



Letter from Chair Galya Diment

again an Exploration Seminar in Georgia.

Our faculty have been productive in their research. Professors Alaniz, Crnkovic, Diment, Dziwirek and Henry have had a total of eight books either published or accepted for publication in the past two years.

Our Affiliate Faculty also continue to make us proud. Affiliate Professor Michael Biggins was invited by the Slovene Book Agency to participate in the first International Seminar of Slovene Literary Translators. Affiliate Instructor Claudia Jensen was awarded the 2010 ASEES Prize for her book, *Musical Cultures in Seventeenth-Century Russia*.

Professor Jim Augerot continues to lead the Ellison Center (REECAS) successfully to further heights as its Director, including receiving four more years of Title VI funding.

As always, we celebrated Maslenitsa by feasting on blintzes and playing physically and mentally challenging games. In May, for Cyril and Methodius Day, we danced and celebrated with alumni and members of the Slavic communities.

Our UW Polish Studies Endowment Committee has been as active as ever, organizing lectures and fundraisers. You can read more about their activities in this newsletter.

We are aware of the challenges that we will be facing in the next several

years, given the turbulent budgetary situation. We need to be prepared to change and to adapt, but through it all – with your support – we are determined to persevere and to maintain our high scholarly and pedagogical standards, to the benefit of our students and our fields.

It is because of budgetary considerations that our newsletter will from now on be available in online version only. We encourage you to check our website frequently to keep abreast of departmental news.

Wishing you all a very successful, joyful, healthy and peaceful new year, as well as new decade. С НОВЫМ ГОДОМ, С НОВЫМ СЧАСТЬЕМ.

As we enter 2011, we have a lot to celebrate and new people to welcome. Our linguist and Polish language specialist, Dr. Katarzyna Dziwirek, has been promoted to Full Professor. Our languages coordinator and teacher extraordinaire, Dr. Bojan Belić, has been promoted to Senior Lecturer. We have a Fulbright scholar from Poland, Dr. Tomasz Łysak, who is doing research at the University of Washington and teaching for us this year; you can read an interview with him in this issue.

We had to say goodbye to Phoebe Ambrosia, our Program Coordinator, who accepted a full-time position elsewhere on campus, and while we miss her, we are very happy with her replacement, Tyler Browne. Tyler earned his MA in Political Science from Portland State University, where he worked in an advising capacity for a year. Now he serves as an undergraduate advisor for our students.

We have been to exciting places in the past year. Dr. Valentina Zaitseva, as she does each summer, led students to Sochi (this year assisted by our Senior Lecturer Zoya Polack), and there was once

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2010-2011 Polish Fulbright Scholar Dr. Tomasz Łysak – Tyler Browne

This year the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures is hosting Dr. Tomasz Łysak as its Polish Fulbright Scholar. From 1996-2002 Dr. Łysak attended the University of Warsaw, where he earned an MA in American Literature and an MA in Polish Culture. In 2007 he earned his PhD in Philosophy from the Polish Academy of Sciences. Dr. Łysak works primarily on representation of the Holocaust in literature and other media. His research interests include: Holocaust representation, trauma studies, film, theory of autobiography, and psychoanalysis. Here at the University of Washington Dr. Łysak teaches courses on Polish Culture and Society as Reflected in Film (1944-1989) and Modern Polish Literature.

I sat down with Dr. Łysak at the end of November to ask him about Holocaust representation in Poland and the USA, the importance of the Holocaust to young Poles today, how representations of the Holocaust have changed in Poland since the end of WWII, and the evolution of the relationship between Polish filmmakers and the state during the Communist era. I also asked what works he would recommend for those interested in discovering more about Polish film and literature.

To begin our discussion, I asked Dr. Łysak how it was that he originally became interested in the topic of Holocaust representation and how he thought the Holocaust was represented differently in Poland and the USA. Dr. Łysak told me that his introduction to Holocaust studies began in high school as a result of his interest in post-WWII Polish literature, of which the Holocaust is a major theme. Later, for his MA in American Literature, he wrote his thesis on Art Spiegelman's *Maus*, a graphic novel that is a biography of Spiegelman's father, Vladek Spiegelman, a Holocaust survivor. It was at this point in his academic career that Dr. Łysak became interested in "historical experience as the basis of identity." Concerning the representation of the Holocaust in Poland and the USA, Dr. Łysak informed me that, in the USA,

many people who wrote about the Holocaust in the immediate aftermath of WWII had Polish roots, either being émigrés from Poland themselves or the children of émigrés. However, it was not until the 1960s that US citizens with no personal connection to the Holocaust also began writing about it. Yet in Poland it was a different story, as many Polish writers started documenting the fate of Jews during the war and continued doing so until the political climate changed in late 1960s. The early works were based on personal observation. The second wave of interest in the topic came in the late 1980s, with such texts as Pawel Huelle's "Weiser Dawidek."

