2013 Fisher Fellow - Yuliya Uryadova

The Fisher Fellowship provides financial support, including roundtrip transportation, housing, and a research stipend, to one scholar participating in the Summer Research Laboratory at the University of Illinois during the month of June. It is presented in honor of Dr. Ralph Fisher, the founder of the Summer Research Laboratory and the Russian, East European, and Eurasian Center at the University of Illinois, and the original champion behind the extensive Slavic collection at the International and Area Studies library.

This year’s Fisher Fellow, Dr. Yulia Uryadova (University of Arkansas) was chosen from a competitive batch of applicants. The project she researched while at SRL examines the political, economic and social stresses of incorporating the Ferghana Valley into the Russian Empire in the late-19th century. In particular, she assesses the tensions between the Russian and Central Asian populations, state and local authorities, land and tax issues, economic dislocation, prostitution, and alcoholism. Dr. Uryadova argues that in the Late Imperial Era, the Ferghana Valley was a restive place, burdened by economic and social tensions that resulted in a growth of crime, including revolutionary terrorism and banditry. This rise in crime coincided with a growth in immigration to the region. Her work sheds light on the threat to imperial authority in Russian Turkestan.

Dr. Uryadova’s project incorporates materials that Western historians did not previously have access to and that Soviet historians largely ignored because of their focus on ideological arguments. The use of these previously inaccessible sources allows Dr. Uryadova to challenge the traditional understanding of empires and their fringes, and defies the existing historiography and narrative of Central Asia by examining the Ferghana Valley as a social, economic, and ideological crossroads.

Dr. Uryadova was attracted to the Summer Research Laboratory precisely because of the materials available in the International and Area Studies library, especially the famous 594-volume Turkestanskii Sbornik. The copy of this document held in the reference collection is the only one currently available outside of Uzbekistan. While visiting the University of Illinois, Dr. Uryadova also accessed the complete digitized national bibliography of Uzbekistan.

After completing her current project, Dr. Uryadova hopes to transform her work into a book manuscript. She also plans to translate her expertise into the classroom setting by developing courses on Islamic societies beyond the Arabic-speaking world and on Russian history in a broader perspective. In fact, Dr. Uryadova has already enriched her teaching activities by designing a seminar on comparative revolutions and by structuring her courses around the themes of empire, cross-cultural exchange, colonial experience and revolutionary politics.

Support for the Fisher Fellowship is provided in part by the Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research and the Office of Outreach Title VIII Program for Research and Training on Eastern Europe and Eurasia (Independent States of the Former Soviet Union). The application for the 2014 Fisher Fellowship will be open in January 2014. PhD candidates at the dissertation stage of their research and post-doctoral scholars in any discipline with a focus on Russia or Eurasia are encouraged to apply.

Nellie Manis finished her MA at REEEC with a graduate minor in European Union Studies in May 2013. She received a BA in History and a BA in International Studies from Penn State University.
in 2008. In August she will begin a Fulbright Student grant at the Linguistics University of Nizhnii Novgorod in Russia. In addition to coursework in translation and interpretation, she will research the differences between translation pedagogy in the United States and Russia.