Area studies are part of the KU “brand.” At the senior night men’s KU basketball game the other evening I was delighted to find on all the seats an attractively designed brochure entitled “Bragging Rights: A Pocket Guide” about KU’s brand programs. It was most gratifying to find one whole brochure panel devoted to “International Impact,” among other things, boasting KU’s instruction in 40+ languages and its internationally focused area studies centers, including the Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies. This thoroughly public promotion of area studies will certainly attract greater numbers of undergraduates targeting foreign languages and international studies. KU is indeed THE place for area studies in the Great Plains and Mountain West.

As area studies centers at the University of Kansas continue to flourish, even in times of lean budgets, the support of KU Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little is greatly appreciated. In her “State of the University” address January 27, 2011, the Chancellor lent crucial support to the humanities and to area studies, noting that: “Our area studies programs earned nearly $9 million in federal support to continue to give our students the global perspective and language skills they need in the modern workplace. The arts, humanities and social sciences are critical to our success as a university and to society. The solutions to most of the grand challenges of our time will require knowledge of history, culture and principles that guide human thought and behavior.” The training and research that area studies offer are central to the mission of KU.

During CREEES’s 50th anniversary year we are celebrating two founding CREEES faculty members, Professor Richard De George, who now is on phased retirement from the Department of Philosophy, and Professor Stephen Parker, who will be retiring from the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures in May. The Slavic Department newsletter, The Lawrencean Chronicle, features an interview with Professor Parker about his long career as a major Nabokov scholar and trustee of the Navokov estate (see http://www2.ku.edu/~slavic/about/lawrencian_chronicle/). In the Spring CREEES Newsletter we converse with Professor De George about his career as one of the country’s leading philosophers dealing with Soviet Marxism.

Fall 2010 brought to campus the annual Palij Lecturer in Ukrainian Studies, Professor Natalie Kononenko (U. Alberta), who talked on applications of folklore in contemporary national stereotypes. In another lecture she shared some results of her field research among Ukrainian-Canadians. Visit the CREEES web page to enjoy excerpts from both lectures.

In January we said good-bye to CREEES Outreach Coordinator Tatyana Wilds, who plans to enter graduate school and to work part-time at the Center for Global and International Studies. We thank her for five years of brightly designed newsletters and lively teacher workshops on a broad variety of themes. As the new Outreach Coordinator we welcome Adrienne Landry (BA, Slavic, 2003), just back in Lawrence after receiving her REES MA at Columbia University in 2006 and putting in several years of NGO work throughout the Caucasus and Balkans.

Spring 2011 is shaping up to be a lively semester. In February we welcomed to campus Professor Dariusz Toczyk (Slavic, U. Virginia) to deliver the 8th annual Backus Lecture on western responses to Soviet crimes against humanity. March 4 saw the biggest and most lively CREEES Spring Festival and Maslenitsa celebration ever. Over 180 people gathered to eat mountains of bliny at the Ecumenical Christian Ministries and dance to the Russian songs and American rock stands played by Kansas City’s own Apollo-Soyuz. The rafters were ringing.

And now, please mark your calendars. I want to draw your attention to a wealth of upcoming spring events. Thursday, March 31, Professor Brian Boyd, the world’s leading specialist on Nabokov, will be speaking on “Nabokov as Psychologist” at 4 pm in the Malott Room. April 1, CREEES hosts the annual FMSO-KU security conference on “Migration, Shadow Economies, and Security Issues on the World’s Borders.” This year’s conference will be expanded to a full day and will include 12 talks, featuring a keynote speech by Martha Brill Olcott of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

The following week will be extra full. REES graduate students will be traveling to our partners at
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CREEES is designated a National Resource Center for the study of Russia, Eastern Europe and Eurasia by the US Department of Education, and receives Title VI funds for educational and outreach activities. The center is a degree-granting program within the School of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Kansas. For further information about CREEES, please visit our website:

www.crees.ku.edu

CREECAS (U. Wisconsin) for a weekend professionalization workshop. Working with the KU School of Music, CREEES will co-sponsor a Russian Culture Festival April 7-8 in conjunction with the international Tariverdiev Organ Competition, which will be taking place that Friday and Saturday at KU’s Bales Organ Recital Hall. April 8, we welcome to campus a group of Russian university administrators, coming to KU for 8 days through the Open World Program to study higher education in its civic context.

We look forward April 14-16 to hosting the Alash Ensemble, throat singers from Tuva who bring to life the ancient harmonics of Central Asian nomads. The Alash Ensemble will be completing a music residency at the Lawrence Arts Center, working with students from the Lawrence school district as well as visiting classes on KU campus.

Two highlights of their visit will be an evening concert April 15 and a special performance given at an all-NRC K-14 Teacher Workshop on “Migration, Music, and the Arts.” Please join us in welcoming this unique talent as they perform their distinct, cultural harmonies here at KU and look forward to learning, among many other things, what nomadic horse culture and throat singing have to do with each other. Please check the CREEES website for details.

Fall 2011 will mark the 20th anniversary of the end of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Looking further into the future please note in your calendars an exciting all-NRC, three-day conference August 25-27 devoted to “Identity and Community after the Cold War Era.” Proposals are welcome until April 15.

Let us hear from you about all the news in your life! Send your news to crees@ku.edu.

Edith W. Clowes, Director, CREEES

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Thursday, March 31
Nabokov specialist, Professor Brian Boyd (Univ. of Auckland, New Zealand) will be giving a lecture “Nabokov As A Psychologist” in the Kansas Union’s Malott Room at 4:00 pm.

Friday, April 1
Annual KU-Fort Leavenworth Security Conference: “Migration, Shadow Economies, and Security Problems on the World’s Borders.” The Conference will be held in the Malott Room of the Kansas Union from 8-5:00 pm. Please register on the CREEES web page.

