



# Slavic & East European Newsletter

## OSU to Host Midwest Slavic Conference

The Midwest Slavic Association, the Ohio State University Center for Slavic and East European Studies, and the OSU Office of International Affairs will be holding the 2007 Midwest Slavic Conference, to be held at the Blackwell Hotel and Conference Center from 12-14 April 2007 on the campus of the Ohio State University.

2007 will mark the fourth consecutive year that the Ohio State University has hosted and CSEES has sponsored the Midwest Slavic Conference, which in 2006 featured 33 panels and over 300 participants. The conference attracted academic, community and

business leaders from throughout the United States, as well as visitors from Russia, Central Asia, and the Ukraine. Also in attendance were advanced graduate students from such major universities as Harvard, Michigan, Co-

lumbia, and Indiana. The conference will open with a keynote address and reception on the evening of Thursday 12 April,

followed by two days of academic and business-related panels. Conference organizers are inviting proposals for panels or individual papers addressing all disciplines related to Slavic, East European, and Central Asian histories, political sci-

*Continued on pg. 11*

## MIDWEST SLAVIC CONFERENCE

<b>Director's Notes</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Guitarist, Violinist to Perform</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Faculty/Student News</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Women's Studies Gets New Chair</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Ohio Slavic Papers Released</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Study Abroad Opportunities</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Opinion/Commentary</b>	<b>14</b>

The *Ohio State University Slavic and East European Newsletter* (formerly OSEEN) is published three times a year by the Center for Slavic and East European Studies (CSEES) at the Ohio State University. Funded with Title VI monies from the US Dept. of Education, the *Slavic and East European Newsletter* is mailed free of charge to subscribers. Please direct submission and subscription requests to:

**OSEEN**  
 303 Oxley Hall  
 1712 Neil Ave.  
 Columbus, OH  
 43210-4273  
 Tel: 614-292-8770

## Columbus Blue Jacket Teaches Czech to OSU Students

What does NHL hockey have to do with university-level foreign language study? Quite a bit if you consider that the Columbus Blue Jackets have 10 players on their roster that are native speakers of four of the languages taught at OSU. It turns out they make excellent language conversation partners as well.

Czech 101 and 104 classes and the Czech Circle hosted "Kavárna Praha" for Blue Jackets defensive lineman and Czech



Columbus Blue Jacket Rostislav Klesla teaches Czech at the Ohio State University

Republic native Rostislav "Rusty" Klesla on October 18. The café setting was an excellent venue to have the 24-year-old Blue Jacket relax and speak Czech with the students taking the language courses autumn quarter. The informal setting allowed students from all

levels to hear Rusty talk about where he's from and what it's like to play professional hockey. The 10TV and Channel 6 sports anchors were envious at the opportunity the students had to hear the personal side of a player.

*Continued on pg. 11*



## From the Director



We at the Slavic Center would like to wish all of you a Happy New Year and hope that you will remain faithful on your New Year's Resolutions to stay active and involved in the OSU Slavic and East European Studies' community. We are looking forward to accomplishing the many initiatives, activities, and projects that we have planned for this grant cycle. I am happy to report that Fall Quarter 2006 saw one of our

highest enrollments in courses. What is especially encouraging is that the less-commonly taught languages at OSU have seen a rise in the number of students and the attendance at our lectures, symposia, and conferences set an all-time high.

We are looking forward to hosting a number of conferences this year, including the Midwest Slavic Conference (12-14 April) for the fourth year in a row, the 3rd Biennial Conference of the Association for Women in Slavic Studies (26-27 April), an International and Interdisciplinary Conference on Women and War (Fall 2007), and a conference of the Association for the Study of Eastern Christianity (Fall 2007). Two volumes of the Ohio Slavic Papers have just been published: vol. 6, "Proceedings of the Second Graduate Colloquium on Slavic Linguistics", reflecting the work of our graduate students in Slavic linguistics, and vol. 8, "Translating Russia: From Theory to Practice", which contains papers presented at a conference organized by our Center.

The Slavic Center also submitted two important proposals to the Graduate School—one which would revise and broaden the curriculum for the M.A. Program in Slavic and East European Studies, and the other which would create a dual M.A. program combining the degree in Slavic studies with a Master Degree offered by the John Glenn Institute for Public Service and Public Policy. It is our hope that with those initiatives will continue to improve the job opportunities available to our M.A. students.

CSEES would also like to welcome two new M.A. candidates, Matt Luby and Seth Lewis, both of whom graduated from the Ohio State University and are coming to our program in January. Both of them will make great additions to our team. We are also currently reviewing the largest number of applications for admission to our program which we have received in recent memory.

Please remember that all graduate students in the Slavic field are invited to submit FLAS applications that support summer language study or offer a generous grant for studying a Slavic language here on campus during 2007-08. In addition I would like to point out that CSEES now lists fellowship and funding opportunities online (<http://slaviccenter.osu.edu/funding.html>) as well as job-search sites (<http://slaviccenter.osu.edu/jobs.html>). Please check these two sites often as we will continue to update and expand them to make it easier for the students and faculty at OSU to make use of the many wonderful opportunities available both in the United States and abroad.

With best wishes for the coming year,

Halina Stephan

## Seeking Applicants for 2006-2007 FLAS Fellowships

The Center for Slavic and East European Studies (CSEES) at The Ohio State University (OSU) is seeking applications for fellowships for Summer Quarter 2007 and Academic Year 2007-2008 under the U.S. Department of Education's Title VI Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship program. These fellowships are available to all full-time graduate and professional students at all levels and in any department who are pursuing a course of study which requires advanced foreign language and area studies training. The fellowships are expected to carry a stipend of \$15,000 for the three quarters of the academic year and \$2,500 for the Summer Quarter. These awards also carry an authorization for full tuition and partial OSU fees. Subject to approval, academic-year FLAS fellowships may also be used for foreign language and area studies at other U.S. or foreign institutions. When an equivalent program is available in the United States, recipients are not allowed to study abroad.

All applicants must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents. FLAS Awards are restricted to students who have not or will not exceed 260 credit hours of study in their graduate program. Languages for which awards will be made through CSEES include **Czech, (Modern) Greek, Hungarian, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Turkish, Uzbek, and Yiddish**. In awarding these fellowships, priority is given to students who: a.) combine language and area studies with professional training and/or b.) study Less-Commonly Taught Languages and/or c.) who intend to undertake intermediate or advanced language study and who have not yet achieved native language competence and/or d.) who are interested in a career with the U.S. Government. For academic year awards, low priority will be given to candidates who have held a FLAS Fellowship during the previous academic year. Applicants are responsible for contacting appropriate language departments and establishing that their requested level of language instruction will be offered in 2007-08. Please note: the awarding of FLAS fellowships is dependent upon the availability of U.S. Department of Education Title VI funding.

