



## CENTER FOR SLAVIC, EURASIAN, AND EAST EUROPEAN STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

FEDEX GLOBAL EDUCATION CENTER

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# Connections

Center for Slavic, Eurasian, and East European Studies



Pink Tank Hull, Prague by David Černý

## Subversive Czech Art

The eleventh annual Czech Studies Workshop, organized by Professor Chad Bryant (UNC Department of History) took place at UNC-Chapel Hill in early April. Participants presented papers on Czech culture, music, economy, history, sociology, and political science. Since its founding in 1999 at the University of Michigan, the workshop has grown to become one of the most prominent annual events in the field. UNC hosted the event for the first time

The presenters came from five scholarly disciplines—history, literature, musicology, political science, and anthropology. Importantly, the workshop provided a forum for younger scholars, including many graduate students, to meet and learn from others, thus furthering the development of one of the most dynamic fields in Eastern European studies.

The Workshop opened with a public lecture given by Dr. Otto Urban, a specialist in Central European symbolism and decadence. His latest book, *In Morbid Colours, Art and the Idea of Decadence in the Bohemian Lands, 1880 – 1914*, has garnered worldwide acclaim. This fall he will curate an exhibition “Decadence Now! Visions of Excess” in the Gallery Rudolfinum in Prague.

Urban’s keynote lecture, “Before Entropa: Czech Subversive Art after 1989,” focused on the sculptor David Černý and his controversial projects. Černý’s most recent work, Entropa, which was introduced to the public in Brussels on the occasion of the Czech Presidency of European Union, created an international scandal. It is a 256 square meter unassembled model kit containing pieces of the 27 member states of the European Union. Each piece has a distinctive theme that portrays the stereotypes associated with that country. Residents of several countries were offended for being insultingly caricatured. It turned out that the artwork was created entirely by Černý and two friends rather than, as promised, by artists from each of the member states. Besides controversy, the piece inspired serious discussion about the function of art. Urban also presented the work of other artists, Podebal, Ztohoven, Guma Guar, and Rafani, who have dealt with the current political and cultural themes in Prague. Urban closed his talk with his thoughts on what subversive art had brought to the Czech culture in the last twenty years.

- Hana Pichova and Chad Bryant, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

## Investigating Putin’s Russia

Yulia Latynina, prominent Russian investigative journalist, spoke to a standing-room only crowd at the FedEx Global Education Center on March 16th. Latynina works with the few remaining independent news outlets in Russia, including Ekho Moskvyy, the Moscow Times, and Novaya Gazeta, where she was a colleague of the slain journalist Anna Politkovskaya.

Latynina featured a slideshow in which she showed a number of examples of corruption and misspending among Russian elites. Pictures of the dilapidated Moscow-Vladivostok highway and stagnant building projects contrasted with photographs of palatial mansions owned by wealthy businessmen. “A palace is not a residence, it is a philosophy,” Latynina said, of a photo of a mansion owned by Alexei Miller, the CEO of Russian energy giant Gazprom.

Latynina painted a picture of Russia where the fabulously wealthy wield massive political power and the masses of poor Russians, led on by false promises, have almost no influence. According to Latynina, Vladimir Putin, the former president and current prime minister of Russia successfully created a political atmosphere in Russia in which the current regime is irreproachable.

In fielding questions about whether the situation in Russia is as bleak as she suggested, Latynina responded that it was not her place to offer prospects for the future but rather to reveal what problems exist with the current situation. “I am a journalist,” she said, “and my job is writing about things that are happening, not about things that are not happening.”

The event was co-sponsored by CSEES, Slavic Languages and Literatures, and Professor David Pike (Germanic Languages).