Thursday, April 14
The Alash Ensemble will perform with the 940 Dance Ensemble at the Lawrence Arts Center at 7:00 pm.

Friday, April 15
A conference on the “Peoples of Siberia” will be held at the Sabatini Multicultural Resource Center, Room 116.

Friday, April 15
The Alash Ensemble will be giving a free concert at the Lawrence Arts Center at 7:00 pm. The concert is free but tickets are required. For more information, see page 11 of this newsletter.

Saturday, April 16
Teachers Workshop: “Migration, Music and the Arts” will be held at the Lawrence Arts Center from 8-3:00. Registration will be open until April 14.

Saturday, May 21
A reception will be held for graduating REES students from 11-1:00 pm in 318 Bailey.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

IDENTITY AND COMMUNITY AFTER THE COLD WAR
At the beginning of the fall semester, August 25-27, 2011, CREEES, in collaboration with other KU area and international studies centers, will host a conference titled “Identity and Community after the Cold War Era.” We are seeking 200-word proposals for papers in both Humanities and Social Sciences, as well as History and Sociology of the Natural Sciences, that address various areas and the kinds of shifts that have happened since the late 1980s. Papers may focus on a specific world area or country, but interdisciplinary and trans-regional proposals are also welcome. Possible topics might include but are not limited to concepts of identity and community informing: post-communist arts/literature/architecture; concepts of ideal space/utopia/built environment; history and memory; political, cultural, and social implications of the internet; new states, new alliances; language and shifts in consciousness; party formation/deformation; borders, centers, peripheries; religious alliances/communities; meanings and uses of national identity; and censorship.

Please send your proposal and updated c.v. by April 15, 2011, to: crees@ku.edu
Put in the subject header of your email: August 25-27 conference proposal.
In the fall of 2010, Richard T. De George, Kansas University’s Distinguished Professor of Philosophy, became the most recent recipient of the prestigious Chancellors Club professor and research award. De George joined the KU faculty in 1959 and was a founding member of CREES. Among his many honors are the HOPE (Honor for Outstanding Progressive Educator) Award in 1965 and the Higuchi-KU Endowment Research Achievement Award in 1986. De George’s prolific research and writing focuses on political and social philosophy, ethics, and applied ethics, with an emphasis on business ethics and most recently computer ethics. He has served as the President of multiple academic organizations, including the American Philosophical Association and the Metaphysical Society of America. He is the author of over 200 articles and has authored or co-authored 20 books, including The Ethics of Information Technology and Business (2003), Business Ethics (2005), and Academic Freedom and Tenure: Ethical Issues (1997).

In the following exchange, Professor De George reflects on his interests in CREES area studies and philosophy, his experiences and involvement with the Soviet Union, and how our field of study has changed over the years.

**CREES: What sparked your interest in Marxist philosophy and your long involvement with CREES?**

I became a member of the Russian and East European Studies Program Committee in the fall of 1960. I had come to KU in the fall of 1959. I knew Russian, having studied it intensively in college, having lived a year with a Russian family in Paris, and having used it in the US Army. I must have mentioned this to Professor Oswald Backus at some point. He was a professor of Russian history and was interested in starting a Soviet area program at KU. He felt that in order to do so it needed someone who could offer a course in Marxism and Soviet thought, since so much in the Soviet Union was driven by ideology. Would I do it?

For me, his request came out of the blue. I was teaching three courses a semester, and had never taught before, so each course was a new preparation. In addition, I told him, I knew almost nothing about Marxism, I had never had a course in it, and I knew even less about Soviet Philosophy. My only qualification was that I could read Russian. But that was enough for Oizzie. He suggested that I apply for an Elizabeth Watkins Summer Faculty Scholarship from KU, and that I spend the summer reading Marx and whatever else I needed to teach the course. That sounded more interesting than teaching summer school. I surprised myself – but evidently not Oizzie – by agreeing, if I got the summer grant. I was officially made a member of the Committee in the fall of 1960. In the summer of 1961 I received the Watkins Scholarship.

In 1961 there were no textbooks on the subject, and so far as I knew no one was teaching a similar course. So I set about reading Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, and I started ordering scholarly books by Soviet philosophers and I subscribed to the leading Soviet philosophy journal, *Voprosy Filosofii* (Problems of Philosophy). I began to learn who was doing what in Soviet Philosophy. I offered a course in Marxism, Leninism and Soviet Philosophy in the fall of 1961.

Little did I imagine at the time that this apparently simple decision would change my career and research for the next thirty years. By sheer accident, in 1960, Professor J. M. Bochenski, a well known historian of logic and of the history of philosophy, visited KU for a semester as the Rose Morgan Professor in the Philosophy Department. It turned out that he was also the head of the Institute for Soviet Studies at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland, the only center in the West to specialize in Soviet and East European Marxism. He invited me to join his Institute for a year. The Ford Foundation had recently started a program in Soviet Area Training Fellowships. In 1961-62, I applied and received the grant.

So in 1962 I took my wife and family off to Switzerland for a year. That solidified my knowledge of both the Soviet area and of Marxism and Soviet Philosophy. From there one thing led to another and my interest in Marxism grew, as did my research interest in the area. The US was in the midst of the Cold War, and working in the area gave a practical as well as philosophical purpose to my research.

**CREES: Can you describe your first trip to the Soviet Union?**

My first trip to the Soviet Union was in 1963. I mentioned I was studying in Switzerland under a Ford Foundation grant. While there I came to realize that I needed more than book learning and asked Ford to fund a month-long trip to the USSR, which, to my surprise, they did.

I visited Moscow, Leningrad, Odessa, Kiev and Kharkov, and in each city met with professors of Marxism-Leninism, especially ethics, since that was to be my specialty. I chose Kharkov to see a collective farm; but Intourist said the fields were too wet and I got a tour of a bicycle factory instead. I had arranged my visit so that I was in Moscow for the May Day parade.

