

CONNECTIONS

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL



CONNECTIONS is devoted to the diversity and opportunity in Eastern Europe and Eurasia, published by the Duke-UNC Center for Slavic, Eurasian, and East European Studies, Durham and Chapel Hill, North Carolina.



Left to Right: Dr. Jacqueline Olich, Dr. Taras Hunczak, Dr. Donald Raleigh and Dr. Mark von Hagen, at the historiography workshop.

The Ukrainian Famine-Genocide Conference

On September 12 the Center for Slavic, Eurasian and East European Studies (CSEES) in collaboration with the Ukrainian Association of North Carolina (UANC) hosted a daylong conference to mark the 75th anniversary of the famine that swept across Ukraine in 1931-32, often referred to as the Holdomor.

The commemoration of the Holdomor has become increasingly politicized with the Ukrainian government recently asking the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to recognize the 1931-32 famine as genocide and Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko proposing a law that would criminalize the denial of the Holdomor.

The conference kicked off with a speech by Dr. George Liber, of the University of Alabama-Birmingham,

“Ukraine and Three Twentieth-Century Cataclysms,” which helped place the Holdomor in the context of Soviet and Ukrainian history.

A historiography workshop moderated by UNC’s Dr. Donald Raleigh explored the main question surrounding the Holdomor: Was it a targeted act by the Soviet government against the Ukrainian people, or was it the result of ill-conceived cruel policies that starved all rural populations throughout the Soviet Union?

Rutgers University’s Taras Hunczak argued that there is documentary proof that the famine was a premeditated attempt to exterminate the Ukrainian people—evidenced by Stalin’s 1933 decree restricting the movement of people out of the Ukrainian SSR and Kuban (a Ukrainian-dominated

UKRAINE CONTINUED ON 3

Freedom of the Media Rep. Comes to UNC

Miklos Haraszti, noted Hungarian journalist, writer, human-rights advocate and political activist, visited UNC from September 21-24 to discuss the media in post-Soviet states, media freedoms in the West and the state of democracy in Central Europe.



In a lecture on media freedom in OSCE space, Mr. Haraszti argued that media freedom required media pluralism, in which there is at least one media channel free of government control. While he noted the absence of pluralism in several CIS states, Mr. Haraszti remained hopeful about the future development of civil society in those states and the continuing role of government commitment to OSCE democratic norms. In a lecture on post-communist politics in Central Europe, Mr. Haraszti was critical of the absence of rational political talk and corresponding constant cultural wars, a condition that he called “Weimarization.” He argued that the overcoming of this polarization will require a new political generation imbued with rational political talk.

HARASZTI CONTINUED ON 4

Announcements

Congratulations to the numerous award-recipients in the field of Slavic, Eurasian and East European studies: **Jessica Golliday**, **Angela Henderson**, **Ashley Timidaiski** and **Tabitha Walker** (FLAS Fellowship, Russian and East European Studies); **Emily Baran**, **Michael Paulauskas** and **Gleb Tsipursky** (Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Program, History); **Elizabeth King** (Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Program, Public Health); **Julia Bobbitt** (Honors Thesis Award, Political Science); **Edward Geist** and **Zsolt Nagy** (Pre-Dissertation Travel Award, History); and **Jonelle Grant** (Special Projects Matching Fund, Pediatric Dentistry).

Congratulations to **Dr. Jacqueline Olich**, who received a Faculty Curriculum Development Award for her new course, "Twentieth Century Childhood in Comparative Perspective."

Congratulations to **Dr. Chad Bryant**, who received an honorable mention for the Wayne S. Vucinich Prize for his first book, *Prague in Black: Nazi Rule and Czech Nationalism*. The award, which is sponsored by the AAASS and the Center for Russian and East European Studies at Stanford, is for the most important contribution to Russian, Eurasian and East European studies in any discipline of the humanities or social sciences. Also, Dr. Bryant recently spoke about World War II in the Bohemian lands at a conference sponsored by the Czech Embassy.

Dr. Louise McReynolds presented a paper, "Cinematic Desire and the Search for Social Stability in the Films of Evgeni Bauer, 1907-191," at a conference at the Columbia Society of Fellows in the Humanities.

