and Displacement in the Middle East and Eurasia” workshop included a range of research topics from natural disasters that bring about displacement, and human conflicts, such as war and genocide.

International Symposium:  
“Islam, Salvation, and the Fate of Others”  
April 16-17, 2010  
The Department of Religion will host an international symposium entitled “Islam, Salvation, and the Fate of Others,” co-sponsored by REEEC. For details, see http://www.relst.uiuc.edu/salvation/.

Annual Center Conference  
April 8-10, 2010  
Led by Donna Buchanan (Illinois) and Gabriela Currie (Minnesota), REEEC will host an international, interdisciplinary conference titled “Soundscapes of the Spirit: Cosmology and Sound Art from the Black to the Aral Seas.”

Fisher Forum  
June 24-26, 2010  
Led by Diane Koenker (Illinois) and Anne Gorsuch (British Columbia) the 2010 Fisher Forum, “The Socialist 1960s: Popular Culture and the Socialist City in Global Perspective” will aim to use the socialist societies of the 1960s as the center from which to explore global interconnections and uncover new patterns of cultural cross-pollination. This forum will be structured around cities as the units of analysis, and it will focus on the arena of popular culture as played out in these city spaces.

Winter Reception 2009

It is with mixed joy and sadness that the REEEC community marked the retirement on December 31 of Merrily Shaw, the long-time Assistant to the Director and a true friend and helper to hundreds of faculty, students, and work colleagues over the years.

The REEEC Winter Reception became a celebration of Merrily’s decades-long contribution to our campus and heard a succession of moving tributes to her warmth of heart, liveliness of spirit, and unparalleled knowledge of the ins and outs of Center and University business.

Some of the REEEC staff gather around Merrily Shaw, who retired in December. From Left: Katrina Chester, Kristina Satern, Richard Tempest, Merrily Shaw, Theresa Schafroth, Jennifer Byslma.
**Faculty News**

**Eugene Avrutin** was awarded a Cahnman Publication Subvention Grant from the Association for Jewish Studies for *Jews and the Imperial State: Identification Politics in Tsarist Russia*, which will be published by Cornell UP in 2010. Avrutin also presented a paper at the international conference on “Jewish Migration and Integration to the Metropolises of Europe, 1848-1918.” University of Vienna.


**Tania Ionin** received an award from the University of Illinois Campus Research Board to conduct an experimental study on the interpretation of Russian indefinite noun phrases (Title: *An Experimental Investigation of Scope in Russian*). The award provides funding for a research assistant in the Spring 2010 semester, plus money to pay human subjects.


**Janice Pilch** has been appointed Visiting Program Officer on International Copyright for the Association of Research Libraries for 2009-2010. She also serves as an international copyright advocate for the Library Copyright Alliance, representing U.S. library interests at the World Intellectual Property Organization and other international fora. Janice has been appointed the U.S. representative to the IFLA Committee on Copyright and Other Legal Matters. Her recent presentations include “The WIPO Development Agenda,” and “What Are Traditional Cultural Expressions and What Are the Policy Issues for Libraries?” at the Second Global eIFL-IP Conference in Istanbul, and “Hard and Soft Law Options for an International Instrument on Copyright Limitations and Exceptions” at the British Library, London.

**Mark Schrad**’s first book, *The Political Power of Bad Ideas: Networks, Institutions, and the Global Prohibition Wave* will be published by Oxford University Press and is due to be released in February 2010. His second book, *Vodka Politics: Autocracy and Alcohol in Russia* is now under contract with Oxford University Press. Schrad also had an editorial for the New York Times in October, which covered recent Russian attempts to confront their astronomical alcohol problem. He has also recently launched www.vodkapolitics.com to chronicle the development of this policy initiative, as well as Russian & foreign press coverage of it. Further, Schrad has a journal article, “In Defense of the Populist Lecture,” accepted and forthcoming at PS:Political Science and Politics, and also received recognition for his teaching this fall: both as an “Outstanding Educator” from the Illinois Greek Community and an “Outstanding Teacher/Scholar” from the Teaching and Learning Academy here at Illinois.

**Mark Steinberg** completed substantial revisions on A History of Russia, with Nicholas Riasanovsky, which will appear as the eighth edition in 2010. This academic year he will be giving talks in Cambridge (England) and St. Petersburg (Russia). And he continues to edit the journal Slavic Review.

**Russel Zanca** has a new book, titled: *Life in a Muslim Uzbek Village: Cotton Farming After Communism*, which will be published in February 2010. It will be the first Anglphone ethnography about post-Soviet Uzbeks. Associate Professor of Anthropology, Central Asia Specialist, Northeastern Illinois University.

**Richard Tempest** was appointed to the editorial board of *The Journal of Political Marketing*. He also gave a series of lectures on “Intrigue, Money, Terror, War” to Seniors’ Professional Academy, Illinois State University. Tempest also published *Solzhentsin pisatel’ XXI veka* in Put’ Solzhenitsyna v Kontekste bol’shoego Vremeni, ed. L. I. Saraskina (Moscow: Russkii put’, 2009). He was also interviewed by the Voice of America on the reception of Russian literature in the US in November 2009.

**Student News**

**Matthew Sutton** (Slavic) was awarded a FLAS fellowship for summer 2009 with which he studied at Middlebury Russian Language School. He was also awarded a FLAS for academic year 2009-10.

**Rachel Koroloff** spent the summer in Moscow, St. Petersburg and Halle, Germany conducting preliminary archival research on her dissertation project on networks of natural history in 18th century Russia. In St. Petersburg she met with Russian researchers at the Institute for the History of Science and the European University. In Halle she met a prominent scholar of G. W. Steller, German naturalist in Kamchatka, while using the archives of the Franckesche Stiftungen. Before leaving for Russia, she served as the coordinator for the 2009 Fisher Forum.

**REEEC Center News**

Editor: Katrina Chester
Assistant Editor: Kristina Satern
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The Center News is published bi-annually. We welcome your comments and suggestions. To be added to our mailing list, contact the center at the address below or email: reec@uiuc.edu.

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Noontime Scholars Lecture Series

February 23
“To je všojednje/It Doesn’t Matter”: Emotions and Endangerment in Bilingual Lusatia
Elizabeth Spreng: Junior Fellow Faculty, University of Illinois-UC

March 2
“The Historical Sciences of North Korea and the Soviet Union in the 1950’s”
Ho Yeon Cho: Professor, Kyungnam University/Division of Humanities; Visiting Scholar, University of Illinois-UC, REEEC

March 16
“Life-Creation or Parody: Symbolist Constructions of Gender in Life and Literature”
Colleen McQuillen: Assistant Professor, University of Illinois-Chicago, Slavic and Baltic Languages and Literatures

April 20
“Climate Change, Cataclysmic Events and Societal Stability: A Quasi-experimental Analysis”
Peter Nardulli: Director, Cline Center for Democracy, University of Illinois-UC

Directions in Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies Colloquium Series

March 4
“Scholars, Popularizers, and Ideologues: Images of the Historian in Tsarist and Soviet Russia”
Frances Nethercott: Visiting Scholar, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton

March 11
Anne Lounsbery: Associate Professor of Russian Literature, New York University

April 1
“Informality, Inequality and Transformation in the Post-Socialist City”
Sasha Tsenkova: Professor, International Development and Planning, University of Calgary, Faculty of Environmental Design

Distinguished Scholar

April 15
“From our Correspondent in Moscow: Reporting on Solzhenitsyn, the Kremlin, and the KGB”
Stig Fredrikson: Journalist, smuggled Solzhenitzyn’s manuscripts out of the USSR.