The month was eye-opening for me, and rewarding in many ways. I was still in the Army Reserves with a Strategic Intelligence unit at KU, and had been asked by the US Embassy in Bern if I would look out for troop convoys and take down bumper markings. I refused, since I really did not want to end up in a Soviet jail as a spy.

On the flight from Bern to Moscow I was the only American, and when we changed planes in Prague, I was left in the waiting room, watched over by a guard with a submachine gun, without my passport until the last possible minute before the plane took off and I was allowed to board.
We arrived in Moscow and I noticed five or six portly men in black suits who looked official. I figured they knew their way around and I followed them, expecting they would lead me to passport control and customs. They opened one door after another and I followed closely behind. When we went through the last door, I found myself on a Moscow street without my passport, without my luggage, and without having gone through immigration or customs – an illegal alien. I went to the exit from which passengers were emerging and was stopped by an armed guard who told me that was an exit not an entrance. It took some time to convince him that I had innocently taken the wrong door and that my passport and luggage were inside and that I had still to go through passport control and customs. I guess he found my story so unusual that instead of calling his superior, he finally just let me back in.

I’ll just mention that when I was in Odessa I did see a convoy and, as I looked at it, I thought that had I taken the assignment I would now be writing down bumper markings. Looking up at a bridge under which the convoy was passing, I then saw someone casually leaning against a bridge abutment writing in a small pad. I knew what he was doing.

The trip was arranged by Intourist. It arranged meetings for me at the Institute of Philosophy in Moscow and at universities everywhere except Leningrad, where I had requested a meeting with a particular professor, who was not quite as orthodox as the others. I was told he was not available. But I was assigned a guide, who happened to be a philosophy graduate student. When I told him my story he replied that he knew the professor and would arrange a meeting for me. He did. In retrospect I hope the student didn’t get into trouble.

I learned only in 1991 that of course the KGB had a folder on me and that my guide in Moscow, who was a philosophy graduate student at the Institute of Philosophy in Moscow, almost was dismissed from the Institute because he did not report any negative information about me.

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**CREES: In your address at the 50th Anniversary of CRES, at one point you mentioned the John Birch Society. Did you ever feel any sort of pressure from outside organizations or people because you taught courses on Marxism?**

I was certainly conscious of the John Birch Society and its activities in Wichita. But it never affected what I did – either in teaching or in scholarship.

My Marxism course turned out to be attractive to students, since it always closed at the classroom limit. I tried to teach the course as objectively as possible and develop an evaluation of it through looking at both what Marxists themselves said as they developed various varieties of Marxism, and at what the concrete results were of adopting certain policies. I was pleased when, after the course was over, students would ask me if I was a Marxist.

Only once did the University raise any concern. KU invited the Soviet Ambassador to give a talk, and I requested that he meet with my class. The Chancellor agreed to his doing so, providing I made a voice recording of the class and that I not turn the class over to the Ambassador. I agreed.

I happened to be teaching Lenin’s theory of knowledge at the time. So I presented Lenin’s theory and then asked the Ambassador, “Did I get it right?” He hemmed and hawed for a while, said that it had been a long time since he read the text, and then started talking about peace and friendship between the US and the USSR. I think my students got the point.

Other than that, although faculty, students, administrators, the John Birch Society or others may have been concerned about what was going on in my class, no one ever brought any pressure on me, and if any was brought on the University, it was never passed on to me.

I am surprised by how often in the supermarket, or in airports, or at a variety of gatherings I meet former students who come up to me and say how much they enjoyed and how much they learned in my Marxism class.

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**CREES: Are there aspects of Marxism that are still relevant in today’s society? What elements continue to play a role?**

I taught my Marxism course last year and had about as many students as I ever did, so there is still student interest. After 1991 Marxism seemed to many people to have lost out to capitalism. But since the global financial meltdown of the recent past, there are more and more questions being raised about capitalism. Many of the questions being raised can be traced back to Marx’s critique of capitalism, whether or not Marx or Marxism is mentioned.

Socialism has also made a comeback, and much of the language is taken from the Marxist variety of socialism, even though no one that I know of seriously advocates communism as we found it in the former Soviet Union. But that, many argue, was Lenin’s distortion of Marxism, rather than what Marx himself advocated.

Marxism has influenced historians, who take economics and its influence on history more seriously than they used to; it has influenced sociology, and until recently it was an important factor in literary criticism. It has also been the impetus for critical studies in law and other areas. So it is still influential.

Strict economic determinism does not have many advocates, nor does Marx’s economic theory. But his critique of capitalism; his emphasis on freedom; his criticism of alienation, oppression, and exploitation; his attack on radical individualism and his defense of the notion that people are interrelated and flourish best in cooperative communities – all of these still resonate with many people around the globe, as does his claim that we should not accept the word of politicians or of any others at face value but should look for deeper, often economic, motives and motivators.

Class warfare is not as pronounced as in Marx’s day, but it is still brought up often enough that we cannot ignore it, and the notion of the rich ripping off the poor is almost commonplace in many sectors. Marx is not the only one to have said some of these things, but he is often the source of the critiques and he presented the most systematic and trenchant criticism of capitalism. To be well informed, I think it is very helpful to know what Marx said. That makes him still relevant.

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**CREES: Aside from your expertise in Soviet and other types of Marxism, you are widely regarded as a prominent authority on business ethics, and have written several books on the topic. Is there any overlap of these two areas? If so, what do you consider to be the most significant themes?**

As to the relation of my interest and work in Marxism and business ethics, let me start by noting that I first became...
interested in what has become known as business ethics when a friend in about 1970 invited me to give a lecture at his university on the topic: “Can Capitalism be Successfully Defended Against Marx’s Critique?” In working through that paper I came to the conclusion that it could, but that Marx made many important criticisms of 19th century capitalism. He got many of the defects of capitalism right; but he got the remedy wrong.