My second question for Dr. Łysak was about the importance of the memory of the Holocaust in contemporary Poland and, more specifically, the familiarity of young Poles with this aspect of their country's history. Dr. Łysak explained to me that, since the collapse of Communism, there has been a historical revival focusing on the multi-ethnic nature of Polish society in the pre-war years. Examples of this revival include the restoration of Jewish cemeteries and the construction of monuments to commemorate the horrors of the Holocaust. According to Dr. Łysak, Polish monuments commemorating the Holocaust focus largely on two themes: the theme of absence and the theme of martyrdom. The theme of absence is typified by monuments such as the Krakow Ghetto and Deportation Monument built in 2005 while the theme of martyrdom is typified by the Ghetto Heroes' Memorial in Warsaw, by Nathan Rapoport, from 1948. Another development since the collapse of Communism has been the shedding of light on such dark instances from this unfortunate chapter in Polish history as the massacre of Jews of Jedwabne by the Polish inhabitants of the town, chronicled in the book *Neighbors*, by Jan T. Gross. However, this new emphasis on Poland's Jewish history since the collapse of Communism has not been entirely uncontroversial. Dr. Łysak informed me



that while some of the resistance to focusing on the history of Poland's Jews is anti-Semitic in nature, there are also individuals whose understanding of the Polish history of WWII is still informed by the historical narrative established under the Communist regime; namely that the Second World War was a national tragedy with Poles, not Jews, as the primary victims of Nazi brutality. Concerning the familiarity of young Poles with the history of the Holocaust, Dr. Łysak told me that education about the Holocaust is not a compulsory topic for Polish high school students. However, he did say to me that many Polish high school students learn about the Holocaust through the efforts of individual educators and that many students take part in field trips to camps such as Auschwitz, where they gain a better understanding of this tragic chapter in Polish history.

I next asked Dr. Łysak how cinematic and literary representations of the Holocaust have changed throughout modern Polish history. I was especially curious to know how the Holocaust had been represented under the Communist regime as opposed to how it has been represented since the end of the Communist era. Dr. Łysak's response was that films about the Holocaust were originally used as instruments of Communist propaganda. For example, Dr. Łysak explained to me that concentration camps were often depicted as focal points of left-wing resistance. However, such representations had little basis in historical fact. Instead, in those

instances when there was resistance in the camps, the Communists simply appropriated this resistance as their own. According to Dr. Łysak, following the period during which films about the Holocaust served as vehicles of Communist propaganda, the focus shifted to the individual and themes of individual resistance and personal responsibility for moral action. Themes of this nature are readily apparent in Andrzej Munk's film *Passenger*, which depicts the relationship between a female SS guard at Auschwitz and a Polish inmate who is killed for smuggling information about the atrocities. Dr. Łysak informed me that, following the collapse of Communism, the focus in Polish filmmaking switched to Polish-Jewish relations during the war. Major themes addressed since the collapse of the Communist regime include Polish hostility toward Jews, indifference to the plight of the Jews, and Polish appropriation of Jewish property during the war. As an interesting aside, Dr. Łysak told me that many of these controversial themes had actually already been present in Polish literature during the Communist era. This was due to the relative laxity of censorship of literature vis-à-vis film. Dr. Łysak explained to me that, as opposed to literary works, which were only examined once before going to publication, censoring films was a two-step process. First, the screenplay was censored; then, after the film had been made, it was examined to see how closely it adhered to the screenplay that had been approved. With respect to how representations of the Holocaust changed after Poland's transition to democracy, Dr. Łysak's opinion was that perhaps the single most important change in the post-Communist era was that "The Holocaust [became] a Jewish tragedy". With the collapse of Communism, representations of the Holocaust were no longer used to promote a narrative of national victimization, something that had been a key feature of the official Communist Holocaust historiography.

My next question for Dr. Łysak concerned the course that he is offering winter quarter here at UW, Polish

Culture and Society as Reflected in Film (1944-1989). Specifically, I asked Dr. Łysak to explain the relationship between filmmakers and the state during the Communist period and how these relations changed over time. Dr. Łysak's responded that, immediately after WWII, many of the filmmakers in Poland were filmmakers who had been active during the interwar period, and that many of these individuals had strong Communist sympathies. However, during the 1950s a group of filmmakers formed what came to be known as the Polish Film School. This group comprised filmmakers such as Andrzej Wajda, and looked abroad, particularly to Italy and Italian neorealism for inspiration. According to Dr. Łysak, members of the Polish school were not interested in film as a form of entertainment. Instead, they saw it as a medium which could be a venue for the serious discussion of moral questions. During the 1960s, the Polish school reached its apogee. The 1970s saw the rise of comedy in Polish cinema, especially comedy which mocked Communism and problems of Communist life, such as bureaucratic red-tape and shortages. However, the workers' strikes in the late 1970s led many filmmakers to become involved with the workers' movements. With the imposition of martial law in 1981, many films made by Polish filmmakers were no longer screened, and it was not until the end of Communist rule that many of the films made post-1981 could be seen in Poland.

My final question for Dr. Łysak concerned his personal recommendations of works of Polish literature and film for those interested in learning more. This question was submitted to Dr. Łysak in written form after our interview and so his answer is reproduced here in full.

Dr. Łysak: Since I'm predominantly interested in the postwar period I'd recommend contemporary writers. Marek Hłasko was my first mature literary fascination and his works give a lot of insight into the life choices of

those who didn't see themselves in the mainstream of Communist life. When it comes to literature written in the past 20 years, I'm going to point to Dorota Masłowska, who made a lot of waves on the literary scene. Her debut novel was adapted for a film and her plays are performed in Poland and abroad. I also have a soft spot for Marcin Świetlicki, whose poetry was popularized through the post-punk band Świetliki and reached a wide audience. Andrzej Stasiuk would be another choice, as he restlessly probes the provincial life in his texts, recently expanding his area of interest from Polish Galicia to the Balkans.

If I were to point to a single Polish director, I'd say Andrzej Munk. Unfortunately, his premature death in a car accident cut short a really promising career. From my childhood I remember emotions accompanying watching Krzysztof Kieślowski's "Ten Commandments." One also shouldn't miss the comedies realized in the 1970s by Stanisław Bareja or Marek Piwowski. The last 20 years brought about substantial changes in Polish cinematography, with many new directors and "lighter" topics. The directors started looking for inspiration in Hollywood, producing more or less successful imitations of American cinema. Juliusz Machulski's "Killer" series is a good example of this trend.