Applications and more information are available online at:

[http://slaviccenter.osu.edu/academics\\_flas.html](http://slaviccenter.osu.edu/academics_flas.html)

**The application deadline is**

**2 February 2007**



## Renowned Russian Roma Guitarist, Local Violinist to Play at OSU

Vadim Kolpakov, one of the most prominent and renowned Russian Roma (Gypsy) 7-string guitarists in the world and Arkadij Gips, a violinist from Kyiv, Ukraine, will be performing at Hughes Hall 100 on January 12, 2007. The performance will be a showcase of Romani music.

The Roma have long been traveling people – their home is the road. Roma musicians absorbed music from new territories, and in turn, influenced the locals – and as a result one can hear everything in their music, from Turkish percussion to Spanish flamenco. Perhaps their greatest influence, however, was across the Balkans, Central Europe and Russia, where musicians earned their living by playing for weddings, feasts and celebrations of all kinds.

Romani music has also strongly influenced Russian music and culture, as composers and writers have always been fond of Romani music. “Aleko” by Pushkin, “Zhivoy Trup” by Tolstoy, “Yama” by Kuprin, “Bespridannitsa” by Ostrovsky, and Rachmaninov’s opera based on Pushkin’s “Tsygane” are only a few of the many Russian literary and musical creations which were influenced by Gypsy culture and music.



Vadim Kolpakov is one of the most prominent and renowned Russian Roma (Gypsy) 7-string guitarists in the world. He was a lead musician of the Moscow Roma (Gypsy) Theatre Romen, where he performed as a guitarist, composer, vocalist, dancer and dramatic actor. To this day, his original guitar compositions are performed in many prominent plays at the theatre as part of the vibrant

oral tradition of Russian Roma culture. Hailing from Saratov, Russia, Vadim graduated from the Roma Performing Arts School Gilori and studied guitar with his uncle Alexander Kolpakov, the virtuoso Russian 7-string guitarist who served as the musical director of the Romen Gypsy Theatre for over a quarter of a century. At the age of 15, Vadim began work at the Romen Gypsy Theatre, where he worked for 8 years and was the leading guitarist for 7 years. Vadim has performed extensively in Russia and abroad. He has given concerts in Carnegie Hall (New York City), as well as in the Kremlin (Moscow) for Russian President Vladimir Putin, Kazakhstan President Nazarbaev, and for both the Finnish and Portuguese Presidents and Parliaments. Vadim has also performed in Europe with the Russian Gypsy group Gelem as lead guitarist, and performed in the famous Roma festival Khamoro in the Czech capital, Prague. He has performed in innumerable other musical projects on Russian, Canadian and American television and radio and was invited to record his own compositions for the soundtrack of

the Finnish motion picture Mire Bala Kale Hin. He has recorded several CDs with Alexander Kolpakov and the group Gelem. In 1999, Vadim participated in the major concert tour ‘Gypsy Caravan’ as part of the famous Gypsy group The Kolpakov Trio.

Vadim’s musical repertoire includes Russian- and Gypsy-style compositions by Alexander Kolpakov, music by Sergey Orekhov, 19th-century Russian 7-string guitar repertoire and his own compositions and improvisations on Gypsy, Russian, classical, rap and world music. He works exclusively in the oral tradition and teaches traditional Roma guitar, dance and vocal repertoire to students in his studio in Cambridge, MA.



Genuine world-class artist Arkadij Gips brings audiences to cheers as well as tears when he plays violin. “If ‘music is a king,’ then Arkadij Gips certainly wears a crown” was the media’s response to the first performances of Columbus Ohio’s new immigrant from Kiev, Ukraine.

Arkadij began playing violin at the age of three and at six, he was admitted to the School for Talented Children in Kiev. Classically trained by Vladimir Novak, who later founded Holland’s leading music school, Arkadij Gips began performing with chamber and symphony orchestras as well as performing solo acts. Being a laureate of many national and international music competitions, he continued his education and graduated from the Rostov Music Conservatory.

Gips became a well-known violinist in Eastern Europe where he played with a variety of orchestras. His performances included Ukrainian, Jewish, Roma, Hungarian and Polish music. In addition to ethnic music, his interests varied, among them country, folk and jazz.

In the U.S., Arkadij has performed with many noted musicians, playing jazz and country in addition to ethnic and classical styles of music.

Today, Arkadij not only plays, but conducts, arranges and composes music. Arkadij’s trio “Amazing Strings” with keyboardist Roman Zhuravlov and vocalist Lyudmila Smirnov have captivated the hearts of audiences in the U. S. and Canada. When on tour with the critically acclaimed play, “Fiddler on the Roof,” Theodore Bikel was so spellbound by “Amazing Strings”, that he nearly missed his stage call!

Arkadij Gips continues to explore new forms of expressing his thoughts and emotions towards his music and his culture.





## Faculty/Student News

**Larissa Bondarchuk** (DSEELL, GTA) successfully passed her Candidacy Examinations in September of 2006. In November 16-19, 2006, she participated in the AAASS annual conference in Washington, D.C. where she presented a paper titled "Diagnosing Vengeance: A New Close Reading of *Anna Karenina*", where she offers a new interpretation of Anna's suicide as a consequence of her postpartum depression.

**Nick Breyfogle** (History, Assoc. Professor) published "Prayer and the Politics of Place: Molokan Church Building, Tsarist Law, and the Quest for a Public Sphere in Late Imperial Russia," in *Sacred Stories: Religion and Spirituality in Modern Russian Culture*, ed. Heather Coleman and Mark Steinberg (Indiana University Press, 2006) and his article "Caught in the Crossfire? Russian Sectarians in the Caucasian Theater of War, 1853-56 and 1877-78" was republished in *Orientalism and Empire in Russia* (Bloomington, 2006). The article originally appeared in *Kritika* (Fall 2001). He gave the keynote lecture, "Living Empire: Understanding Multiethnic Eurasia in the Modern Era," at the conference "Orienting the Russian Empire," sponsored by the Havighurst Center for Russian and Post-Soviet Studies at Miami University, Oxford, OH, October 28, 2006. In 2007, he has forthcoming the co-edited volume *Peopling the Russian Periphery: Borderland Colonization in Eurasian History* and a guest-edited issue of *Russian Studies in History* on "religious sectarianism in modern Russian history."

