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Our Dinner with Andrei Codrescu
Esteemed essayist, poet and commentator visits University of Wisconsin by Nancy Heingartner / OUTREACH COORDINATOR

On an unseasonably beautiful Monday in early October, 2010 I had the pleasure of escorting Andrei Codrescu, prolific writer and social commentator, to various gatherings around the UW-Madison campus. Codrescu had come to Madison for a full day of media appearances and guest lectures, and I was glad that the weather did not disappoint. Codrescu flew into Madison on Sunday, October 3 and gave a lecture at local bookstore Room of One’s Own that evening. Monday, October 4, began with an interview by Matthew Feraca summarized her experience that day by saying, “He’s such a worldly guy and it was so much fun to just have a real conversation without having in mind beforehand what the plot would be, you know, how it would be shaped, and just flying by the seat of my pants and practicing the real art of conversation with somebody who’s quite the master.” Following “Here on Earth,” we crossed the real art of conversation with somebody who’s quite the master.”

Studying Baltic Languages at UW-Madison
Sixteen students from around the U.S. spent summer 2010 on the UW-Madison campus intensively studying the languages and cultures of the Baltic nations: Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The Baltic Studies Summer Institute, BALSSI, sponsored by a consortium of U.S. universities, has a home at UW-Madison for three consecutive years, from 2009 through 2011. In 2010, elementary Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian, and intermediate Latvian and Lithuanian were offered. In 2011, pending sufficient enrollment, intermediate Estonian will be added to the list.

Students were in class

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Letter from the director

By Ted Gerber
CREECA DIRECTOR

Greetings to the CREECA community! As the Wisconsin autumn sadly but inevitably gives way to winter, I have plenty of good news that will hopefully cheer you up. First and foremost, CREECA was successful in securing funding for the US Department of Education’s National Resource Center (NRC) competition for the 2010-14 grant cycle. In fact, the reviewers gave positive comments and the robust budget for our NRC programming testifies to the vibrancy of our center’s activities. Moreover, we also received funding for 9 graduate-level and 2 undergraduate-level year-long Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships, effectively increasing the number of year-long FLAS fellowships we can award by 4, while maintaining the number of summer awards at our disposal at the prior level of 5. I want to thank and congratulate Jennifer Tishler, Nancy Heininger, and Andy Spencer for their contributions to our NRC/FLAS proposal. Also, all the CREECA staff members are grateful for the input of our Administrative Council and for the energetic participation of CREECA’s faculty, student, and community affiliates in our activities. Your engagement in and support for our programs is vital to our continuing success.

The start of a new academic year often brings staff departures and arrivals, and this year is no exception. We wish the best to Alec Luhn, who did outstanding work as our Web and publications assistant last year. Alec graduated in May 2010 with majors in Russian, journalism, and history, and took an exciting new job as a reporter for the Moscow Times. Be sure to read his work when you are in Moscow (or see the online version of the newspaper.)

We are fortunate to have Mike Dando, a graduate student in Curriculum and Instruction, as our new webmaster and publications assistant. Mike comes to us with two significant experience in Web design and print layout, but also a sharp talent in photography, which you will find evident in this edition of the newsletter.

As usual, we have a flurry of regular and new events underway this fall. In addition to our regular Thursday lecture series, which continues to feature a diverse group of both local and external speakers, we are delighted to host the well-known poet and commentator Andrei Codrescu, with help from several campus partners, including the Distinguished Lectures Committee of the Wisconsin Union Directorate, the Kempner Knapp Bequest Committee, and the Anonymous Fund of the College of Letters & Science. As you can read elsewhere in this issue, Codrescu’s classic wit and insightful commentary were on display at his public lecture on October 4, about the value of language and the complicated nature of translation, and during his appearance on the Wisconsin Public Radio show “Here on Earth.”

We have enhanced our lecture series in cooperation with the Russian Language Flagship by having speakers like Alexander Martynov and Artemy Troitsky give presentations in Russian to the Flagship students during their visits. CREECA has also helped launch distance-learning Kazakh language instruction featuring Marzhian Arekova, whose UW courses are being taken simultaneously by students at Indiana University and the University of Michigan. We appreciate Marzhian’s willingness to learn the ropes of distance-learning technology. Although there are skeptics about the effectiveness of distance-learning for language instruction, we believe that it offers a promising, cost-effective opportunity to maintain the viability of instruction in languages for which student demand has tended to be weak and scattered across institutions.