Slovene at the UW

- Michael Biggins

In an essay first published in 2004, Slovenia's best-known novelist Drago Jančar attempts to capture the paradoxical essence of his homeland, that westernmost, diminutive bastion of Slavdom barely the size of Vermont, by recounting two legends (Drago Jančar, *Duša Evrope*. Ljubljana: Slovenska matica, 2006).

According to one of the legends, when God was creating the world, he sparingly allocated each part of it a particular natural beauty, one here, one there. At the end he had a fistful of the most dazzling landscapes left, which he let fall onto a small patch of earth known today as Slovenia.



Novo Mesto, viewed from the Krka River

The other legend has our Savior walking down a country road one day when he suddenly spies a downcast man sitting on a rock and crying. "What's wrong with you," asks our Savior, feeling infinite compassion for the poor man. "I'm your Savior and I can help." The man lifts his teary eyes and says, "I'm a Slovene." "In that case," our Savior says, "even I can't help you." And he sits down beside the man and cries with him bitterly over his fate.

Visitors to Slovenia equipped with just a Fodor's or a Lonely Planet will quickly grasp the truth of the first legend, but be baffled by the second, probably for the duration of their stay. What national identity could pretend to be a cause for total existential despair? Amid such stunning natural landscapes! Most travelers are well advised to dismiss the sour note and

enjoy the scenery – go scuba diving in the Adriatic, climb an Alp, explore a cave or two in the Karst, try the wines. Admire the profusion of Secessionist architecture in Ljubljana, the capital, or maybe go hunt for the vanishing Cerknica Lake. Even if you did start asking the locals about the despair, they wouldn't admit to it. Leave sorting out the messy parts to the Slovenes – and more hopefully still, to the Slovenists.

The Slavic Department at UW began training Slovenists when it introduced its Slovene curriculum in 2009, becoming the second Slavic studies center in North America with such a program. (The other program has been in existence at the U. of Kansas since 1980. A third program was recently put in place by the Slovene government at an Ohio community college in order to support the émigré community in Cleveland, in its day the largest Slovene city outside of Ljubljana.) UW's program is unique, in that it assumes prior exposure to either Slovene or another Slavic language in order to make the most of scarce instructional hours and to facilitate quick functional mastery of the language, especially by graduate students operating on short timetables. In the course of four quarters we cover the equivalent of two years' worth of material, after which students are ideally primed to make the most of a summer intensive advanced language course in Ljubljana, and then continue their advanced study back at UW with Slovene 499, Directed Readings in Slovene. By 499 all the props are pulled away and students are dealing with unadapted sources in their areas of specialization – whether literature, history, current affairs, or other disciplines. At that point each student is trying, with the aid of one disciplinary approach or another, to get to the heart of conflicts that have bedeviled Slovenia for at least the past century, and sometimes much longer.

UW's involvement with Slovenia goes back much further than our newly established course offerings might suggest, and prospects for the continued

expansion of these ties are promising. Since 1994 alone the UW-University of Ljubljana exchange program has sent 29 UW faculty members, PhD students and staff selected on a competitive basis to deliver guest lectures and collaborate with colleagues at Slovenia's leading research university, with reciprocal visits to UW during that time by fourteen faculty members from Ljubljana. In the Slavic Department, Professors José Alaniz and Gordana Crnković are both recent alumni of the UW-Ljubljana exchange whose visits have particularly helped grow UW's network of contacts with Slovene specialists in the sociology of culture. Moreover, Slovenia's official recognition of UW as home to one of the handful of Slovene instructional programs in North America puts Seattle on the itineraries of the visiting Slovene writers, artists, filmmakers and other noteworthy speakers whose North American tours the Slovene Ministry of Culture will be sponsoring in years to come.

As UW's Slovene language instructor, my own preferred approach to the issues that vex Slovenia has been through Slovene literature – as both a reader and a published translator. This past summer I was fortunate to be invited by the Slovene Book Agency (SBA) to attend the first ever international seminar of Slovene literary translators, which involved fifteen translators representing twelve

Not politicians, but local poets, frame the main entrance to Novo Mesto city hall.



languages and thirteen countries and took place far from the distractions of the capital in the small provincial town of Novo Mesto. On each of four successive days all fifteen of us grappled with the translation challenges posed by the same Slovene text, but with the text's author present to respond to our frustrated questions about one dense passage or another. Four days, four authors, four texts. It was heaven for translators (see legend #1) without a hint of the threat of legend #2, except of course in the very subject matter of the texts we were translating. The SBA did a world-class job of conceiving and executing the seminar. They were methodical and shameless taskmasters (as they should be), requiring all participants to translate and submit all of the texts in our native languages, with problem areas marked, well before the seminar began, thus ensuring that not a minute of the four days was wasted, beginning with the four-hour translation workshops each morning, followed by a different guest lecturer each afternoon, and ending with the public literary reading and broadcast interview given each evening by the next day's author-in-focus. For once, the lingua franca of an international conference was Slovene. As the sole representative of the *other* lingua franca, I was popular as a source of

comparative translations that everyone present could understand.

Whether there is or isn't another translator's seminar in store for me down the road, I can honestly say that this one was the event of a lifetime. I met some remarkable fellow translators, became personal acquaintances with authors whom I'd previously known only from their published work, and discovered at least one who I think has a bright career ahead of her in English translation. It was the kind of exhilarating experience that would be much harder to replicate if, for instance, one were a Russian or a German or a Polish literary translator. Which weighs considerably as one of my reasons for teaching Slovene at UW – because I know that Slovene language is a skill that will give bright and diligent students an unmatched level of access to a society and culture that is not just fascinating, troubled, creative and instructive in its own right, but functions in striking ways as a model in microcosm of our own.