**Angela Brintlinger** (DSEELL, Assoc. Professor) has a forthcoming translation of Vladislav Khodasevich's *Derzhavin*, which will be published in the Winter issue of the *Antioch Review*. She has also published an article, "How Bad is Bad? How Great is Great?: Translating Derzhavin in the Context of Khodasevich's Biography," in the *Ohio Slavic Papers*, ed. Brian T. Baer, 2006 and participated in the Routledge Encyclopedia of Contemporary Russian Culture, ed. Helena Goscilo, Karen Evans-Romaine, and Tatiana Smorodinskaya, writing three entries: "Andrei Bitov," "Konstantin Simonov," and "Literary Research Institutions." In November 2006 at AAASS she participated in a roundtable on "Teaching Pushkin" and was discussant to a panel on "Potustoronnost" in Russian modernism. As incoming president of the North American Pushkin Society, she chaired the NAPS panel at AATSEEL at the end of December. She also co-organized the Association for Women in Slavic Studies conference to be held at OSU in April 2007: "Beyond *Little Vera*: Women's Bodies, Women's Welfare in Post-Socialist Russian, Central and Eastern Europe."

**Inna Caron** (DSEELL, GTA) presented a paper on Tolstoy and functioned as a discussant for a fin-de-siècle theatre panel at the AAASS convention in Washington. She also gave a talk on Lermontov and chaired the annual panel of the North American Chekhov Society at the AATSEEL meeting in Philadelphia.

**Carole Fink** (History, Professor) published the following: Co-editor: *1956: European and Global Perspectives* (Leipzig: Leipzig University Press, 2006) and paperback edition of *Defending the Rights of Others: The Great Powers, the Jews, and International Minority Protection, 1878-1938* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); "Cold War Culture and Politics in Europe," in *1956:*

*European and Global Perspectives*, pp. 37-57; "Turning Away from the Past: West Germany and Israel, 1965-1967," in *Coping with the Nazi Past: West German Debates on Nazism and Generational Conflict, 1955-1975*, eds.; "Philip Gassert and Alan Steinweis (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books 2006), pp. 276-93.; and made the following presentations: "1956: A Global Perspective," University of Oslo, Sept. 2006; "Ostpolitik: Views on the current Debate," Forum for Contemporary History, University of Oslo, Sept. 2006; "A Jewish Diplomat in Paris: Louis Marshall and the Paris Peace Conference," Syracuse University, Nov. 2006; "The Cold War and the Middle East," Center for International History, Columbia University, Nov. 2006. In addition she gave commentary to Michael Morgan, "US and the Helsinki Conference," at the Mershon Conference on the Nixon Era in Foreign Affairs, Dec. 2006 and was a scholar in residence at the Nobel Institute in September 2006.

**Yana Hashamova** (DSEELL, Asst. Professor) has finished her book *Pride and Panic: Russian Imagination of the West in Post-Soviet film* which will be published by Intellect Books (UK) [represented and distributed in the US by University of Chicago Press] in Spring 2007 and received the Coca-Cola Critical Differences for Women Research Faculty Grant for her work on trafficking in women (2006-07).

**Maria Ignatieva** (Theatre, Assoc. Professor) published the essays "Stanislavsky and His Mother" in the inaugural issue of the journal *Stanislavsky* in Moscow, October 2006; and "Maria Lilina" (part 1) in *Slavic and East European Performances*, Summer 2006, and presented the paper "Stanislavsky and His Mother" at the International Federation for Theatre Research in Helsinki in August 2006.

**Ryan Kennedy** (Political Science, Graduate Fellow) is currently in Chisinau, Moldova doing research as part of a Fulbright grant. His article on the 2005 Kazakhstan presidential election will be appearing in the November/December edition of *Problems in Post-Communism*. He also has an article on post-Communist trade policies that will be appearing in the next edition of *Foreign Policy Analysis*. In addition, he has had commentary pieces appear in *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst* and *Oxford Analytica* in the past two months.

**Marianna Klochko** (Sociology, Assist. Professor) had her article "Time preference and learning versus selection: a case study of Ukrainian students" published in *Rationality and Society* in August 2006 (vol 18 number 3).

**Caitlin Malone**, (Engineering Physics, honors student) published an article "Cloak and Axe: Dostoevsky's Raskolnikov as a Byronic Hero" in Columbia University's Slavic periodical *The Birch*.

**Irene Masing-Delic** (DSEELL, Professor) has published the following: "Larissa, Lolita, Or Catharsis and Dolor, in the Artist-Novels *Doktor Zhivago* and *Lolita*," Eternity's Hostage, Selected Papers from the Stanford International Conference on Boris Pasternak, Part II, ed. by Lazar Fleishman, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006 (pp. 396-424; "Belkin, Belochkiny and Belka Chudo-Divo: Pushkin's 'The Fairytale of Tsar' Saltan' in Nabokov's



*Pnin*, "A Century's Perspective, Essays on Russian Literature in Honor of Olga Raevsky Hughes and Robert P. Hughes, edited by Lazar Fleishman and Hugh McClean, Stanford: Stanford Slavic Studies, 2006 (pp.351-368); "Kak spasti kul'turu ot tsivilizatsii: Sredizemnomorskaia model' Maksima Gor'kogo," in *Kul'tural'nye issledovaniia*, eds. Aleksandr Etkind and Pavel Lysakov, Sankt-Peterburg- Moskva: Evropeiskii universitet v Sankt-Peterburge, 2006 (pp. 267-290).

**Myroslava Mudrak** (History of Art) published the main essay, "Portraying Selfhood: The Art of Lydia Bodnar –Balahutrak" in a bilingual monograph produced in Kyiv in the autumn of 2006. Mudrak offers a retrospective analysis of Bodnar-Balahutrak, a Houston-based painter, who dwells on the themes of diasporan displacement and whose recent work addresses the cultural fallout of Chernobyl. In September, Mudrak also participated in a public forum on the subject of "Ukrainian Modernism, Identity, and Nationhood: Then and Now" at the Chicago Cultural Center, in conjunction with the exhibition, *Crossroads: Modernism in Ukraine 1910- 1930* for which she wrote the catalogue essay on the avant-garde. In November 2006, she delivered a lecture on "Color and Its Dynamic in the Ukrainian Avant-Garde" at the Ukrainian Museum in New York where the exhibition, "Ukrainian Modernism" will be on show until March 11th.

Mudrak's essay "Czech Modernism and the Ukrainian Studio of Plastic Arts: Parallel Strategies" was published in Prague in the proceedings from the 2005 symposium *Ukrainian Visual Arts in Interwar Czechoslovakia*.

**David Pettegrew** (History) graduated with a PhD in August and accepted a tenure-track position at Messiah College where he now teaches.

**Daniel Prior** (History, Visiting Scholar) published "Heroes, Chieftains, and the Roots of Kirghiz Nationalism" in *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 6/2 (2006): 71-88, and presented "Tribal Chiefs, Epic Poetry, and the Roots of Kirghiz Nationalism" in a panel he organized, called "Precursors of National Identity in Central Asia, 19th to Early 20th Century," at the annual conference of the Central Eurasian Studies Society at the University of Michigan at the end of September.