Speaking of language instruction, we are happy to confirm that CREECA will be hosting the Baltic Studies Summer Institute (BALSSI) for a third consecutive year in summer 2011. Last summer we were encouraged that enrollments were sufficient to offer five courses: first-year instruction in all three Baltic languages and second-year Latvian and Lithuanian. We hope to build on the momentum from this year and that enrollments will expand still further. Help us spread the word to anyone who might be interested in learning a Baltic language in summer 2011. Finally, CREECA has played a key role in launching a new Central Eurasian Studies Summer Institute (CESSI), a consortium of nine member institutions and several additional contributors, which will begin offering instruction in the languages of Central Asia and the Caucasus in summer 2011.

For more information, please contact Nancy Heininger, Outreach Coordinator. (608) 262-3379.

Save the Date!

Day in the Baltics
Monday, April 4, 2011

Attention Teachers of High School Juniors and Seniors!
Day in the Baltics, CREECA’s annual mini-conference, is coming in Spring 2011.
The event will be held on the UW-Madison Campus 8:30 am until 12:15 pm.
Please mark your calendars!

For more information, please contact Nancy Heininger, Outreach Coordinator.
outreach@creeca.wisc.edu or call (608) 262-3379.

The Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia
200 Ingraham Hall, 1155 Observatory Drive • Madison, WI 53706

Dando, a graduate student in

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areas of potential cooperation in Russian digital library projects. Spencer gave a presentation on UW-Madison’s Russian Satirical Journal digitization project as an example of a project that could be further developed jointly with Russian partners. The Yeltsin Library, which also has regional branches in the cities of Petrozavodsk, Cheboksary, Kazan, Tumen, Omsk, and Ulan-ude, will be digitizing materials found in repositories in these regions as well as materials from St. Petersburg. Examples of digitized items from these regional branches were shown at the meeting, including a rare book on Russian geography published in 1776 and held by a repository in Tumen. As plans for cooperative projects move forward, further meetings of this group will take place, with the next meeting likely to be held in Russia.

In March 2010 Manon van de Water (theatre and drama) went on a research trip to Moscow and the Northern Caucasus (Vladikavkaz and Beslan) to conduct on-site research for a book chapter: “Theatre as Therapy in Volatile Regions.” In August the on-line journal of AATE (the American Alliance for Theatre and Education) Incite/Insight Vol. 2, 3 published a report on this trip, titled “Theatre, War and Terrorism in the Northern Caucasus.” In December 2010 van de Water will give a lecture on the same topic at the Janasanskriti Theatre of the Oppressed Festival in Kolkata, India. This research trip followed on a series of teacher workshops which van de Water conducted in Beslan in April 2009; the report from these workshops has been published in the 2009 yearbook of the Russian Theatre Federation.

On October 24, 2010, the Dane County chapter of the United Nations Association of the United States of America presented emeritus professor Norma Berkowitz (UW-Madison, social work) with the Global Citizen Award for her many years of effective work at the international level, recognizing in particular her work in founding the Friends of Chernobyl Centers U.S. Inc. (FOCCUS).

Michael J. Mikos (Slavic languages, UW-Milwaukee) gave an invited lecture on “Religious Freedom in 17th Century Poland: Historical, Architectural, and Literary Depictions” at the Fourth Annual Cross-Culture-Cate International Lecture ship in the Humanities, Society, and Religion at the Oklahoma State University on August 30, 2010.

Ekaterina Levintova (public and environmental affairs, UW-Green Bay) published her article “Good Neighbors/ Dominant Narratives about the ‘Other’ in Russian and Polish Newspapers” in Europe-Asia Studies 62:8 (October 2010), 1339-1361.

Congratulations to Neal Pease (history, UW-Milwaukee), whose book Rome’s Most Faithful Daughter: The Catholic Church and Independent Poland was awarded a 2010 ASEEES/Orbis Book Prize for Polish Studies, for the best book in any discipline, on any aspect of Polish affairs.

Jambul

Continued from page 3

endorsed by the Russian administration.