The CSEEEES FLAS application deadline is January 30, 2009. All students interested in a foreign language and area studies of the region are encouraged to apply. For more information, visit <http://www.unc.edu/areastudies/fundingopp/flas-apply.html>, or contact Dr. Jacqueline Olich at jmolich@email.unc.edu.

I Know What You Did Last Summer...

The returning MA RUES students were very busy over the summer:

- **Jessica Golliday** interned with the US Department of State at the US Embassy in Moscow. She is focusing her thesis on the idea of "credit and blame" in the international community's reaction and interpretation of the events leading up to, during and after the recent Russia-Georgia conflict.

- **Ashley Timidaiski** dedicated her summer to the Slavic and East Europeans Collection Acquisition and Development Dept. in Davis Library as a research assistant. For her thesis, she is looking at the formation of moderate-right parties in Poland and the Czech Republic.

- **Jeffery Gerring** spent six weeks working in Naples, Italy, with the US Navy. His thesis will be concerned with collective violence in the former Yugoslavia and trying to predict the likelihood of such violence in Kosovo.

- **Zumrat Salmorbekova** interned with the Research Triangle Institute, in

the International Development Group, Conflict Mitigation, Management and Reconciliation Unit. Her thesis will investigate NATO expansion and US-Russia relations by comparing and contrasting the 1999 Yugoslav war and the 2008 Russia-Georgia conflict.

- **Tabitha Walker** was a research assistant at CSEEEES and worked with Dr. Jacqueline Olich to design a new course for Fall 2008. Her thesis will look into the issue of trust in political and economic institutions and society in Poland from the early-1990s to today.

- **Jie Shen** spent his summer interning for GE Shanghai, where he worked in a program to build a test water plant. His thesis will examine the projection and effects of Russian energy policy, comparing the policies of Russian, China and the United States.

- **Nydia Fors** also interned at the US Embassy in Moscow. Her thesis project will focus on the upcoming Olympic Games to be held in Sochi, Russia.

UNC History Department Sponsors Talk by Duke's Slavic Librarian

On October 21, the UNC History Dept. and CSEEEES sponsored a talk by Dr. Ernest Zitser, Librarian for Slavic and East European Studies & Adjunct Asst. Professor, Dept. of Slavic and Eurasian Studies at Duke University. The subject of this provocative presentation was a series of early 19th-century Russian erotic watercolors, which humorously depict Russian tsars and their favorites in *flagrante delicto*.

Dr. Zitser noted that although political pornography was common in contemporary European societies, until the discovery of the drawings recently acquired by the New York Public Library there was little evidence of its use in Imperial Russia. According

to Dr. Zitser, the watercolors in question employed taboo sexual images and vulgar language to attack the legitimacy of the Romanov dynasty. He suggests that this anonymous series of drawings was made by people who bemoaned the moral decay of Imperial Russia resulting from the influence of foreigners, female rule, and favoritism at the Romanov court.

The audience at this well-attended event engaged in a lively discussion of the larger issues raised by this piece, which Duke's academic librarian hopes to rework for future publication.

For more information on his research, please contact Dr. Ernest Zitser, 919-660-5847, ernest.zitser@duke.edu.

Meet the New First-Year MA RUES Students (2008-2010)



Left to Right: Colin Biddle, Brandon Rice, Angela Henderson, Isaac White and Billy Beaver

Please join us in welcoming this year's incoming M.A. students!

- **Billy Beaver** is from the Washington, D.C. area and graduated in 2008 from Goucher College in Baltimore with a degree in Russian Language and Literature. He is interested in Russian language and in the Russian political landscape but is unsure as to his future focus. However, he tentatively believes he will look into censorship of the media in Russia as the basis of his thesis.

- **Colin Biddle** grew up in Richmond, Virginia and received a B.A. in History from Mary Washington College in 2008. Colin intends to study Serbian and focus on issues in democratization, EU expansion and conflict resolution while at UNC. Colin received a FLAS Fellowship to study Serbo-Croatian at the University of Pittsburgh this past summer.