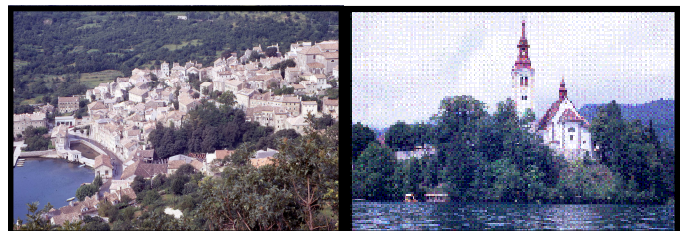
**Andrea Sims** (Linguistics) finished a Ph.D. in linguistics in September. Her dissertation was titled "Minding the gaps: Inflectional defectiveness in a paradigmatic theory". This fall she presented four papers based on that work, including one at the first meeting of the Slavic Linguistics Society and one the AAASS Annual Convention. She is currently a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow at Northwestern University.

**Joan Titus** (Musicology) graduated with her Ph.D. in Autumn quarter. Her dissertation addresses the first four film scores of Dmitry Shostakovich and is entitled, "Modernism, Socialist Realism, and Identity in the Early Film Music of Dmitry Shostakovich, 1929-1932." She also attended the International Shostakovich Centenary Conference in October in Bristol, England, where she successfully presented a paper based on a chapter from her dissertation

## OSU Welcomes New Women's Studies' Chair



The Slavic Center is glad to welcome Dr. Jill Bystydzienski to OSU as the new chair of the Women's Studies Department. Dr. Bystydzienski came to Columbus this fall after six years of directing the Women's Studies program at Iowa State University. Her research interests include women, gender and politics in an international and global perspective, with politics broadly defined to encompass established political institutions and women's movements, organizations, and actions. Her current research in this area focuses on women's movements and feminism in post-Soviet countries. She also does research on women and gender in a cross-cultural perspective, particularly the phenomenon of crossing cultures and cultural barriers, and building coalitions across differences; and has recently embarked on research on women and gender in the sciences, examining the barriers to women in science fields. She is a co-principal investigator on two recent National Science Foundation grants that focus on women in the sciences and engineering. She is the author of many articles and book chapters as well as books. Recent publications include: [Removing Barriers: Women in Academic Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics](#), co-edited with Sharon R. Bird (Indiana University Press, 2006), "Negotiating the New Market: Women, Families, Women's Organizations and the Economic Transition in Poland," [Journal of Family & Economic Issues](#) 26/2, Summer 2005: 239-265; and "Women in Scandinavian Parliaments" in [Sharing Power: Women in Consolidated and Developing Democracies](#), Yvonne Galligan and Manon Tremblay, eds., 203-217, Ashgate Publishers, 2004. She is currently finishing a book on intercultural domestic partnerships.





# SLAVIC FRIGHT NIGHTS BIG SUCCESS

By Maryann Walther-Keisel



DSEELL Graduate Students Ryan Walker and Teresa Kuruc enjoying the Bigos!



Archduke Fredinand (Mark Nuchols), a friendly witch (Kim Pierpont), and member of Дневной дозор Maryann Walther-Keisel (CSEES' Office Coordinator)



Andrei Kolenko and Lauren Ovchinnikov under the romantic pumpkin tree.

October 27-31, 2006: From the bizarre black humor of "Little Otik" to the high-tech digital effects of the box-office winner "Nightwatch", the OSU community enjoyed the darker side of Eastern Europe as the Slavic Center's "Nights of the Slavic Living Dead" Halloween film series in record numbers. The Department of Slavic & East European Languages and Literatures augmented the experience through graduate students Elizabeth Worrall and Thad Fortney, who provided informative introductions to the creepy movies and chair Daniel Collins, who gave a talk on Slavic vampires preceding the film "Viy". Over 90 people, many in costume, joined the Slavic Center staff and students for a Halloween party before "Nightwatch". Festivities included Russian and East European food (bigos!) and appropriate seasonal activities such as a tarot card reader. The film series complemented the Slavic Department's popular Autumn course offering Slavic 130, "The Vampire in Eastern European and American Culture", taught by Dr. Collins. Thanks to all who helped to make this event possible!



Bigos, Golubtsy, meatballs, and more. Now that's a party!

For information on future events, check out our website:

<http://slaviccenter.osu.edu/events.html>

Or sign up for our weekly e-mail list:

[csees@osu.edu](mailto:csees@osu.edu)

Subject: Add

Text: CSEES List



DSEELL Ph.D. Candidate Andrei Cretu, CSEES Office Assistant Kim Pierpont, and CSEES M.A. Candidate Daniel Gray. Nice outfits Dan and Andrei—scary!

## Russian Language Tables!

**For Beginners/Intermediate Level Speakers:**

Thursdays 6-8pm

Caribou Coffee in the Gateway (1601 N. High St.)

**For Advanced/Heritage/Native Speakers:**

Fridays, 9:30pm

Larry's (2040 N. High St.)

Those interested in donating to the Slavic Center are invited to make tax-deductible contributions to account #307923 at the Development Office of the OSU Foundation or to contact the Center for Slavic and East European Studies.

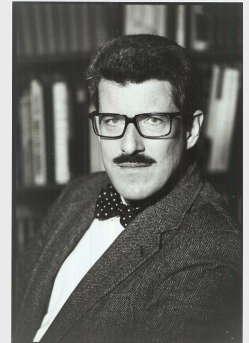
Your contributions are appreciated!





# Schimmelpenninck van der Oye to present on: “What Is Russian Orientalism”

February 14 at 4:30 pm (Location—TBA), David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, Associate Professor of History at Brock University, in St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada, will give a talk entitled “What Is Russian Orientalism.” Professor Schimmelpenninck will be examining the applicability of Edward Said’s theories to Russia about “Orientalism” as a hegemonic device. The focus will be a painter, Vereshchagin, and a composer, Borodin, whose works were created in the late nineteenth century, at a time of tsarist conquest in Central Asia. After a brief survey of how Russian Orientalism fits into the broader framework of Said’s ideas about culture and colonialism, Schimmelpenninck will examine the war painter Vasilli Vereshchagin’s “Turkestan Series,” a group of canvases executed in the early 1870’s, shortly after the artist participated in the campaign against Samarkand. Vereshchagin’s portrayal of tsarist small wars against the Islamic khanates will then be compared with Aleksandr Borodin’s opera *Prince Igor*. While based on a thirteenth-century medieval epic about an unsuccessful campaign against steppe nomads, the opera can also be read as a metaphor for the tsarist march into Turkestan. The lecture will be accompanied by slides as well as musical clips, and will draw on Professor Schimmelpenninck’s work on his current project, *Russian Orientalism: Asia in the Russian Mind from Catherine the Great to the Emigration*, to be published by Yale University Press.