Michael Biggins is UW's librarian for Slavic, Baltic and East European studies and an affiliate faculty member in the Dept of Slavic Languages.



Beehives with traditional hand-painted end panels can be encountered just off of many country roads.



Translation specialist Štefan Vevar and novelist Katarina Marinčič meet with translators on day two of the seminar.

UW POLISH STUDIES

Fulfilling its mission of *Bridging Cultures Through Education*, this past year the Polish Studies Endowment Committee hosted a series of interesting events ranging from lectures on economics and seismic tomography to Polish cinema and poetry. We also co-financed the Fulbright lecturer of Polish Studies at the UW, awarded a student scholarship, and organized three fundraising events.

In February 2010 many of us enjoyed **Malgorzata Walewska's** performance in *Il trovatore* at Seattle Opera and, the following day, met the diva in person at a fundraising cocktail party. This was Ms. Walewska's second engagement in Seattle, after her 2009 Seattle Opera debut as Judith in Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle*. We look forward to her return as Dulcinea in Massenet's *Don Quixote*, in March 2011.

In March **Professor Marek Belka** gave a lecture entitled "The Central European Dimension of the Global Economic Crisis: Prospects for Recovery." Professor Belka, former Prime Minister and Finance Minister of Poland, visited us as Director of the International Monetary Fund's European Department and shortly before becoming Head of National Bank of Poland http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marek_Belka_-_cite_note-0 The day following the lecture, guests had a chance to meet Professor Belka and his wife at a private fundraising reception.

At the beginning of April, **Dr. Elżbieta Durys**, an Assistant Professor at University of Łódź and visiting Fulbright Fellow at the University of Texas in Austin, talked about trends in Polish Cinema after 1989 and discussed why Polish national cinema suffered such a long crisis and what contributed to its revival.

Later on that month, over 200 people gathered at Kane Hall to watch the documentary film "**A Trip To Nowhere**," introduced by Martha Golubiec, who provided historical background. The film was written, directed and illustrated by Shannon Hart-Reed and produced by Grazyna Balut Ostrom and Martha Golubiec with the Polish Home Ladies Auxiliary in Seattle as executive producer. It relates the little known and forgotten stories of the forced deportation by the Soviet Union of over a million Polish women and children to Siberian labor camps during WWII.

In May a lecture by **Dr. Anna Frajlich** from Columbia University examined how Shakespearean motives served as metaphors and disguises in dealing with communism for the so-called "56 generation" of writers. That same day Dr. Frajlich met with UW students for a reading and discussion of poetry and the following day, at Ewa and Krzysztof Poraj-Kuczewski's, she and her husband met with Polish poetry lovers for a reading.

In June we said farewell to **Dr. Przemyslaw Chojnowski** and his family. For two consecutive years, as the Polish Studies Fulbright Lecturer, Przemek shared his knowledge of Polish history, culture and language with UW students, his colleagues and our community. As PSEC renewed its financial commitment to support Fulbright Scholars, in September, we welcomed **Dr. Tomasz Łysak** from University of Warsaw's Faculty of Applied Linguistics, Department of Specialized Languages as our 2010/11 Fulbright Lecturer.

Besides providing half of the Fulbright Lecturer's yearly salary, the UW Polish Studies Endowment Committee awarded a \$1500 Student Scholarship for 2010 to **Corey Krzan**.

Corey is a third-year undergraduate student who is double-majoring in French and Eastern European Languages. He is a dedicated volunteer and an active founding member of the Polish Student Association at the University of Washington. Corey is spending this academic year in Poland studying at the Polish Culture and Language School at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków.

During the summer Ewa and Krzysztof Poraj-Kuczewski hosted an informal event during which **Dr. Norbert Untersteiner** gave a short talk "Why should we care about the North Pole? Changes in the Arctic climate



Shannon Hard-Reed (middle) with Joanna Brodniewicz and Krystyna Balut

Norbert Untersteiner (middle) in conversation with Toni Krol, Bozena Chudzinski and others



and how they are connected to the rest of the world” and presented a documentary movie *Alpha Station 1956/57*. It was an enjoyable evening with delicious food, a great ambiance, and a spirited and interesting discussion. We hope to continue this tradition by inviting interesting speakers from our community who are experts in areas that are not necessarily Polish-related.

The new academic year began with the new Board elections: Krystyna Untersteiner, chair; Allen Jaworski, vice-chair; Shosh Westen, treasurer; and Heidi Beck, secretary. We thank Sheila Charles, former chair, and Kat Dziwirek, acting secretary, for their work and dedication.

October brought us two interesting, though very different events. First, **Professor Barbara Romanowicz**, a leading seismologist from UC at Berkeley, gave us a peek into the earth's interior from crust to core. Then, the extraordinary Polish opera star, **Aleksandra Kurzak**, dazzled Seattle audiences with her performance in Gaetano Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Again, as has become a tradition with Ms. Walewska and Mr. Mariusz Kwiecień, many opera aficionados had a chance to meet Ms. Kurzak at a private reception held at the lovely home of longtime PSEC supporter Koryn Rolstad.



Reception with Aleksandra Kurzak

The last event of 2010 was a panel discussion: *Civic Society and Independent Media in Central Europe: 30 Years of the Solidarity Movement in Poland*. Our guests, **Henryk and Ludwika Wujec**, journalists, activists, politicians, were instrumental in establishing independent trade unions and media in Poland. They were involved in KOR (Committee for Worker's Defense), underground trade unions, and later, in building the basic structure of the Independent Trade Union Solidarność, particularly its media. **Zbigniew Pietrzyk** and **Zbigniew “Ziggy” Karwowski**, former Solidarity leaders and organizers, now residing in the US, joined Mr. and Mrs. Wujec in a discussion led by **Dr. Arista Cirtautas**, from UW's Jackson School of International Studies. It was a memorable evening, with charismatic speakers, good discussion, and a congenial atmosphere. A great way to celebrate the end of another successful year in the history of the Distinguished Polish Speakers' Series!