Finally, the sole reading of the documents was a great exercise to develop my reading skills (I am sure many scholars working in the archives know the challenge of reading Cyrillic and Arabic in cursive). Thanks to the modern technology and the policies on archival work in Kazakhstan, I was able to photograph numerous dark (archival files) and bring them with me to continue my work on pre-Soviet Kazakh literature.

To summarize, my trip to Almaty proved productive and extremely useful. Introducing myself to archival work in Central Asia, getting acquainted with the archival and library holdings unavailable elsewhere, obtaining materials for my research, and meeting with the most active Kazakh scholars — these were the most conspicuous results of my endeavor, thanks to the Graduate Student Project that could be further developed jointly with Russian partners. The Yeltsin Library, which also has regional branches in the cities of Petrozavodsk, Cheboksary, Kazan, Tumen, Omsk, and Ulan-Ude, will be digitizing materials found in repositories in these regions as well as materials from St. Petersburg. Examples of digitized items from these regional branches were shown at the meeting, including a rare book on Russian geography published in 1776 and held by a repository in Tumen. As plans for cooperative projects move forward, further meetings of this group will take place, with the next meeting likely to be held in Russia.

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A Trip of a Lifetime: Kazakhstan

By Jambul Akkaziev

Graduate Student – Languages & Cultures of Asia

In the meantime, during the evenings I would meet with leading scholars of Kazakhstan who advised me on how to work in the TiGARK, which I started during the fourth week of my stay in Almaty. Spending morning and afternoon hours in the archive proved invaluable to my exploratory research for many reasons.

First, I have obtained hands-on experience in working in Kazakhstan's archives, which in many ways are similar, if not identical, to other archives in the post-Soviet space; thus, I have acquired the necessary tools to pursue research at archives in the Russian Federation and in the nations of Central Asia. Second, working through most of the fondy (archival holdings) and opisi (registers) relating to the 19th-early 20th century literature and book-publishing in the Kazakh SSR, I acquired a broad picture of what is available and potentially indispensable to my future dissertation.

The unpublished literary works by Kazakhs collected both by the Kazakh intellectuals and Russian officials and explorers were of major significance to my endeavor.

Further, the documents pertaining to the works banned by Russian censorship during the colonial era provided me with a picture of the historical circumstances and the official rhetoric in which Kazakhs were creating their literary works. In addition, the documented reports by Russian officials on the Jadidist (new-method) schools in the Kazakh steppe “undermining” the Russian educational policies, while widely known to researchers, have also shed light on some of the literary trends of Sciences, I ventured into both the library of this Academy and the National Library of Kazakhstan. As I found out, over the past decades the Kazakhstan government has been funding a special Medeni Murat (Culture Legacy) project devoted to bringing to light existing written works and documents about Kazakhstan that were obscured or otherwise dismissed during the Soviet era. These newly published works proved exceptionally useful for my next foray into the State Archive (TiGARK). First, some of them presented an overview of the pre-revolutionary literature of Kazakhstan, which gave me a better picture of which authors and regions I should focus on in the future. Second, several works were collections of archival documents, which saved me a fair amount of time, time otherwise spent ruminating through the archival holdings they were obtained from. Last but not least, some of the Medeni Murat works referred me to the Rare Books Collection of the National Library, where I spent two weeks researching the 19th century bibliographies and newspapers germane to the literature of Kazakhstan.

“My primary goals were to get acquainted with archival work in Kazakhstan, to explore collections pertaining to the 19th century literature and history of Kazakhstan”
Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) 2010 - 2011 Academic Year

CREECA would like to congratulate the following recipients of the Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships for summer 2010 intensive language study and for foreign language and area studies during the 2010-2011 academic year. FLAS fellowships are awarded on the basis of a competitive application process to students who are enrolled in a program that combines modern foreign language training with area or international studies.