- **Angela Henderson** hails from West Virginia and recently received her B.A. from West Virginia University in Slavic Languages and Literatures. For her thesis, she is interested in looking

at Russian/Soviet childhood in a comparative perspective

- **Brandon Rice** earned his B.A. in 2005 from the University of California, Santa Barbara in Slavic Languages and Literatures and Political Science. He worked in Moscow for three years prior to coming to Chapel Hill. He plans to continue studying Russian and hopes to pick up Serbo-Croatian and possibly even Georgian or Ukrainian. His research interests include relations between the West and Russia connected with post-Soviet de facto states and energy policy.

- **Isaac White** grew up in southern West Virginia and graduated from West Virginia University in 2008 with a degree in Russian Studies and minors in Slavic and East European Studies and Political Science. Isaac intends to continue learning Russian and begin studies in Polish. His research interests are primarily concerned with intelligence and security analysis within Russia and East Europe.

Events

Russkoe Kino: Russian Movie Night. Every other Thursday night, starting from September 5, 7:00 p.m. in Dey Hall, Room 402, UNC-Chapel Hill.

Russkaya Popoika: Russian Conversation Hour. Every Friday afternoon, 4:00 p.m. in Dey Hall, Room 407, UNC-Chapel Hill.

For updated information on all upcoming events, please visit <http://www.unc.edu/depts/slavic>.

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UKRAINE CONTINUED FROM 1

region in the south-west of Russia).

The demographic aspects of the famine were then examined by Dr. Oleh Wolowyna, UNAC President. While estimates of Holodomor losses have ranged from 2.5 to 10 million, Dr. Wolowyna's careful methodological study places the number at between 4 and 5 million. Dr. Liber and Dr. Hunczak joined Dr. Wolowyna at a lively roundtable moderated by Duke's Dr. Jehanne Gheith.

The keynote address by Dr. Mark von Hagen, of Arizona State University and president-elect of AAASS, attacked the roots of the disagreement about the causes of the catastrophic famine. He argued that our inability to make sense of the famine reflects broader problems: reluctance to confront the larger history of collectivization, the relationship of the famine to the crimes of the Stalin era and the need to raise awareness of Ukrainian history. Drawing comparisons with other famines, Dr. von Hagen suggested that it is unhelpful for politicians to exploit past tragedies, especially ones as complex and tangled as the 1931-32 famine in Ukraine.

The conference was a huge success thanks to all the guest speakers, whose participation was made possible by the event's many sponsors: CSEES; UANC; and UNC's Department of History, College of Arts and Sciences and Office of International Affairs.

Up-and-Coming Russian Authors Visit Chapel Hill

The UNC Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures recently hosted a series of lively readings and discussions with four dynamic young Russian writers: Dina Gatina, a poet, prose-writer and graphic artist; Genady Kanevskiy, known for his rhythmic spoken word poetry; Ilya Kukulin, a prominent literary critic and poet; and Nikolai Zvyagintsev, author of four books of lyrical poetry.

On September 23, the writers participated in a round-table discussion on what it means to be a writer in Russia today. Later in the week the writers, armed with skilled translators, took to Market Street Books and read some

of their work to approximately sixty undergraduates and graduate students, members of the Russian-speaking community and other interested locals.

This was the first trip to the United States for most of the writers, and offered an exciting opportunity to connect with colleagues and contemporaries in this country, and to share their viewpoints with an American audience.

The writers' visit was part of a professional exchange program sponsored by the Open World Leadership Center at the Library of Congress and CEC ArtsLink. This was the fifth year that the UNC department has hosted a group of Open World Russian writers.

HARASZTI CONTINUED FROM !

His visit was an excellent opportunity for students to have direct access to one of Europe's leading voices on democratization and freedom of the media. It was made possible by many generous sponsors: CSEEEES; UNC's School of Journalism and Mass Communication, College of Arts of Sciences, Office of International Affairs and Center for European Studies/European Union Center of Excellence; and Duke's Center for International Affairs.

For more information on the OSCE's Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media, please visit <http://www.osce.org/fom/13024.html>.

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