Discussion panel Henryk Wujec, Olga Owens (interpreter), Ludwika Wujec, Zbigniew Pietrzyk, Zbigniew Ziggy-Karwowski and Arista Cirtautas

We would like to thank all of our supporters and invite you to attend the upcoming events and lectures and encourage you to support our endeavors financially. As you probably noticed, this year we are again not holding an auction, and for that reason we are seeking donations, contributions and

participation to supplement not only the Speakers' fund but also the Fulbright and Student Scholarship and Endowment funds. If you feel, as we most fervently do, these remarkable programs should be continued and are valuable to you as well as to our community and to its students, **please consider supporting us by making a financial commitment in support of our mission**. Thank you! Dziękujemy! <http://www.polishstudiesuw.org/contributions>

We invite you to our upcoming events:

On January 20, 2011, in commemoration of Chopin's 200th birthday, Dr. Steven **Lagerberg**, accompanied by accomplished pianist **Fred Kronacher**, will give a lecture entitled “Chopin – Mortal Man/Immortal Genius.” On February 10, **Dr. Piotr Moncarz** will talk about “Energy Challenge of East Central Europe,” and on May 5, **Ryszard Horowitz** will present “Extension of Imagination.” Please look for more information about these events on our website (www.polishstudiesuw.org) or subscribe to receive our monthly e-newsletter (contactus@polishstudiesuw.org)

UW Explore: Georgia, 2010

- Mary Childs

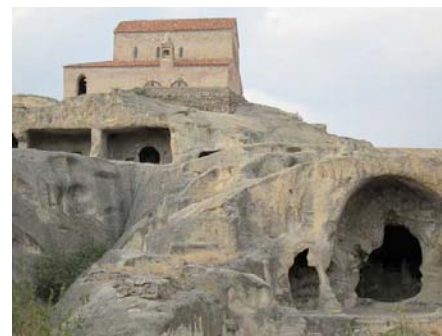
Inspired by the adventures of the first UW Exploration Seminar to Georgia in 2009, the second Seminar to Georgia took place in September, 2010: this year's group included nine intrepid students, from a wide range of majors. We spent 3 ½ weeks exploring in depth the history and culture of the Republic of Georgia, nestled in the Caucasus Mountains south of Russia, and which came to the world's attention during its brief war with Russia in August, 2008. A major goal of the seminar was to get a better understanding of Georgia, trying to understand the complex historical and cultural factors that are currently at play in the Caucasus region and today's Georgia's geopolitical and social realities.



This year, the program travelled to Georgia via Turkey, to get a better appreciation of the cultural continuities and the fluidity of the borders in the Black Sea region. We spent an action-packed day in Istanbul before flying to Erzurum in northeastern Anatolia, to explore the Georgian Valley, a cultural center of 10-11th century medieval Georgia. Our day in Istanbul included visits to Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque; the ancient Roman Cisterns; and the Grand Bazaar and Spice Market, where the amazing array of goods and foods, including our first Turkish coffee

and baklava, did not disappoint our expectations. Early the next morning we flew to Erzurum, which in the early 19th century was part of the southwestern flank of the Russian Empire, and is currently the center of Islamic teaching in Turkey. For many of us, it was the first time we had seen women in full burkas or experienced Ramadan: the streets were largely deserted, but we were able to visit the 13th century Twin Tower Seminary, and its interior garden set with tables for the evening meal; and welcomed in to the town's main mosque, where the head imam gave us a personal tour. From Erzurum, we drove to Yusufeli, a center for rafting and trekking in the Kascar Mountains, but also the jumping off point for the Georgian Valley. Travelling on narrow mountainous roads, we visited three Georgian Orthodox sites: Oskvank, Barhal, and Ishan. Ishan's Church of the Mother of God's interior has been converted to a mosque, but still clearly reveals its Orthodox past: fragments of frescoes and architectural details of the ancient church are visible; exploring the exterior, we discovered that Georgian visitors continue to worship at the site, and have made small shrines, tucked in corners overgrown with nettles and weeds, by scratching in Georgian words, and burning slender beeswax candles melted on to the rough stone surfaces of the 11th century church.

The Turkish leg of the seminar ended as we walked across the border at Sarpi, bustling with kilometers of Turkish trucks queued up to bring goods into Georgia, and a daunting line of travelers from Turkey, Armenia, and Azerbaijan.



Our guide, Archil, met us on the other side of the border, and we were immediately introduced to the "real" Georgia, joining the locals for a swim in the Black Sea and enjoying our first taste of delicious Georgian food.

As we made our way to Tbilisi, we stopped at Batumi, now booming as Georgia's largest port; Kutaisi, the country's capital from the 10th to the 12th century; Gori, Stalin's birthplace and home to the well-kept Stalin Museum; and Uplistsikhe, a town carved into limestone hills, now in ruins, that had been a thriving commercial center as far back as the time of the ancient Greeks.

In Tbilisi, we met our home-stay families, with whom we would live for the better part of the month. We learned to navigate the Tbilisi metro and buses, not to mention the intricacies of Magti, the Georgian cell phone company. Welcomed by the generous staff of our host institutions, including GFSIS, the Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies, and the Shota Rustaveli Institute of Georgian Literature, we heard lectures on varied topics: Rustaveli's *The Man in the Panther Skin*, Georgia's national epic; the history of Georgia in the Soviet period; and of course, the current political and economic situation.