Summer 2010 Intensive Language Study
- Barbara Bird (second language acquisition) – intermediate Lithuanian, BALSSI
- Roberto Carmack (history) – intermediate Kazak, Indiana University
- Derek Drake (German) – elementary Estonian, BALSSI
- Charitle Hyman (anthropology) – advanced Ukrainian, University of Kansas Program in Lviv
- Benjamin Jens (Slavic languages and literature) – ACTR Summer Language Program for Russian Teachers, Moscow
- Sarah Kapp (Slavic languages and literature) – advanced Russian, School of Russian and Asian Studies
- Jessica Mason (anthropology) – ACTR Advanced Russian Language and Area Studies Program, Moscow
- Peter Ori (Comparative Literature) – ACTR Advanced Russian Language and Area Studies Program, Moscow
- Katherine Wirk (geography) – advanced-intermediate Czech, Summer School in Slavonic Studies, Masaryk University, Brno
- Lisa Woodson (Slavic languages and literature) – ACTR Summer Language Program for Russian Teachers, Moscow

Thanks to contributions from other FLAS-granting campuses, CREECA made several awards to visiting teachers.

- LGBTQ Kelly (Russian and East European Studies, Indiana University) – elementary Lithuanian
- Michael Kemenetz (Library and Information Science, Long Island University) – elementary Lithuanian
- Jordan Kuck (history, University of Tennessee-Knoxville) – intermediate Latvian
- Debra Raver (ethnomusicology, Indiana University) – intermediate Lithuanian
- Zachary Kelly (Russian and East European Studies, Indiana University) – elementary Lithuanian
- Michael Kemenetz (Library and Information Science, Long Island University) – elementary Lithuanian
- Jordan Kuck (history, University of Tennessee-Knoxville) – intermediate Latvian
- Debra Raver (ethnomusicology, Indiana University) – intermediate Lithuanian

FLAS Fellows for the 2010-11 Academic Year
- Athan Biss (history) – third-year Russian
- Ryan Goodwin (REECAS) – third-year Kazak
- Anna Greenson (comparative literature) – third-year Russian
- Jordan Hussey-Andersen (REECAS) – second-year Serbo-Croatian
- Malavika Jagannath (REECAS) – first-year Kazak
- Nicole Kraus (sociology) – fourth-year Russian
- Karolina May-Chu (German) – fourth-year Polish
- Omar Mohamad (LCA) – first-year Kazak
- Steven Wilson (political science) – third-year Russian

During the 2010-2011 academic year CREECA awarded undergraduate FLAS fellowships for the first time to two exceptional seniors:
- Ryan Prinz (majoring in international studies and Russian)
- Matthew Regner (majoring in chemistry and Russian).

Applications for summer 2011 and the 2011-2012 academic year FLAS will be available at flas.wisc.edu starting in December 2010; the next application deadline will be February 15, 2011. Please visit flas.wisc.edu for a list of eligible languages, fellowship details, and an application.
We don’t belong to one language in particular but we translate many languages to be parts of our everyday lives.” - Andrei Codrescu

Codrescu continued from page 1

Park Street to Chadbourne Hall, site of Chadbourne Residential College (CRC), a joint program of the College of Letters & Science and University Housing “committed to interdisciplinary learning and civic engagement for the purpose of developing responsible, invested citizens in our local and global communities.”

During the fall semester, CRC participants had been reading and discussing several of Codrescu’s works, including essays collected in New Orleans, Mon Amour as well as radio essays featured on NPR, such as “Bombing Moon Gives New Meaning to Lunatics” and “Looking to a Post-Human Future.” The students were eager to meet the author in person and another informal give-and-take ensued.

According to Caton Roberts, faculty director of CRC, “[Codrescu’s] inimitably penetrating, discerning, and hilarious manner dazzled an otherwise intimidated group of largely first-year students.” After a quick dinner hosted by the Distinguished Lecture Series at the Memorial Union, all that remained was the main event at the Wisconsin Union Theater, a public lecture titled “Swimming Between Languages: Learning English by Osmosis & Other Adventures.” Following an introduction by Tomislav Longinovic, chair of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literature, Codrescu took the stage and opened a wide-ranging, funny, and unusually intimate conversation with the audience, setting aside his prepared text and instead improvising on the theme of swimming between languages.

Codrescu recalled an early visit to Madison, when he was newly arrived in the United States, and also being mentored by a professor of literature at the University of Chicago. Recalling his multi-lingual childhood and youth, in which Hungarian, German, and Romanian coexisted, as well as his later exposure to French, Italian, and English, Codrescu urged his audience to learn world languages: “We live in a world of translations,” he stated. “We don’t belong to one language in particular but we translate many languages to be parts of our everyday lives.”