Schimmelpenninck is the author of *Toward the Rising Sun: Russian Ideologies of Empire and the Path to War with Japan* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2001); co-editor with Bruce Menning of *Reforming the Tsar’s Army: Military Innovation in Imperial Russia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); and with John Steinberg, et al, *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero*, 2 vols. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2005-2006). After a childhood in the Netherlands, Schimmelpenninck was educated at the University of Toronto Schools and at Yale College. He spent ten years as an investment banker in Toronto and the City of London before returning to Yale, where he completed a doctorate in history in 1997. He has been awarded fellowships by Harvard University’s Olin Institute for Strategic Studies, the National Humanities Center, and SSHRC.

## DSEELL Linguists and Literati Scrape By CSEES Area-Studyians in Kickball, CSEES Challenges DSEELL to Bowling for Winter 2007



DSEELL Undergrad Brian Martin pitches during the 3rd inning.

The Center for Slavic and East European Studies lost to the Department of Slavic and East European Languages and Literatures in a match for the ages. CSEES’ Head Coach Maryann Walther-Keisel: “they’re a good team and they played a tough game, but I think on any other day and in any other conditions we could have beat them. I want a rematch.” Because of the remarks, CSEES and DSEELL Team Managers are working out a date to bowl away the controversy. Look forward to this, because according to CSEES’ teammate Daniel Gray, “if you think my kickball pitch is fast and accurate, just wait until you see my bowling skills.”



Nicholas Starvaggi, Douglas Schaffer, Terry Studer, and Daniel Gray emphatically cheering their team on.



Joshua Pennington pitches for DSEELL as Terry Studer waits to run home from 2nd base.



## NAVIGATING THE BYZANTINE WORLD OF RUSSIAN BUSINESS AND POLITICS

By Nicholas Starvaggi

There are many aspects of American business culture that people take for granted, and that many Russians would not understand. For example, the concept of "conflict of interest" does not exist in Russia, where many elite members of the government are also shareholders in huge state industries, such as Gazprom. Business in Russia is usually easier if you know exactly who to bribe, and outside of Moscow and St. Petersburg, in order to successfully do business it is essential to have at least one local politician in your pocket. Indeed, ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union, when many of the people in power acquired the state's resources in the often muddled and corrupt privatization campaign of the early 1990s, business and politics in Russia have been inextricably linked. Where is this often troubled relationship taking Russia and the Russian people? How will Russia, as it attempts to join the open markets of the world, adapt to domestic openness and democracy? And what exactly is going to happen in 2008, when President Vladimir Putin's term expires? These are some of the themes and questions that the panelists and speakers at the University of Urbana-Champaign Chancellor's Conference on Russia, Business, and Politics attempted to answer over the course of two days. Four OSU Graduate Students were in attendance at the conference, which was held in Chicago in October.

Opening the conference was David Satter, a former Moscow correspondent for the *London Financial Times*. Satter has worked in Russia since 1976 and currently writes for *The Wall Street Journal* and other national news outlets. Satter's opening address set a dark tone for the conference and offered a bleak

view of Russia's chances for a democratic government. Satter, who knew Anna Politkovskaya and several other journalists who have been assassinated, argued that freedom of the press does not exist in Russia and believes that Putin's successor will continue his authoritarian management style. Obviously, Satter's address was quite pessimistic, which sparked lively debate amongst the other panelists during the rest of the conference.

After a full day of panels, including an informed presentation on businesses' confidence in the government by former Ohio State professor Timothy Frye, the evening banquet address was given by Patricia M. Cloherty. Cloherty has held appointments from presidents Jimmy Carter, George H.W. Bush, and Bill Clinton and is currently the chairman and CEO of Delta Private Equity Partners, LLC. Her address was an impressive catalogue of her accomplishments in Russia and struck a much different path than Satter's pessimistic opening address. Cloherty has years of hands-on experience in the Russian business world, having run several investment firms which have seen billions in profits. Cloherty spoke about the cutthroat and often corrupt world of Russian business, and described the rising generation of highly educated and capable businesspeople in Russia. She was not all optimism, however, as she revealed at a panel on the politics of business. Cloherty knew Andrei Kozlov, a Central Bank deputy chairman who was assassinated recently for his crackdown on small banks, which were often money laundering schemes. Cloherty was also the only speaker to condone the Khodorkovsky affair, in which the former oligarch lost his billion dollar oil company and was sentenced to nine years in

prison.

By far the most fascinating speech, however, came from William Browder, founder and CEO of Hermitage Capital Management Limited and a former vice president at Salomon Brothers. Browder is the grandson of the famous Earl Browder, who was head of the Communist Party USA in the 1930s and 1940s. He got his start at Salomon Brothers in 1992, where he started investing in Russian privatization. By 1996, he had struck out on his own and was soon managing billions of dollars, which he lost almost all of in the economic meltdown of 1998. He soon recovered, however, and started doing business with some of the oligarchs. When one of them tried to force a hostile and illegal takeover of their company, Browder fought back and won. He found an ally in Putin, who had his own ax to grind with the oligarchs. Browder, who is a champion of shareholder rights, ran afoul of Putin by exposing corrupt management practices, however, and has been declared persona non grata in Russia, even though his business and staff continue to work there.

Clearly, there are great benefits to doing business in Russia, if you can navigate the nest of cobras that Russian politics often resembles. As former U.S. ambassador James Collins observed in one of the panels, it is necessary to make friends with local politicians and recognize that Russians do business differently than Americans. As many of the panelists observed, there is hope for the rising generation of highly educated and capable businesspeople in Russia, and the country's role in the international business world will only continue to grow.



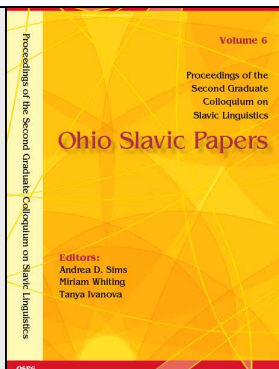


## 2 New Volumes of the Ohio Slavic Papers Released

Two new additions of the Ohio Slavic Papers have been published and are now available for purchase. Both issues, which were published by Title VI National Resource Funds through the Center for Slavic and East European Studies, are works taken from conferences that were also mainly funded by CSEES' Title VI Funds.