Complementing our activities in Tbilisi, field trips to several of Georgia's borders provided many highlights to our seminar, giving us a chance to enjoy the natural beauty of the country's flora and fauna and see more of "real" Georgia. We



spent a long weekend in Stepantsminda (formerly Kazbegi), ten kilometers south of the border with Russia: one short day hike found us in a field of wild raspberries, from which we were able to see the impressive Devdoraki Glacier; the next day, outside of Juta, a small village south of Stepantsminda, we were lucky enough to spot multiple flocks of migrating honey vultures as we hiked up to the base camp of the Chaukhi Massif. Before we left the area we visited the Tsminda Sameba Church, perched high on the hills above the town, and spent the early morning hours trying to catch a glimpse the top of the region's famous mountain, Kazbegi. We spent another long weekend in the Kakheti region, going first to the south of Tbilisi, where we visited the cave monastery Davit Gareja, climbing the hills behind the complex, exploring the monks' cells

with frescoes dating to the 11th century, from whose vantage point we could look down into the plains of Azerbaijan. In Kakheti proper, further to the north and east, thanks again to Archil, a photographer and author with friends in all corners of Georgia, we gained insight into Georgia's multi-ethnic makeup that is rarely seen by casual tourists: an entire village of blond, blue-eyed Russian Old Believers; Dagestani peasants selling milk from their three-wheeled motorized cart on the streets of Lagodeki; a young Chechen peasant on his horse; Azeri women in colorful scarves, tying up their chickens and hawking homemade stuffed green peppers in the traditional covered market of Telavi.



Back in Tbilisi, life was no less exciting, and this year's group bravely visited the sulphur baths in the center of the old town, which Alexander Pushkin recounts in his *Journey to Erzurum*, and which we all agreed, smelled just the way Pushkin had described them. Students pursued individual research projects for the more formal academic portion of the

seminar, and were amazingly resourceful and perspicacious as they teased out information about today's Georgia, interviewing local experts, including research fellows at GFSIS, doctors, and journalists. All in all, it was an amazing adventure, well deserving of its name as an Exploration Seminar.



We are eagerly looking forward to the 2011 Seminar! In addition to the time in Tbilisi, the program will include a few extra days in Istanbul, a return to the Georgian Valley, and visits to other spectacular areas of Georgia: Svaneti, with its villages even higher in the Caucasus than Stepantsminda; and the desert plains of Javakheti to the south, bordering Armenia. For more information, please contact: Mary Childs, mchilds@u.washington.edu; Professor James West, jdwest@u.washington.edu; or the UW International Programs and Exchanges: <http://studyabroad.washington.edu>.

NEWS FROM YOU

Michele Anciaux Aoki (PhD 1991) is in her third year as World Languages Program Supervisor at the State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. "Although the commute to Olympia (about 2-3 days per week) can be a nuisance, the opportunity to work on promoting world languages to 1,000,000 students in K-12 schools across our state makes up for it. We've had some major accomplishments this year, including the formal adoption of the national "Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century" as our state's K-12 World Languages Learning Standards and the endorsement by the State Board of Education of a model policy and procedure for awarding Credit for Proficiency (where students can earn high school credits by reaching certain proficiency levels in the language). You can find me at www.k12.wa.us/worldlanguages/.

"My son Ante is still living in St. Petersburg, Russia (4 1/2 years now). We enjoyed having him home for Christmas last year. My daughter Natalya just graduated from the US Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD in May, with a major in Aerospace Engineering and minor in Russian Language. She's now down in Pensacola, FL, about to start flight training to be a Navy pilot."

"I've begun my second year as Assistant Professor of Chinese at the College of William & Mary in Virginia," writes **Roy Chan** (BA 2002). After a grueling first year, I'm still trying to get used to the rhythms of academic life. However, I've really jumpstarted my second book project that deals with China and Russia, and as part of that project, presented research in Moscow in September and at the ASEES conference in Los Angeles. With a Russian colleague at W&M, we invited Slavic scholar Anastasia Kayiatos from UC Berkeley to discuss sexuality in the second world. She and I held a public brown-bag discussion that was a lot of fun."

In 2010 **Gray Carpenter Church** (BA 1977) taught classes for Irdeto in Oslo and Buenos Aires. While there, she took advantage of the opportunity to go birding and added several species to her life list. Gray writes that she is "forever grateful to Anne Rathbone Winskie (MA 1978) for introducing her to the joys of birding." In June Gray and husband Al once again competed in the Kona Classic fishing tournament. Once again, they didn't win.

On November 16 **Carol Davis** (MA 1979) gave a poetry reading at the Library of Congress as part of the Poetry at Noon series. "I read from

my book, poems about what it was like living as a foreigner in Russia."

Vitaliy Demyanik (BA 2008) has been teaching English to adults in Seoul for the past year and has had the opportunity to travel throughout Southeast Asia at the same time.

"Greetings from Washington, DC, where I (**Candace Faber**, BA 2005) am back in training with the State Department. I returned from Warsaw, Poland this summer and am preparing to head out to the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan. A Slavic alumni good news story - two years ago, I got a call from fellow alumnus Mike Waske, who saw in your newsletter that I was working in the cultural affairs section of the U.S. Embassy in Warsaw. He was working with the Seattle-Gdynia Sister City Association and Washington Business Week to bring to life the first edition of Washington Business Week in Gdynia, Poland. Through that connection, the U.S. Embassy was able to offer the project financial and logistical support, and our Ambassador and several embassy officials participated in the program. It was a wonderful example of people-to-people diplomacy, giving Polish high school teachers and students an opportunity to broaden their horizons and to think of themselves as innovators and entrepreneurs. Washington Business Week has empowered high school students in Washington State for over 20 years; I was proud to help bring the first edition of this program to Gdynia, and it is an added delight that our cooperation began with an article in the Slavic alumni newsletter!"