## Pondering Russia’s Future

On February 19-20, 2010 the Duke Center for Slavic, Eurasian, and East European Studies hosted an international conference focused on Russian Futures: Contexts, Challenges, Trends. This stimulating interdisciplinary exchange, facilitated by Duke faculty, was designed to explore current and emerging trends in the faculty members’ specific fields. Invited panelists included Russian scholars from the St. Petersburg State University, the Moscow School of Economics, the U.N.’s Department of Economics and Social Affairs, and American scholars from eleven U.S. universities.

The resulting panels featured a wide array of important organizing topics, ranging from visual and information literacy in contemporary Russia to the evolving state of Russian women’s welfare and social and professional engagement, from current research in Russian semiotics to the state’s cultural, legal, and political relations with non-Russian minorities.

Conference papers contemplated and tested modes of adequately assessing and representing contemporary

Russian culture and society, ranging from historical and textual analyses to contemporary issues in demographics and the cognitive sciences. To cite just a few examples: Ellen Mickiewicz (Duke) analyzed how Russians currently interpret television news. Steven Barnes (George Mason University) urged both American and Russian scholars to create interactive websites as engaging teaching tools, using the website he primarily developed on the Gulag experience as an excellent example (<http://gulaghistory.org/nps/onlineexhibit/stalin/>). Nadiezhda Kizenko (SUNY-Albany) and Andrea Mazzarino (B.A. Duke, ABD Brown University) discovered surprising common ground in their respective papers on women in the contemporary Russian Orthodox Church and young women exploring business careers; both conservative churchwomen and aspiring female entrepreneurs seek combined professional empowerment and spiritual fulfillment in their work.

The papers presented at the conference will be published in the electronic journal *Glossos* later in 2010.

- Beth Holgrem, Duke University

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UNC-Chapel Hill • Campus Box 5125 • Chapel Hill, NC 27599-5125

[global.unc.edu/slavic](http://global.unc.edu/slavic) • [csees@unc.edu](mailto:csees@unc.edu)

+1 919-962-0901 • +1 919-962-2494 fax

EDITORS: Robert M. Jenkins, Jacqueline Olich

Duke University • 302 Languages Box 90260 • Durham, NC 27708-0290

[duke.edu/web/CSEES](http://duke.edu/web/CSEES) • [eda@duke.edu](mailto:eda@duke.edu)

+1 919-660-3157 • +1 919-660-3188 fax

MANAGING EDITORS: Dawes Cooke RUES ’11, Ian Robinson RUES ’11



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Marko Dumančić** (Ph.D., History) defended his dissertation entitled “Rescripting Stalinist Masculinity: Contesting the Male Ideal in Soviet Film and Society, 1953-1968,” and accepted a visiting assistant professor position at Oberlin College.

**Cassandra Hartblay** (CSEES FLAS Fellow and Ph.D. student, Anthropology) was awarded the prestigious National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship for Cultural Anthropology.

**Jerry Hough** (James B. Duke Professor, Political Science, Duke University) will teach a new course in Fall 2010: Political Science 299: The Domestic Politics of the Cold War in the United States and Soviet Union.

**Robert M. Jenkins** (Director, CSEES) and Rebecca Best (Ph.D. student, Political Science) delivered a joint presentation of their paper “Internal Spoiling: An Examination of the Effect of Spoiler Violence on the Willingness of Elites to Negotiate” at the 68th Annual Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA) Conference in Chicago.

**Elizabeth King** (Ph.D., Anthropology) has received a NIMH postdoctoral fellowship at Yale University’s Center for Inter-disciplinary Research on AIDS and will continue research on HIV-related issues among female sex workers in St. Petersburg.

**Louise McReynolds** (Professor, History) was awarded a Fellowship from the John S. Guggenheim Foundation and a Senior Scholars Research Grant from NEH.

**Paula Michaels** (CSEES Fellow and Associate Professor, History, University of Iowa) was awarded a Fellowship from the John S. Guggenheim Foundation.