A better remedy was not to overthrow it but to correct its defects from within. The defects could be morally criticized, and the immoral aspects could be corrected. Business ethics is an attempt to constrain the worst aspects of rapacious capitalism and to render it capitalism with a human face.

In 1972 Joe Pichler, who was Dean of the Business School, and I decided at a lunch to try to do something about what we both saw as some of the evils of capitalism. We hosted what has been cited as the first conference on business ethics, and Oxford published some of the papers as a volume entitled Ethics, Free Enterprise and Public Policy. The conference caught the attention of NEH and it offered us a grant of $300,000 to develop the relation of business and the humanities. I developed my business ethics class under that grant, and disseminated a booklet on how to teach business ethics (which was new at the time) to 900 professors across the country who requested it. I used the conference papers as a text, since no text was available, and then turned my course into a text in business ethics. It started with the question of the justice of economic systems and raised the question of the morality of both capitalism and of different varieties of socialism, including the Soviet. So in a sense my work in Marxism was part of my work in business ethics.

After the Soviet Union dissolved, I wrote a number of articles on the development of incipient capitalism in Russia, and on the moral issues raised by the change of economic systems and by the development of the oligarchies. I discussed the moral difficulties of the small entrepreneur in a distorted system distribution without the required legal framework in place, among others. My book, Business Ethics, was translated into Russian and used in some Russian business schools. It was also translated and used in China – in part I think because it considered the Marxist critiques seriously, and gave alternatives that those

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BOOK TALKS: FALL 2010

On September 14, 2010, KU Professor, Nathan Wood, introduced his new book, Becoming Metropolitan: Urban Selfhood and the Making of the Modern Cracow. The “Age of Great Cities” erupted in East Central Europe in the last quarter of the 19th century as migrants poured into imperial and regional capitals. For citizens of places like Cracow, discovering and enacting metropolitan identities reinforced their break from a provincial past while affirming their belonging to “modern European civilization.” Strolling the city streets, sipping coffee in cafés, riding the electric tram, and reading the popular press, Cracovians connected to modern big-city culture.

In this lively account, Wood looks to the mass circulation illustrated press as well as to supporting evidence from memoirs and archives from the period to present Cracow as a case study that demonstrates the ways people identify with modern urban life. Wood’s original study represents a major shift in thinking about Cracovian and East Central European history at the turn of the century. Challenging the previous scholarship that has focused on nationalism, Wood demonstrates that, in the realm of everyday life, urban identities were often more immediate and compelling.


In 1701 Tsar Peter the Great decreed that all residents of Moscow must abandon their traditional dress and wear European fashion. Those who produced or sold Russian clothing would face “dreadful punishment.” Peter’s dress decree, part of his drive to make Russia more like Western Europe, had a profound impact on the history of Imperial Russia.

This engrossing book explores the impact of Westernization on Russia in the 18th and 19th centuries and presents a wealth of photographs of ordinary Russians in all their finery. Christine Ruane draws on memoirs, mail-order catalogues, fashion magazines, and other period sources to demonstrate that Russia’s adoption of Western fashion had symbolic, economic, and social ramifications and was inseparably linked to the development of capitalism, industrial production, and new forms of communication. This book shows how the fashion industry became a forum through which Russians debated and formulated a new national identity.

KU Professor and Deputy Director of CREES, Mariya Omlicheva, presented her book, Counterterrorism Policies in Central Asia on November 9, 2010.

During the last two decades, Central Asian states have witnessed an intense revival of Islamic faith. Along with its moderate and traditional forms, radical and militant Islam has infiltrated communities of Muslims in Central Asia. Alarmed by the border incursions, sporadic terrorist violence and religious anti-governmental campaigns, the leadership of all Central Asian states adopted extensive measures against radical Islam and intensified counterterrorism policies.

This book examines the dangerous tendency of counterterrorism policies of the Central Asian states to grow more alike amid propensities for divergence and attributes this trend to the impact of the social context in which these states operate. It underscores the importance of international setting that shapes governments’ perceptions of terrorism and their counterterrorism policies. Applying a comprehensive theoretical framework, which integrates different mechanisms of international influences on state behaviour, the author explains the Central Asian states’ perceptions of terrorist threat and their counterterrorism responses.
On October 5, 2010, KU History Professor Eve Levin reviewed the institutions of popular participation in government in Russia’s past: the medieval town assembly (veche), the councils of the land (zemskii sobor) of the 16th and 17th centuries, the local self-government of the second half of the 19th century (zemstvo), and the Duma and State Council from 1905-1917. In each case, there were democratic elements, but the institutions did not represent the kinds of democratic institutions that have prevailed in the US. But rather than emphasize the presence of indigenous democratic traditions that could serve as a basis for developing a fully-responsive democratic government in the future, current Russian leaders (and intellectuals) instead choose to deny that Russia had democratic traditions. That way, they justify Russia’s slow progress towards responsive, democratic government in the present.

Professor Levin has worked at KU since 2003 and is the editor of the *Russian Review*.

On October 12, 2010, CREES hosted a roundtable brownbag event which was dedicated to a review and discussion of inter-ethnic violence that erupted in summer 2010 between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz in southern Kyrgyzstan. During the discussion, participants shared their views on the causes of inter-ethnic tensions and their broader implications for national and regional security.

Participants of the roundtable were Dr. Thomas Wilhelm (MA, REES, 1991) Director of the Foreign Military Studies Office (FMSO) at Fort Leavenworth; Matthew Stein (MA, REES, 2009), Central Asian Research Specialists for FMSO; and Dr. Mariya Omlicheva, Assistant Professor of Political Science at KU and CREES Associate Director.