Volume 6 is titled: *Proceedings from the Second Graduate Colloquium on Slavic Linguistics* and was edited by Andrea Sims, Miriam Whiting, and Tanya Ivanova. This volume presents contributions to the Second Graduate Colloquium on Slavic Linguistics, which was held at The Ohio State University on November 6th and 7th, 2004. The following papers are included in the issue:

- Istratkova, Vyara. *When Prefixes Become Adverbs.*
- Becker, Christopher. *Assignment of Genitive Case in Russian Container Noun Constructions.*
- Krawczyk, Elizabeth. *Inherent Quantification of Russian Indefinite Pronouns and Russian 'any'.*
- Sanders, Jennifer S. *Emergence of Russian Case Systems: Patterns of Development in the Expression of Possession and Age.*
- Mikhailova, Julia. *Syntactic Complexity in the Speech of Students of Russian in the OPI and the SOPI.*
- Dong, Xinran. *Linguistic Realization of Politeness in Russian Requests.*
- Kier, Andrew J. *On the Origins of the Glagolitic Alphabet.*



Volume 8 is titled: *Translating Russia: From Theory to Practice* and was edited by Dr. Brian James Baer of Kent State University. The articles in this volume came from the Conference "Translating Eastern Europe: Art, Politics, and Identity in Translated Literature," which was held from September 30th to October 2nd, 2005. The following papers are included in the issue:

TRANSLATING CULTURE  
Visson, Lynn. *Terminology and Ideology: Translating Russian Political Language.*

Olshanskaya, Natalia. *Translating Political Discourse: Between Victory and Pobeda.*

Goscilo, Helena. *Lewd and Ludic, and Flaunting It: Leningrad's Highly Profitable "Nenormativnaia Leksika".*

Task, Sergei. *Translation: Lost and Found.*

### BEYOND SEMANTICS

Carnevale, Robert, and Ueland, Carol. *Translating Speech Acts: Examples from Russian Poetry.*

Schwartz, Marian. *Marks of Punctuation as False Grammatical Cognates.*

Bystrova-McIntyre, Tatyana. *Between Norms and Style: Using Corpora to Understand Punctuation Use in Russian and English.*

### CONTEXTS OF TRANSLATION

Hoffman, Deborah, and Korchagina, Nadezhda. *Notes Toward a Postmodern Translation: 'Translating' Sorokin's Goluboe salo.*

Brintlinger, Angela. *How Bad is Bad? How Great is Great?: Translating Derzhavin in the Context of Khodasevich's Biography.*

Kates, Jim. *How do You Say 'No Smoking!' in English?*

To order a copy of any Volume of the Ohio Slavic Papers, please send  
 an e-mail to:  
[csees@osu.edu](mailto:csees@osu.edu)  
 Or call: (614) 292-8770

**CSEES Quarterly Events are now listed online at:**  
<http://slaviccenter.osu.edu/events.html>  
**And e-mailed weekly (Mondays during the Academic Year)**  
**To sign up, just send an e-mail to [csees@osu.edu](mailto:csees@osu.edu) with the Subject: Add, and the Text: Monday List**



## 2005-06 FLAS Recipient Reports from Moscow

By Katia Scodova

I absolutely love Moscow, and if you have met me even once, you can attest to this fact. With the 2006-2007 FLAS, I was able to return to my favorite city, where I am finishing my MA coursework at Moscow State University. I have been in Moscow for three months now, and my life here has not stopped for a second. I am perpetually exhausted and want to do nothing more than sleep, but there is always someone or something calling me out into the Moscow cold. Since my arrival, I have moved twice, made new friends, traveled to the north, and fortunately have not yet been "feised" at a club.

After the first month of aimlessly wandering the streets of Moscow, I decided it was time to do something more productive than shopping and exploring Moscow's club scene. The four hours a day that I spent in class just was not enough Russian language practice, and the majority of my Moscow friends are native English speakers. In order to gain practical work experience and force myself to use more Russian, I applied for every human rights related internship that I could find. I was eventually awarded an internship at the local UN High Commissioner for Refugees office. The office where I work is as multiethnic-multicultural-multilingual as it gets, and even though English is the "official" language, most of my interactions with the staff are in Russian. So far the work is standard internship tasks, but each week I get a new project and a new responsibility. I am currently responsible for translating and logging the complaints, appeals, and general correspondences from the refugees that we serve, as well as organizing the monthly emergency meetings, where exception cases are discussed.

While class and the internship occupy most of time during the week,

I still manage to find plenty of time to explore the city and the surrounding areas. Even with Moscow being named as the most expensive city in the world, cultural entertainment still only a fraction of what it costs in the states. For example, I have been to the Bolshoi Theater at least ten times and not once have I ever paid more than 300 rubles for a ticket (about \$10). Last week I went to see the Fiery Angel by Prokofiev, and my tickets were only twenty rubles (\$.75)!

One of the highlights of this third trip to Moscow was my recent excursion to Velikii Novgorod, which I took with my Australian twin, Sima. On the eve of our departure for the north, we found out that our reserved train tickets had been sold. Not one to let this little detail interfere with our plans, Sima used her "connections" and through friends of a friend's friend, she secured our transportation in a semi-truck. It never occurred to us to be concerned about this method of transportation, and it turned out that we had no reason to be. Before arriving at the truck, the only information that we were given was that our truck driver was a young, cheerful guy (cheerful being a euphemism for portly, as Sima pointed out). We made our initial introductions, and Sasha pulled the truck on to the highway. The cabin of the truck was decorated how I imagined it would be with a banner of small flags, each with an illustration of a naked woman and sexually suggestive statement. However, Sasha wasn't anything close to the stereotypical image of a scruffy, overweight, "wife-beater"-wearing truck driver. At 26, he recently had married his high school sweetheart and had a three-month old baby girl. Sasha served time in the army, is a major Putin supporter, and is quite content with his job and

life. Our conversations shifted from politics to open container laws in the states to life in Russia. As the night wore on, our conversations began to slack off, and Sasha started to talk more to his other trucker buddies over the radio. Once he clicked his CB radio on to talk, our kind, polite Sasha became a completely different person. Foul language in Russian is so much more creative and offensive than even the closest English equivalents, and Sasha's radio conversations provided us with a broad review of all the ways one can possibly curse the bad roads, the truck, the other drivers, etc. In between his conversations with the other truckers, Sasha would go back to fussing over our wellbeing. We arrived in Velikii Novgorod 12 hours after our departure time, roughly when our train would have arrived at 5:30 am. Even if you are not a fan of classical culture, and there are plenty of other ways to pass the time. The last two times that I was in Moscow, I was exceeding self-conscious about my communication skills and did not explore the night life too much. Now I realize how much I was missing! Moscow at night is completely different from Moscow during the daylight hours. Fortunately (and some times unfortunately), my Moscow friends also love to go out dancing and trying out new clubs and bars. This time I have gone to more clubs than I can even count, and I am sure that I have done permanent damage to my feet by hiking around the city in impossibly high heels!

Much to my delight, the end of this quarter does not mark the end of my time in Moscow. I still have two more quarters and two more seasons to experience in my beloved city before it is time for me to return to the States and my FLAS runs out!