**Zsolt Nagy** (Ph.D. Candidate, History) authored “National Identities for Export: Hungarian, Czechoslovak, and Romanian Nationality Rooms in Pittsburgh’s Cathedral of Learning,” a paper which won first prize in the Southern Conference on Slavic Studies (SCSS) annual graduate student contest.

**Jacqueline M. Olich** (Associate Director, CSEES) presented a lecture entitled, “Area Studies in a Global Age” to Lafayette College faculty and served on an alumni panel entitled “Lives and Careers in Russian and East European Studies.”

**Graeme Robertson** (Assistant Professor, Political Science) received a James Moeser Award for Distinguished Research by the University Research Council to support his project, “Sustainable Development and Local Self-Governance in the Altai Republic” and an Institute for the Arts and Humanities Fellowship.

UNC undergraduate, **Rebecca Ruck**, won a Fulbright to teach in Moldova in 2010-2011.

**Zumrat Salmorbekova** (MA RUES 2009) contributed a chapter entitled “Islam and Islamism in the Ferghana Valley” to Radical Islam in the Former Soviet Union which was published in December 2009 by Routledge, UK.

UNC undergraduate, **Natalia Smirnova**, was awarded a Carolina Undergraduate Health Fellowship for her health research project in St. Petersburg, Russia.

## Linguistic Human Rights in Central Europe



Professors Kontra and Sherwood

On Tuesday March 23 Professor Miklós Kontra, a specialist on Hungarian linguistic variations in Central European countries and the United States, Professor at University of Szeged, Hungary, and member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, gave a talk concerning Linguistic Human Rights in Central Europe. Held in the FedEx Global Education Center, the event was co-sponsored by the CSEES and the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures.

The informative lecture began with an introduction by Professor Peter Sherwood, Laszlo Birinyi, Sr., Distinguished Professor of Hungarian, and a brief history of linguistic human rights for the attendees. Reviewing linguistic rights in Central Europe, Professor Kontra laid bare many facets of the debate. While majorities take for granted that their children might be educated in their mother tongue, that they might use their mother tongue in official situations, and that they have the right to self-identify with their mother tongue, none of these rights are guaranteed for minorities.

Throughout Central Europe, the rights of minorities vary greatly, with some minorities able to use their languages in everyday life and others not allowed to speak them at home. Given such a spectrum of legal rights and customs, international law has no framework to deal with the fundamental problems faced by minority language speakers.

According to Professor Kontra, what is needed is a Universal Declaration of Linguistic Human Rights which would ensure that minorities’ language rights are guaranteed by international law. This is especially salient considering that of the 6000 languages now extant, up to ninety percent of them could be extinct in the next century.

## SCSS Conference

Current and former CSEES-affiliated faculty and students were well represented among award recipients and presenters at the Southern Conference on Slavic Studies (SCSS) annual meeting March 25-27, 2010 at the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida. Local Arrangements Committee Chair, Michael Gorham, and his colleagues were gracious hosts.

Sam Baron’s (Emeritus, UNC Department of History) contributions to the field were celebrated in a roundtable entitled, “Essays in Professional Biography/Autobiography in Honor of Sam Baron.” SCSS members recognized Elon University’s David Crowe (Department of History and Geography) for his distinguished scholarship and service. Zsolt Nagy (UNC Department of History Ph.D. Candidate) received the award for outstanding graduate student paper.

UNC’s Radislav Lapushin (Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures) presented a paper entitled, “‘In Oreanda... Not Far From the Church’; Interpretation

## Brandon Rice and Isaac White Present at NCCSS

Brandon Rice and Isaac White, MA students in Russian and East European Studies (RUES), presented their work in a panel session at the 40th Annual North Carolina Council for the Social Studies (NCCSS) Convention in late February in Greensboro, North Carolina. Dr. Jacqueline M. Olich of the UNC CSEES organized the session, “Energy Security in Europe: The EU, Russia, and Transit Countries,” and Dr. Robert M. Jenkins of CSEES introduced the panelists.