Lisa Frumkes (PhD 1996) says, "Nothing much to report here. Still living in Bellevue, still working at Apex Learning (7 years now!), still a mom (kids now 8 and 5)...but planning to do some travel in the next year and I'm excited!"

David Graber (PhD 1996) took a position in Russian and German language and literature at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington in the fall of 2010. "Wilmington is right on the beach, and it's a ten-minute bike ride to the ocean. It's not the Deep South, but it's still a different world I find very entertaining. My favorite 'Flannery O'Connor' moment was the day I heard a neighbor say 'no ma'am' - to her dog."

Marilyn (Hoogen) Sizer (PhD 1997) happily topped off her 27-year teaching career in June. "I couldn't believe that I'd been teaching English as a Second Language at Roosevelt High School for fifteen of those years! I am celebrating by returning to the UW as an Access student, one of those loyal gray-haired seniors who sits in the corner and makes occasional wise comments. I've got a small part in the

Fremont Players' British Panto this holiday season, my third appearance "on the boards" at Hale's Palladium in Fremont. In the last several years I've made a pilgrimage to the Guggenheim for a Kandinsky retrospective, worked fire safety inside the perimeter at Burning Man and performed with Cirque de Flambe there and in Seattle. Did I mention I married a clown about five years ago? I've also got two grandchildren to keep me young. My husband and I hope to get to Russia this summer."

In April **Laura Kemmer** (MA 1992) notified us that she had accepted a position as Assistant Professor in the Psychology Department at Pacific Lutheran University.

In April **Smilja Janković** (MA 2006) wrote to us from Seoul, Korea, "where I've been living and teaching (English to little kiddies - from kindergarten through middle school) for the past year and a half." Since leaving the UW "life has been somewhat unstable, and I haven't really found a home. After the UW I went to Bosnia - spent a year there, then off to Costa Rica - another MA (this time International Law and Human Rights) and some Balkan detoxing, and finally here, since November 2008. Seoul has been interesting, sometimes hard and challenging, but I've enjoyed teaching and learning how to be a kid again. Working with children is really one of the most rewarding jobs ever, even if it is only teaching them English a few hours a week. However, I have to constantly remind myself that not all children are angels...I hate playing the role of the police officer. Discipline, discipline, discipline! I will be moving to Istanbul fall 2011 and probably trying to get a university teaching job there. I have decided to park my bags there, since Turkey is infinitely interesting and Istanbul close to and far enough from the Balkans for it to be comfortable."

Joseph Kautz (PhC 1994) was just elected President of the SouthWest Association for Learning Technology. SWALLT provides leadership and support in the development, integration, evaluation and management of instructional technology for the teaching and learning of language, literature and culture. "My time at UW prepared me very well for this exciting position."

Dear Slavic Department!

I'm sorry, but the time has come; I ask you now to drop me entirely from the general old Slavic Dept Mailing list; the reasons are simple: I am TOO OLD -- by which I mean, I took a few Slavic Dept. classes, though I knew Gershevsky, Pahn, Novikov, Treadgold, Spector and others, among the

students few (Dale Plank, Roger Shaw). Further, I have seen no mention of persons from that era, it's just too far in the past! Next, I may plan a departure from 50 yrs in Indiana, and any trips to the Pacific Northwest seem most unlikely. But one small puzzle remains; just how was it that you tracked me down? I've been really out of touch with U of Wash, I was in an interdepartmental program (linguistics) and working with N. Poppe the Mongolist.

But I retain fine memories of UW and campus, there too all has vastly changed. People of the state were kind to admit me as state-tuition rate in mid-'50s, can you believe I was paying like \$125-150 per semester then?

Kind regards to all,

J. Krueger, tired and re-tired (PhD 1960)

Mary Kruger (BA 1970), a Senior Foreign Service Officer, continues her work at the Board of Examiners of the State Department. Every day she meets job candidates from all over the U.S. who are eager to face the challenges of a Foreign Service career. If diplomatic service interests you, check out the website www.careers.state.gov.

"Just checking in to say 'hi!' and wish you and everyone at the Slavic Dept. Happy Holidays!" writes **Zulfya Lafi** (MA, REECAS, 2002). "I have been busy working at the UW School of Med./ Dept. of Psychiatry as Manager of Program Operations (mainly managing grants and contracts) and raising Esme, who turned 11 on July 4. She just started Middle School - 6th grade - big change!"

"Even though my current work has nothing to do with Slavic/ Central Asian world, I keep in touch with friends from my IREX days in Kazakhstan and Russia, and hope to be able to travel again some day!"

After graduating from the UW (BA 2003), **Alan Lee** entered the non-profit sphere managing an environmental justice and community building program in Seattle. He recently earned an MA from the Columbia University School of Social Work in New York, where he studied administration and business. He currently works as an analyst for the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Carolyn Leon (BA 1961) writes that she's fortunate to be in good health and will be celebrating her 50th wedding anniversary in 2011. She and her husband "moved from Bellevue to Redmond a couple of years ago, spend our winters in Tucson, AZ, and keep in contact with several Russian friends through

email. My last trip to Russia was in 2007 as a member of the choir of First Presbyterian Church in Bellevue on tour in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Helsinki. An informative good book suggestion: 'Hidden and Triumphant: The Underground Struggle to Save Russian Iconography,' written by a friend, Irina Yazykova, and translated into English. The book gives a brief history of Russian iconography and then concentrates on the dark years of Soviet power and how icons survived. Includes excellent colored pictures of icons."