## CSEES Welcomes Two New M.A. Students for Winter 2007, Congratulates One for Graduating

CSEES proudly congratulates U.S. Airforce **Major Radoslaw Rusek** for successfully passing his M.A. Examinations and graduating with an M.A. in Slavic and East European Studies. Maj. Rusek specialized in Poland, Central Asia, and Security Studies and is currently serving as a Major in the United States Airforce. His primary specialty is an Instructor Electronic Warfare Officer, and his secondary specialty is as a Foreign Area Officer with a desire to become a RAS (Regional Area Specialist). Rusek is currently at the Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha, NE at the 55th Operational Support Squadron

In addition, CSEES would like to welcome two new M.A. Candidates in Slavic and East European Studies:

**Seth Lewis** achieved his Bachelor's Degree from Ohio State University in June 2006 with majors in Central Asian and Slavic Studies and International Studies. While at Ohio State he studied Elementary Uzbek. In the summer of 2005 he was awarded a fellowship to study Intensive Intermediate Uzbek at Indiana University's Summer Workshop for Slavic, Eastern

European, and Central Asian Languages (SWSEECAL). He has studied abroad in Krakow and Warsaw, Poland. Seth's research interests include examining Islam's change and development within Central Asian societies since independence and future regional and strategic energy issues linked to several republics' petroleum and natural gas reserves.

**Matthew "Artur" Luby** graduated magna cum laude with honors in the arts and sciences from The Ohio State University in June 2006 with a B.A. in Economics and Russian and a minor in History. Artur spent the summer of 2005 studying Russian at Tomsk State University. Currently he is an advanced language student in Russian and a beginner in Uzbek. His interests include Russian and Soviet cinema, the Soviet war in Afghanistan, contemporary economies of the CIS countries (with a focus on oligarchs) and Marxist-Leninist theory and its interactions with Islam in Central Asia. 'Artur' received his nickname in Fall 2006 when he was 'sporting' former U.S. President Chester Arthur-like sideburns, 'Artur' being the Russian variant of Arthur.

## Midwest Slavic Conference

(cont. from pg. 1)

ence, literatures, linguistics, sociology, economics, and other fields. If interested, please send a one-paragraph abstract, along with a brief c.v. to [csees@osu.edu](mailto:csees@osu.edu) by **31 January 2007**. Persons proposing papers must be willing to be scheduled either Friday or Saturday.

Graduate students are particularly encouraged to submit presentations. Limited funding will be available to subsidize graduate hotel stays.

Undergraduates area also encouraged to apply. A number of high quality undergraduate panels have been a part of the Midwest Slavic Conference in the past and have been growing every year. Professors and Instructors are asked to encourage those undergraduate students who have written and/or researched at a graduate level to submit a proposal.

Foreign travel will not be supported. For more information, contact the Center for Slavic and East European Studies at 614-292-8770 or at [csees@osu.edu](mailto:csees@osu.edu).

## Klesla teaches Czech

(cont. from pg. 1)

Language study has its rewards!

Professor Daniel Collins, Chair of the Slavic and East European Languages and Literatures Department set the tone for the gathering by making the opening remarks in Czech and it was "Czech only" in Kavárna Praha thereafter. Czech instructors Marcela Michalkova and Martin Michalek can be very proud of the students who listened intently, asked questions of Rusty, and answered his. No mean feat with the media cameras rolling and, for some students, only four weeks of Czech class under their belt. It was clear that the experience was exciting and motivating and it's not hard to assume it was special experience for Rusty as well.







## OSU to Host AWSS Conference

### BEYOND *LITTLE VERA*: WOMEN'S BODIES, WOMEN'S WELFARE IN RUSSIAN AND CENTRAL/EASTERN EUROPE

Congratulations to Dr. Angela Brintlinger (Department of Slavic and East European Languages and Literatures—Ohio State University) on her successful application for a grant for Interdisciplinary Lectures, Seminars, and Conferences on International Themes, which was awarded by the Ohio State University's Office of International Affairs in Fall 2006.

Funding was received to hold the 3rd Biennial Conference of the Association for Women in Slavic Studies which will be held at The Ohio State University on 26-27 April 2007. The interdisciplinary conference has been titled "Beyond Little Vera: Women's Bodies, Women's Welfare in Russian and Central/Eastern Europe" and will focus on discussing new research on women's health and welfare in Russia and Central/Eastern Europe since 1990. From a variety of disciplinary, theoretical and methodological approaches, participants will consider changing social, cultural and political situations and their impact on women. *Beyond Little Vera* will follow up on recent conferences addressing trafficking of women in these parts of the world, including one organized by Prof. Yana Hashamova at OSU in 2004. It will also expand that focus to a more general consideration of the treatment and representation of women's bodies and welfare. Crises in women's treatment and exploitation in Russia and Central/Eastern Europe have perhaps never been more acute, given the now more entrenched negative impact of the market and "globalization" in this area. Scholarly exchange on these issues will thus be more than merely academic, and the cross-disciplinary conversations that emerge may have an effect on policy both in the U.S. and abroad.

The Conference will be held on 26-27 April at the Ohio State University in Columbus, OH, and is sponsored by the Office of International Affairs, the Center for Slavic and East European Studies, the Department of Women's Studies, the Department of Slavic and East European Languages and Literatures, and OSU Women in Development. Paper Proposals are due by Jan. 15, 2007. The *Beyond Little Vera* conference takes a broad approach to exploring the topic of women's bodies and women's welfare. Using a multi- and interdisciplinary approach to these women's health issues -- from domestic relations to sex education, from prison conditions to artistic representations -- the conference will explore the wide-ranging implications of the collapse of social networks and government structures in the former Communist bloc countries. With a thematic focus on women's Bodies and women's welfare, *Beyond Little Vera* will give a geopolitical clarity to the issues and changes in post-socialist societies and cultures of Eastern and Central Europe over the past two decades. A timely, important, and unique endeavor, *Beyond Little Vera* serves a number of functions. With a conference program committee consisting of regular and executive board members of the Association for Women in Slavic Studies, we draw on expertise across numerous fields and across the nation. It will also serve the needs of the affiliates of the OSU Center for Slavic and East European Studies and the other sponsoring departments and programs and their graduate students, as well as attract a participant pool primarily from regional colleges and universities and secondarily from the Columbus area public.

**Can't find anyone else interested in Karakalpakstan? Sick of being the only one at a party who knows what the capital of Montenegro is?**

**Please Join us for:**

**Slavic and East European Graduate Student Social Hour**

**Thursdays, 9pm**

**B. Hamptons, 335 W. 3rd Ave.**



## Study Abroad Opportunities for Summer 2007

The Ohio State University's Office of International Education offers a variety of different opportunities for those students who are interested in studying the languages and/or cultures of Russia and Eastern Europe. For more information on the Office of International Education and its study-abroad programs, please see:

<http://www.oie.ohio-state.edu/>

The following study-abroad opportunities are available for the Czech Republic and Russia for Summer 2007.