On October 18, 2010, KU Professor Nathan Wood discussed his recent research findings on aviation and automobiles in the Polish lands before the First World War. He provided examples of several Poles who tried to create an aviation industry, build a heavier-than-air aircraft, or found an aviation club and promote awareness of airplanes and automobiles in the Polish lands. What Professor Wood found was a great deal of early enthusiasm, followed by disappointment and a then desire simply to try to keep up, so as not to be left behind. British publications from the era show that the sensation of falling behind was actually a common sensation. Typically, historians of innovation focus on the “firsts,” those exceptional and lucky people whose creations mattered at the time and in the long term. Wood’s study of aviation and automobilism in the nominally backward Polish lands helps us to understand that a major sensation of the age of speed is the feeling of falling behind.
Involving the Community in Research: Crowd-Sourcing Audiofiles

Since she first visited Ukraine in 1987, Professor Natalie Kononenko has collected 200 hours of interviews. Within these 200 hours are hundreds of songs and stories, many of which have never been heard outside of Ukraine. On November 2, 2010, Professor Kononenko shared with the CREES community her project to archive these songs and stories as text.

Natalie Kononenko holds the Kule Chair of Ukrainian Ethnography at the University of Alberta, Canada. While visiting KU, Professor Kononenko also gave a lecture titled “The Politics of Innocence: Soviet and Post-Soviet Animation on Folklore.”

Corporate Environment Management Practices and Performance in the Czech Republic

KU Economics Professor Detrich Earnhart, on November 16, 2010, examined the prevalence of certified environmental management systems (EMSs) in the Czech Republic during the late 1990s and throughout the 2000s.

The analysis focused on the adoption of a European Union’s Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) environmental management system and the adoption of an International Standards Office (ISO) 14001-certified environmental management system. The analysis explored whether the adoption of one or both of these systems helped to reduce air pollutant emissions from industrial sources in the Czech Republic.

UKRAINIAN CULTURE FINDS ONLINE HOME

Professor Yaroslava Tsiovkh (Slavic Languages and Literatures) made use of a CREES curriculum development grant to create “Вітає Українська!,” an online collection of materials for intermediate study of Ukrainian.

Activities include cultural readings with mouse-over glosses, audio recordings, embedded video, authentic materials from Ukrainian websites, and self-graded comprehension checks. The collection consists of six thematic units and a total of twenty-one individual activities, with topics ranging from the folktale Kolobok to contemporary pop music superstar Ruslana and gender equality in Ukraine.

The materials on the site, www2.ku.edu/~ukrainian, are provided free to the public as a multimedia supplement that can be integrated into any existing program.
Professor Dariusz Tolczyk, a specialist in Soviet crimes and cover-ups, gave the 2011 Oswald P. Backus Memorial Lecture. The lecture, entitled “From Disbelief to Denial: Western Responses to Soviet Communist Crimes,” was held in the Kansas Union on February 21, 2011.

Professor Tolczyk received his PhD from Harvard University and is Associate Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of Virginia. In addition to lecturing, he currently is editing and translating many works of Slavic literature into Polish.

Professor Tolczyk has published many books and articles, including Gądek w oczach Zachodu (2009). Another of his major publications is See No Evil: Literary Cover-Ups and Discoveries of the Soviet Camp Experience (1999). His most recent book has led to many guest appearances on radio and television programs including Fronda TV (23 June 2009) and Radio Euro (July 10, 2009).

The Backus Lecture was sponsored by the KU Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies and was made possible by a Title VI Department of Education National Resource Center grant and the Oswald P. Backus Memorial Fund. The Backus lecture is dedicated to the memory of Professor Oswald P. Backus, III (1921-72). Professor Backus was the early driving force behind the development of KU as a nationally known center for the study of Russia and Eastern Europe. In the 1960s, these efforts led to the formation of the Slavic and Soviet Area Studies program, now known as the CREES. He also taught history, law and Slavic and Soviet area studies during his 22 years at the University of Kansas, and is credited as having helped make KU’s Slavic library collection one of the finest in the nation. The Backus fund is made available through a generous donation by an anonymous donor.

CREES: Were you surprised at the revolutions in 1989 and the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991? Looking back now, how would you evaluate the reaction of area studies to these events?

I was not completely surprised by what happened in 1989, since Gorbachev had signaled a loosening up of the Soviet grip on the satellite countries, and the unrest in those countries had been growing.

The dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 was a surprise to me as well as to almost everyone. No one that I know of predicted such a swift change in the Soviet Union and a bloodless overthrow of the communist regime. In my class I give a Marxist analysis of it, but could do so only after the fact. That analysis hinges on the capitalist ruling class. It brought change to society from above. But it could take the society only so far. The economic base eventually led to the collapse of the communist superstructure which stood in the way of the society’s further development. Former Soviet philosophers have had a hard time trying to explain the collapse, because they adhere to Lenin’s version of Marxism, which was itself part of the problem.

The reaction of the area studies profession was initially one of surprise. In my case, the field I was studying, Soviet and East European philosophy, disappeared almost overnight. The same was true in other areas as well. So many of us had to retool, and it took several years for the profession to reconceive and reinvent the purpose of area studies. The area clearly had to be redefined both geographically and politically. Since 1991 the program at KU has twice changed its name to reflect what we really do and the area we now study.

CREES: What are your thoughts on the current state of Russian, East European and Eurasian area studies? How do you envision CREES area studies changing in the future?

Unfortunately for me there is no original or interesting philosophy being developed in the area for me to study, and so, with respect to Marxism and Soviet philosophy, I have become a historian rather than a participating reporter or critic.

Russian, East European and Eurasian Area Studies at KU, however, is still thriving and serving an important role in training students about that very complex and still globally important area. We have scrambled to introduce languages we did not teach before, and we pay more attention to the parts of the former Soviet Union that previously we ignored. There is still strong faculty interest in many aspects of the area.
Abbas Karakaya (lecturer in Turkish, CREES/Slavic Languages & Literatures) with Donny Smith published an English translation of Cemal Süreya’s poetry collection Üvercinka (Pigeonwoman), Bloomington: Indiana University Turkish Studies Series. The collection includes parallel Turkish text, a preface by Talat Halman, a biographical essay by Ulku Tamer, and essays by the translators.