Don Livingston (PhD 1998) continues as a Senior Lecturer in Russian at Arizona State University. In Summer 2010 I was program observer for the eight-week Russian-Tatar language programs in Kazan that were conducted under the auspices of the Critical Language Institute of the Melikian Center; I will be resident director of those programs in Summer 2011. In November 2010 I released to the public a major set of online supplementary exercises for the textbook "Live from Russia." I continue to run the "Russian Word of the Day" blog, which currently receives over 600 browser hits a day (plus over 1300 RSS/Atom hits).

Rebecca Manring (MA 1974) has been serving as Acting Director of Indiana University's India Studies Program throughout 2010. "My first taste of administration - I've been surprised by how much I've enjoyed the chance to meet and work with people across the university, and to get to know more about my colleagues and their work. Another book, "The Fading Light of Advaitacarya," a set of translations of hagiographies of a 14th-15th century leader of a Bengali devotional tradition, is in press with Oxford University Press, and I'm looking forward to moving in some new research directions (especially religion in South Asian cinema) this next year. Spent a couple of weeks in India during the summer as a member of the American Institute of Indian Studies' Language Committee, observing language programs. That gave me the opportunity to visit Lucknow for the first time, and also to catch up with long-time friends and colleagues in India. All is very well!"

"Nothing much has happened with me," writes **Cadence McAfee** (BA 2008). "I'm looking for ways to use my Russian; I applied for the position at T-Mobile that was sent out. S novym godom!"

Monica Nunan recently moved to the Legal and Corporate Affairs Department at Microsoft.

"Sorry I (**Sunny Otake**, MA 1994) am late in replying to your very kind e-mail. Between finals and having an uncle in the hospital, life has been very hectic lately. All is well in my world, though. Wedding planning is well underway and the wedding is set for August 14, 2011. It will be at Steve's parents' lake house, so the setting is very tranquil. My conversion should be done by then and I should also be well on my way to a new career in chemistry. All in all, a year of many changes."

In 2010 **Lee Pickett** (BA 2006) "got engaged, moved from Maryland/DC to New York after giving up on finding a job in the federal government, was unemployed for a few months, started work doing research on business licensing for a company (unfortunately, has nothing to do with Russian), got married (she's not Russian, but it's okay...). I just took LSATS, so I hope to start law school next fall. Maybe I'll still get to use my Russian skills if I get into the right kind of law..."

This past summer and fall **Andrew Schirmer** (BA 2010) interned at the Foundation for Russian American Economic Cooperation, helping to organize the annual bilateral meeting of the Russian American Pacific Partnership. After taking and passing the FSOT written exam, he is now applying for various jobs and reading fat Victorian novels.

In mid-April **Cheryl Spasojevic's** (BA 1967) new grandson, Aleksander, was born, joining his older brother, Mirko, now 2 years, 8 months old. "We stayed here in the U.S. until the beginning of June to help out before leaving for Vučkovića in Serbia. Because it was a pretty rainy summer we didn't get to any of the folklore events that we have in the past. I did a translation about the Bronze Age archeological sites in Šumadija as a chapter of a forthcoming book, which gave me the opportunity to make use not only of my language degree but also my second degree in Anthropology. I was really surprised to learn that there were so many sites right in my own back yard there.

In July a documentary filmmaker came to chronicle the youth who are participating in the latest project that I work with through the foundation WorldWide Orphans in the Children's Home "Mladost" in Kragujevac. This is the seventh year of work with them, and the

current project is financing the college studies of four young people who were wards of the Home and the Center for Social Work and had participated in earlier projects. Otherwise, I kept busy with my large organic garden and orchard. In September my younger son, Marko, received his Ph.D. in Environmental Studies from UC Irvine and now is in a post-doc position at UC Davis. I am lucky that my older son, Rade, and his family live right next door so that I can enjoy my grandsons."

"2010 hasn't been a very exciting year," writes **Nicolette Stauffer** (BA 2008), "but I returned from teaching ESL in Prague in late 2009. I had a great time and enjoyed every minute of it! It was nice being able to practice my Czech and explore a little. Teaching was very rewarding and such a wonderful experience. Since my return I have been substitute teaching as a para-educator in Olympia while I decide what comes next!"

"I've been wanting to respond, I swear - just a very busy time, I suppose," writes **Dana Weintraub** (MA 1992). "That said, this has been a good and busy year! First, I wanted to say I enjoyed a lovely Russian/Georgian dinner starting with khachipuri, moving on to pelmeni, and finishing up with goluptsi. We have a really good restaurant here in San Diego called Pomegranate - I highly recommend it. The waitstaff are all Russian so we get to practice our Russian from the time we make our reservation to the time we leave, stuffed.

"This has been a great year: I got married in April and became a stepmom of 3 kids at that time, and we adopted a dog, as well. In June, I was promoted to Senior Director of Development at San Diego Hospice & The Institute for Palliative Medicine, an AMAZING organization that provides end-of-life care to over 1,000 patients a day in San Diego County, and support to their families and friends to the tune of about 14,000 adults and children each year. So.... life is good!"

Jared West (MA 2003) is currently a flight attendant supervisor for US Airways. "I've been with the airline now for 7 years, and I have had a lot of opportunity for world travel. My son, Aleksandr, is now 11 years old and keeping me on my toes more than ever. I also bought my first house this summer and it's been keeping me busy and keeping my pockets empty!"

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This year's recipient of the *Vadim Pahn Scholarship Fund* was Blerina Shehu, who studied second-year Russian in the UW's summer quarter intensive Russian language program.

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