### **Russian Culture and Society Program, St. Petersburg, Moscow, Russia**

The Russian Culture and Society Program is a continuation of the GEC course Russian 235: Modern Russian Culture, to be offered by the Department of Slavic and East European Languages and Literatures during the Spring Quarter. During that quarter, the class will learn about modern Russian culture and society in historical and political context. Immediately following Spring Quarter exams, the students, guided by DSEELL Assistant Professor Yana Hashamova and CSEES Assistant Director Luke Wochensky, will travel to St. Petersburg and Moscow for approximately 10 days to experience everyday life and to visit sites of major artistic, cultural, and historical importance at one of the most beautiful times of the year - the framed White Nights of early summer.



### **Intensive Russian Language & Culture Program, Tomsk, Russia**

The OSU Program in Tomsk is an intensive language and culture program offered at Tomsk State University (TSU). The program provides students with the opportunities to increase their Russian language ability and to experience contemporary Russian life by living with host families. The program is located in Tomsk, a major academic, research, industrial, and cultural center located in western Siberia, 4000 kilometers from to the east of Moscow. The program is designed for intermediate and advanced speakers and runs for approximately 8 weeks.



### **Intensive Czech Language Program, Olomouc, Czech Republic**

The OSU Summer Program in Olomouc is a four-week, intensive language and culture program offered at Palacky University. The program provides students with the opportunity to begin and/or increase their language ability and to experience contemporary Czech life and culture. In addition to classroom instruction taught by Palacky University instructors, students will participate in group field trips and have opportunities to explore the city on their own.

### **Opera and Identity in Russia Today, St. Petersburg, Moscow, Russia**

This three week intensive program is a continuation of a regular spring quarter course, Russian Opera and Identity (Music 294/694). Following completion of the course, students will travel to Russia where they will attend opera performances, study opera production, listen to lectures on the history and status of opera in Russian society today, as well as interview representatives of the opera community and members of opera audiences.



## OPINION/COMMENTARY

This is a new section of the CSEES' Newsletter featuring the commentary of current events by OSU Graduate Students. If you would like to submit an article or respond to this one, please e-mail your submission to: [csees@osu.edu](mailto:csees@osu.edu) no later than 15 March. Your article may be chosen to be included in this section.

### Why it doesn't matter who killed Alexander Litvinenko

By Daniel Gray

12.20.2006

On 23 November Alexander Litvinenko became the latest dissident who can no longer publicly criticize the Kremlin. As a former member of the Russian security service, or FSB, Litvinenko served in the counter terrorism directorate. His career was abruptly ended in 1998 when he, along with other intelligence officers, announced to the public their discovery of a supposed FSB-sponsored assassination squad. Reported targets included fellow FSB dissident Mikhail Trepashkin and billionaire oligarch Boris Beresovskiy. Following his dismissal from the security service, Litvinenko fled to London to escape imminent im-

prisonment. In London he wrote several books that "exposed" alleged Russian government involvement in criminal activity and even acts of terror. In *Blowing Up Russia*, the 1999 Chechen bombings of Russian apartments were, according to evidence gathered by him and Trepashkin, in fact perpetrated by federal agents in order to create a cause célèbre' for the second Chechen War.

Before his death, Litvinenko was reportedly investigating the October murder of liberal journalist Anna Politkovskaya and had been warned that his life was in danger. On 1 November he became severely ill with what would later be known as radiation poisoning. For almost four weeks,

Alexander Litvinenko suffered a slow and horrifying death by being burnt from the inside out. Accepting his fate, Litvinenko made numerous statements from his death bed declaring Vladimir Putin to be the culprit.

Litvinenko's death on 28 November led to a worldwide frenzy of speculations. The Russian government strongly denied any involvement, but western media began immediately pointing to Moscow. British police began the arduous task of tracing the worldwide trail of the radiation. Investigators were dispatched to Moscow to take statements from individuals connected with Litvinenko. Later, Russia started its own inquiry. While there is





## OPINION/COMMENTARY

little tangible evidence, many in the media and governmental officials see an ominous connection. They are concerned with the fate of Russian activists and dissidents as either their lifespan is curtailed or they face the prospect of jail time.

As of now the investigation appears to be at a dead end. The Russian government announced that certain individuals, like Trepashkin, were off limits to British investigators and that any possibility of extradition was out of the question. Without access to all possible "persons of interest," gathering the required evidence may be impossible. On December 20th the British contingency returned empty handed. The perpetrator has evidently eluded the British police.

Despite insisting that it played no role, other responses from Moscow regarding these high profile incidents have caused some concern. Vladimir Putin stated that "as far as

I understand in the medical statement of British physicians, it doesn't say that this was a result of violence, this is not a violent death, so there is no ground for speculations of this [criminal] kind" and that Litvinenko's outcry while dying was a "provocation." A month earlier he commented in Germany that murdered dissident journalist Anna Politkovskaya's influence in Russian politics was "very minor." Regarding Litvinenko's death, State Duma representative Sergei Abeltsev declared that the "deserved punishment reached the traitor. I am sure his terrible death will be a warning to all the traitors that in Russia the treason is not to be forgiven. I would recommend to citizen Berезovsky to avoid any food at the commemoration for his accomplice Litvinenko."

Regardless of Western opinion, it does not seem logical that the Russian government would sanction such a

provocative act. What exactly would Russia gain from having him eliminated? Although Litvinenko publicized alleged acts of state criminality, he does not seem to have had any influence in Western foreign policy. Faced with impending WTO membership, it would be irrational to target someone with seemingly minor importance.

However, the damage is already done. This has been the largest public relations disaster for the Putin administration. The global perception of Russia is arguably at its lowest since the Soviet Union. Litvinenko's name is never too far from Putin's in any newspaper column. In the end the world will probably never know who was behind the plot to assassinate Alexander Litvinenko. But does it really matter?

**Center for Slavic and East European Studies**

303 Oxley Hall  
1712 Neil Ave.  
Columbus, OH 43210-1219

Phone: 614-292-8770  
Fax: 614-292-4273  
csees@osu.edu



[www.slaviccenter.osu.edu](http://www.slaviccenter.osu.edu)

Non-Profit Org.

U.S. Postage

**PAID**

Columbus, OH

Permit No. 711

***Director***

Halina Stephan

***Assistant Director***

Luke Wochensky

***Office Coordinator***

Maryann Walther-Keisel

***Outreach Coordinator***

Teresa Kuruc

***Publicity***

Daniel Gray

***Media Specialist***

Andrei Cretu

***Office Assistant***

Anastasia Patoka

***Student Assistants***

Amanda Kraguljac

Kim Pierpont

**MIDWEST SLAVIC  
CONFERENCE**

**12-14 APRIL 2007**

**AT**

**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY  
BLACKWELL HOTEL & CONFERENCE CENTER  
2110 TUTTLE PARK PLACE  
COLUMBUS, OHIO**