Russia on the Edge: Imagined Geographies and Post-Soviet Identity, a new book by Professor Edith W. Clowes, just appeared with Cornell University Press (for more information please visit: http://www.cornellpress.cornell.edu/cup_detail.taf?ti_id=9909). She will be giving a book talk Thursday, April 28, at the Kansas Union Bookstore. Clowes gave two invited talks in the last year, both of which will be appearing in print. Her March 2010 talk on the Russian poet, Dmitrii Prigov, entitiled “Парадия московского текста в цикле Дмитрия Пригова ‘Москва и москвичи,’” was delivered at the international conference, Имадж-Диалог-Эксперимент: Поля современной русской поэзии, at Bernkastel-Kues in Germany’s Mosel wine country. Fall 2010 she gave the 16th Cunningham Lecture at the University of Minnesota on “Looking for Miracles: Anna Akhmatova, Boris Pasternak, and the Orthodox Legacy.” Other new publications include a lengthy encyclopedia article on the twentieth-century Russian novel for the new Blackwell Encyclopedia of the Novel and an edited forum on “Gorky and God-Building” in Modern Greek Studies (U. Minnesota).


Shannon O’Lear’s (Geography) new book, titled Environmental Politics: Scale and Power (2010) was published by the Cambridge University Press. Professor O’Lear brings a geographer’s perspective to environmental politics. The book considers issues of climate change, energy, food security, toxins, waste, and resource conflict to explore how political, economic, ideological and military power have contributed to the generation of environmental issues and the formation of dominant narratives about them.

Norman Saul (Professor Emeritus, History) participated in two international conferences in Russia. In November 2010 he was a featured speaker at a conference on “Russia and America in the North of Russia,” held at Vologda State University and the Belozersk Monastery with support from the US Consul General in St. Petersburg. The paper, “Zinaida Ragozin (1838-1924): A Remarkable Russian-American Historian and Publicist,” is being published in English in the proceedings of the conference. The trip also involved observing student projects at a high school in Pushkin near the Catherine Palace and visits to Totma and St. Petersburg. In mid-February 2011, Prof. Saul presented “Charles R. Crane and the Promotion of Russian Studies in the United States” at a conference on “Russian/Soviet Studies in the United States, American Studies in Russia: Mutual Representations” at the Russian State University for the Humanities in Moscow.

The American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages awarded Professor William Comer (Slavic Languages and Literatures) its 2010 Prize for the Best Book in Language Pedagogy for his pedagogical edition of Viktoria Tokareva’s A Day without Lying (Slavica, 2008). The award was conferred at the organization’s national meeting in Pasadena, CA in January 2011.

Marc L. Greenberg (Chair, Dept. of Slavic Languages & Literatures) was involved in work for the KU Faculty’s and Libraries’ Open Access Initiative. He was a participant in three presentations and roundtables for Open Access Week at the KU Libraries and gave a presentation at the AAUP meeting in Washington, DC in June. Shortly after the Washington meeting he wrote an editorial, with co-author Ada Emmett, first published in Slovene in Delo and later translated into English, where it appeared in the Hall Center Communiqué and was also translated into Croatian and Serbian, where it appeared in three additional periodicals.

Vesna Mikolić, Dean, Humanities Faculty (University of Primorska, Koper), Marc L. Greenberg (KU SLL), Valerija Perger (Murska Sobota), in Koper, Slovenia, September 2010.
Professor Greenberg also gave a paper in June “A Balkanism in Central Europe? Subordinate Clauses in Mura-River-Valley Slovene” at the conference “Dialektologie a geolingvistika v současné střední Evropě,” Filozoficko-přírodovědecká fakulta Slezské univerzity v Opavě, Opava, Czech Republic. He also went on a dialectological expedition in Southern Bohemia with Zbyněk Holub, a noted Czech dialectologist. His most recent article “PIE inheritance and word-formational innovation in Slavic motion verbs in i” appeared in New Approaches to Slavic Verbs of Motion, ed. by Viktoria Driagina-Hasko and Renee Perelmutter.

Marta Pirnat-Greenberg (Slavic Languages and Literatures) was interviewed in the Slovenian daily newspaper, Dnvenik. To read a complete version of her interview, go to: www.dnevnik.si/nedeljski_dnevnik/actualno/1042431023. For a translated version, go to the same website and click “translate” in the upper right-hand corner.

Geoff Husic has been promoted to Slavic and Special Languages Librarian at KU’s Watson Library. Geoff has been a librarian at KU since 1987 and is a subject specialist for the Balkans, Central Asia, and Turkey. He also works with Arabic and Persian language materials. Jon Guillian has been promoted to Associate Librarian for Slavic and Eurasian Studies. Jon has been a librarian at KU since 1995 is responsible for KU Libraries’ collections from and about Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and the Caucasus.

After five years of superb service, Tatyana Wilds has left the position of CREES Outreach Coordinator. She continues to work part-time at KU’s Center for Global and International Studies and plans on entering graduate school. Adrienne Landry has been hired as the new CREES Outreach Coordinator. She is a KU alumna (BA, Slavic/History, 2003) and did her graduate work at Columbia University (MA, 2006) where she was a Harriman Certificate recipient. After completing a fellowship in Tbilisi, Georgia, Adrienne spent several years managing programs aimed at resolving ethnic conflict in the Balkans.

ALUMNI NEWS

2004 Adrian Erlinger (MA) is now the Account Manager at The PBN Company, the largest strategic communications firm specializing in Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. He manages and advises US and CIS clients to maximize their investments in the region.

1987 Howard Solomon (MA, REES; PhD, Slavic Languages and Literatures, 1997) has been posted to the US Embassy in Moscow as the Deputy Minister Counselor for Political Affairs. He is also serving as Senior Advisor to the Open World exchange program. Karla Soloman (MA 1991) and he, along with their two children, arrived in Moscow in August 2010 and expect to be there for a three-year assignment.