## Congratulations MA RUES Graduates- Spring 2010

On May 4, 2010 our four graduating MA RUES students presented their thesis findings.

Billy Beaver presented “Revolutionary Ideas,” assessing the factors accounting for the stability or fall of presidential regimes in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Ukraine between 2003 and 2008.

Colin Biddle presented “International Failure in Bosnia and Herzegovina: The Problem with Local Ownership,” arguing that divisions within the international community undermine the international civilian mission, while nationalist parties

as Appropriation.” SCSS Past President, Louise McReynolds (UNC Department of History), spoke on “Bauer vs. Griffith: The Emergence of Narrative Cinema.” CSEES Associate Director, Jacqueline M. Olich, discussed “Harry and the ‘Other Europe’: Representations of the Slavic World and the Imagination of J.K. Rowling.” Duke University’s Ellen Mickiewicz (James R. Shepley Professor of Public Policy and Political Science) participated in the “Gas Wars, Colored Revolutions, and Media Politics in Russia and the ‘Near Abroad’” plenary session. Her Duke colleague, Anna Krylova (History Department), served on a roundtable entitled “Comparative and Transnational Approaches to Russian and Soviet History: The State of the Field.”

The following UNC graduate students presented their research in Gainesville: Emily Baran; Marko Dumancic; Aaron Hale-Dorrell; Daniel Giblin; Michael Paulauskas; John Robertson; and Gleb Tsipursky.

The 2011 SCSS will be held in Alexandria, Virginia.

Audience members included North Carolina elementary, secondary, and community college teachers. Rice and White demonstrated how factors such as the increasing European dependency on Russian natural gas supplies, their failure to secure alternate suppliers and routes, and the opening of new transit route options for Russia have weakened the energy security positions of both the consumer countries and the transit countries in relation to Russia.

block reconciliation.

Brandon Rice presented “The Paradox of Pipelines: Economic and Political Effects of Transit Wealth,” synthesizing scholarly research on the “resource curse” and, utilizing Ukraine and Belarus as case studies, arguing for a new model—the “transit curse.”

Isaac White presented “Determinacy and Domestic Incentives: Success of International Conditionality in Serbia,” analyzing determinants of success for policies pursued by international organizations that are resisted by domestic actors. White focused on IMF aid, EU energy policy, and EU efforts at judicial reform.

## UN Peacekeeping

In February, the FedEx Global Education Center hosted a workshop titled “UN Peacekeeping: Its History and Effectiveness.” The workshop was co-sponsored by CSEES, the West Triangle Chapter of UN Association, The Center for Global Initiatives, The Curriculum in Peace, War and Defense, and The Triangle Institute for Security Studies.

The keynote address was given by Lise Morjé Howard, Professor in the Department of Government at Georgetown University. Professor Howard’s lecture detailed the beginnings of UN peacekeeping as armistice observers in 1948, following the creation of Israel and the wars that followed, to the multi-dimensional peacekeeping and nation-building exercises that the UN engages in today. This timely lecture was made even more interesting by the unconventional nature of the address. Professor Howard was forced to conduct her address over the internet due to the enormous amounts of snow that had fallen on Washington D.C. and grounded her flight.

Following the address, a roundtable was held discussing the issues of UN peacekeeping and elaborating on those issues in several case studies. Robert M. Jenkins (Director, UNC CSEES) participated in the roundtable discussion describing the peacekeeping exercises in the Balkans in connection with the Yugoslav Wars.

## Crimes Against Humanity?

The Carolina Seminar Series on “Russia and Its Empires, East and West” continued in February with the presentation of a paper by Peter Holquist (University of Pennsylvania Department of History). The paper detailed the usage of the term ‘crimes against humanity’, from its first appearance in a diplomatic message from Russia to the Allies concerning the Armenian Genocide by Ottoman Turks in 1915. The event was sponsored by CSEES, Carolina Seminars, and the History Department.