STUDENT NEWS

Rhianna Patrinely (Slavic Languages and Literature and REES, 2012) has an article titled “The Aral Sea Disaster: Unequal Restoration Progress in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan” coming out in Troika, an undergraduate journal published by the University of California, Berkeley. In the article she explains why Kazakhstan has achieved a higher degree of restoration in the north half of the Aral Sea, although more deterioration is seen in the south (Uzbek) half of the sea. Her explanations include: historic ethnic conflicts in Uzbekistan, Soviet economic legacy in both countries, and current economic and political developments.

CREES co-major Amy Sinclair and political science and economics major Joshua Dean were selected as Global Scholars at KU for their demonstrated interest in global and international studies, plans for studying abroad, and potential for continued high academic achievement and leadership. Joshua is also one of the first two KU participants in the Stanford US-Russia Forum (SURF). As KU Global Scholars, Amy and Joshua will complete an interdisciplinary seminar called “Truth in a Global Society,” taught by Brent Steele, Associate Professor of Political Science, and will receive $1,000 scholarships to be applied toward a KU-approved study abroad program. The Global Scholars program is supported financially by a gift from KU alumnus Richard Paegelow.

REES MA Candidate Yuki Onogi was accepted to the Master of International Affairs program at Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs.

REES MA Candidate Bethany Owens was accepted to present her paper “Women, Quotas, and Progress in the Former Soviet Union: A Comparative Study of Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, and Armenia,” at the University of Pittsburgh’s GOSECA conference, “Decades of Asynchrony: Europe & Central Asia and the Dissolution of the Soviet Union.” Bethany was also selected to present this paper at KU’s Graduate Research Competition.

REES MA students, Ruoxi Du and Nathan Pickett, are the first recipients of the FMSO-CREES Research Assistantship in Security Studies. Ruoxi is investigating Russian, Chinese, and American interests in Central Asian oil. Nathan is researching religious issues in Ukraine.
CREES will host two groups of delegates from Russia this year as part of the Open World Program. The first delegation, which focuses on issues in higher education, will be in Lawrence April 8-16. The second group will be studying environmental management, and will visit June 18-26.

The Open World Program “enables emerging leaders from Russia and other Eurasian countries to experience American democracy and civil society in action” (www.openworld.gov). The program was established in 1999, and is the first and only exchange program of the US legislative branch. Librarian of Congress James H. Billington, familiar to many REES faculty and students as the author of numerous works on Russia, was an early proponent of the program and continues to play a large role in Open World’s success.

The program has its own Open World Leadership Center, which awards grants to a broad range of NGOs and educational institutions to host Open World delegations. The Center selects host organizations on an annual basis through a competitive grant process. The Graduate School, based in Washington DC, asked CREES to take part in its proposal to organize the visits of a number of delegations throughout the year.

According to the Open World website, “Open World has introduced more than 12,000 current and future Russian decision-makers to American political and civic life, and to their American counterparts. Open World delegates range from first-time mayors to veteran journalists, from nonprofit directors to small-business advocates, and from political activists to high-court judges.”

If you would like to host a delegate of the June group or future programs, please contact CREES Assistant Director Bart Redford at bredford@ku.edu, or by phone at (785) 864 4248.

April 14-16, 2011, CREES will host the Alash Ensemble, throat-singers from Tuva. The members of Alash are masters of Tuvan throat singing, a singing technique that harmonizes multiple pitches at the same time. The Alash Ensemble are also masters of traditional Tuvan instruments and are deeply committed to traditional Tuvan music and culture. At the same time, they are fans of western music. The Alash Ensemble believes that traditional music must constantly evolve, and they infuse their songs with western elements, creating their own unique style, yet staying true to their Tuvan musical heritage.

Throat singing developed among the semi-nomadic herders in Central Asia. Because throat singing produces a musical sound that carries over long distances, the music became a way for shepherds, yak herders and horsemen to entertain each other and communicate across vast areas of steppes and taiga.

Throat singers use their voices to create the sounds of the natural world, often incorporating into their music the sounds of whistling birds, bubbling streams, howling wolves and blowing wind. Because the horse is such an integral part of Tuvan culture, many songs are performed to a rhythm that mimics the beat of a horse cantering across the wild, open land.

The Alash Ensemble will be visiting KU and local school classes, as well as performing at the CREES Teacher Workshop: “Migration, Music and the Arts.”

Listen for the Alash Ensemble on KPR airing April 14th and 15th, or come see them live at the Lawrence Arts Center on Friday, April 15th at 7:00 pm. The concert is free of charge, but due to wide-spread interest, tickets are required.

For more information, please contact:
Adrienne Landry
CREES Outreach Coordinator
alandry@ku.edu
On December 7, 2010, CREES Director Edith Clowes hosted the Center’s annual holiday party. Faculty and family gathered to celebrate the semester’s end.
On March 4, 2011, CREES celebrated its annual spring festival. Over 180 faculty, staff, family and friends gathered for an evening of good food and live music as the center celebrated the spring holidays of the region with a variety of tasty dishes and dancing to the popular local band, Apollo Soyuz.
Special Events and Lectures

“From Disbelief to Denial: Western Responses to Soviet Communist Crimes”
Dariusz Tolczyk
Backus Lecture (Slavic Languages and Literatures, Univ. of Virginia)
February 21, 2011
7:00 pm
Kansas Union, Malott Room

“CREES Spring Festival”
March 4, 2011
4:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Ecumenical Christian Ministries Center
1204 Oread Avenue

“Open Access and the Modern University: The Ukraine Experience”
Tetiana Yaroshenko (Executive Director at ELibUkr Project, University Librarian at National University of Khiv Mohyla Academy)
March 14, 2011
1:00 pm
Watson Library, Room 455

“Meeting Andrei Tarkovsky”
Dimitry Trakovsky
March 28, 2011
3:00 pm
Kansas Union, English Room

“Nabokov as Psychologist”
Brian Boyd (Univ. of Auckland, New Zealand)
March 31, 2011
4:00 pm
Kansas Union, Malott Room

Annual KU-Fort Leavenworth Security Conference:
April 1, 2011
8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Kansas Union, Malott Room

“William Faulkner and Russia”
Mikhail Kuraev
April 5, 2011
7:00 pm
Kansas Union, English Room

School of Music Russian Festival and Tariverdiev Organ Competition
Bales Organ Recital Hall
April 7 - 8, 2011

REES Professionalization Workshop at UW-Madison
April 8-9, 2011

Kansas Business and the World
K-14 Teacher Workshop
April 9, 2011
Pearson Hall

Open World Program Delegation from Russia, focusing on Higher Education
April 8-16, 2011

Alash Ensemble residency and concerts
Lawrence Arts Center / KU Campus
April 14-16, 2011

Public Concert: Alash Ensemble and 940 Dance Company
April 14, 2011
7:00 pm
Lawrence Arts Center

Conference: “Peoples of Siberia”
April 15, 2011
9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Sabatini Multicultural Resource Center, Room 116

Public Concert: Alash Ensemble
April 15, 2011
7:00 pm
Lawrence Arts Center

K-14 Teacher Workshop: “Migration, Music and the Arts”
April 16, 2011
8:00 am - 3:00 pm
Lawrence Arts Center

Book Talk: “Russia on the Edge: Imagined Geographies and Post-Soviet Identity”
Edith W. Clowes (Director, CREES)
April 28, 2011
4:30-6:00 pm
Kansas Union, Jayhawk Ink Lounge, 2nd level

Reception for Graduating CREES Students
May 21, 2011
11:00 am - 1:00 pm
318 Bailey Hall

Brown Bag Series
12:00 pm
318 Bailey Hall

Manfred Stinnes
Lecturer in International Relations, Humboldt University
February 1, 2011

“Roma in Eastern Europe”
Julie Denesha
KU School of Journalism
February 15, 2011

“The Uses of Ignorance: The Gulag under Western Eyes”
Dariusz Tolczyk
Slavic Languages and Literatures, University of Virginia
February 21, 2011

“Whose Place is This? Art, Territory and Civic Dialogue in Ljubljana, Slovenia”
Rebecca Blocksome
Spencer Museum of Art
March 1, 2011
“Media in Russia”
Nathan Pettingill, Lawrence Magazine
Sue Novak, KU School of Journalism
Tom Volek, KU School of Journalism
March 8, 2011

“Trends in Post-Soviet Librarianship and Librarianship in Ukraine”
Tetiana Yaroschenko, Executive Director at ELibUkr Project, Univ. Librarian at National Univ. of Kyiv Mohyla Academy
March 15, 2011

“Emerging Identity Scapes in Southern Kazakhstan: Contours of Interethnic Attitudes Among Youth”
Reuel Hanks
Geography, Oklahoma State Univ.
March 29, 2011

“Technology & Culture in Early Modern Europe: The Challenge of Change in the Russian Context”
Scott Palmer
History, Western Illinois Univ.
April 5, 2011

“Theatrical Performance and Survival at Auschwitz-Birkenau”
Rebecca Rovit
KU Department of Theatre
April 21, 2011

“Persian Renaissance and the Case of Formation of Tajik National Identity”
Razi Ahmad
Center for Global and International Studies
April 19, 2011

“Katyn in Recent Polish-Russian Relations: The Thorny Path to Reconciliation”
Anna Cienciala
Professor Emerita, KU History Dept.
April 26, 2011

“FMSO Research Assistant Presentations of Research”
Ruoxi Du, CREEES
Nathan Pickett, CREEES
May 3, 2011

“Laird Essay Competition Winner”
TBA
May 10, 2011

Friday Night at the Kino
7:00 PM
318 Bailey Hall

“Kajmak in Marmeleda”
Cheese and Jam
In Slovene with English Subtitles
January 28, 2011

“Okno v Parizh”
Window to Paris
In Russian with English Subtitles
February 18, 2011

“Mimino”
In Russian with English Subtitles
March 11, 2011

“Vostok-Zapad”
East-West
In Russian with English Subtitles
April 15, 2011

Tuesday Turkish Film Series
7:00 pm
318 Bailey Hall

“Hazan Mevsumi: Bir Panayir Hikayesi”
The Time of Autumn: A Fairground Attraction
In Turkish with English Subtitles
February 1, 2011

“Mommo Kiz Kardeşim”
The Bogeyman
In Turkish with English Subtitles
February 22, 2011

“Hiçbir Yerde”
In Nowhere Land
In Turkish with English Subtitles
March 29, 2011

“İstanbul Hatırası: Köprüyü Geçmek”
Crossing the Bridge: The Sound of Istanbul
In Turkish with English Subtitles
April 19, 2011

Deadlines

Foreign Language Area Studies (FLAS) Academic Year and Summer Applications
February 1, 2011
5:00 pm
318 Bailey Hall

Roy and Betty Laird Essay Competition
March 28, 2011
5:00 pm
320 Bailey Hall

Conference Proposals: “Identity and Community and the Cold War Era”
April 15, 2011
5:00 pm
320 Bailey Hall

All CREEES brownbags, book talks, and film series are free and open to the public. If you would like to give a brownbag lecture or would like to recommend a movie for our film series, please contact:

Bart Redford, CREEES Assistant Director
bredford@ku.edu
785-864-4248
Many of our activities are enhanced through private donations to the Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies. Special events, renowned lecturers, scholarships and study abroad opportunities are just some of the ways your donations can help us to maintain our Center’s vitality. We hope that you will contribute generously to strengthen the Center’s programs by sending your gift today.

For more information, please contact us at: crees@ku.edu
785-864-4248.

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