Welcome to the fall/winter edition of the ISEEES Newsletter! I am delighted to inform you that in the summer of 2018 ISEEES successfully competed for another four-year U.S. Department of Education Title VI National Resource Center (NRC) grant. With declining Federal dollars for international and foreign language education, this year’s selection was one of the most competitive in the 50-year history of the Title VI program. Kudos go to ISEEES executive director Jeff Pennington and ISEEES assistant director Zachary Kelly for the intelligence and hard work they put into our successful proposal.

As a National Resource Center, ISEEES promotes programmatic activities focusing on our region, including language and area studies instruction, scholarly research, funding for library resources, public outreach, and teacher training. NRC funding supports the continued teaching of Armenian, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, Czech, Hungarian, and Polish in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. As part of the new Title VI mandate for outreach to minority-serving institutions, two new NRC initiatives will have us partner with Russian-studies faculty at California State University East Bay and at Howard University to strengthen Russian studies courses offered to students at these universities.

As part of our ongoing academic exchange agreement with the Central European University in Budapest, on September 10-11, ISEEES hosted the second in a series of joint conferences with the CEU. Titled “Borders, Borderlands, and Migration,” this two-day conference brought together speakers from Berkeley and CEU for a series of informative and, at times, controversial presentations highlighting the current migration crisis in Europe.

ISEEES is pleased to be hosting UC Berkeley alumna Regine A. Spector, Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, as she spends her sabbatical with us during the 2018-19 school year. As part of our faculty/graduate student lunchtime seminar series, Regine spoke about her book Order at the Bazaar: Power and Trade in Central Asia (Cornell University Press, 2017).

This fall was a particularly busy time for ISEEES and we were pleased to host a number of interesting talks by visitors. The following is just a sample of some of the events. In September, Professor Jonathan Flatley, Department of English, Wayne State University, delivered a talk entitled “Revolutionary Blackness in the Soviet Imagination,” which focused on the work of Soviet artist Victor Koretsky, whose posters from the 1930s to the 1970s present black revolutionaries combating racist imperial capital around the world. In October, Omer Bartov, John P. Birkelund Distinguished Professor of European History at Brown University, spoke on his most recent book Anatomy of a Genocide: The Life and Death of a Town Called Buczacz (Simon & Schuster, 2018). In November, Kyrill Kunakhovich, Assistant Professor of History at the University of Virginia, spoke on rock and roll and popular music in Cold War East Germany and Poland. Later in the month, Berkeley’s Yuri Slezkine, Jane K. Sather Professor of History, delivered this year’s Gerald D. and Norma Feldman Annual Lecture, entitled “The Life and Death of the Russian Revolution.” Also in November, ISEEES invited journalist and political commentator David Corn to speak on his latest book Russian Roulette: The Inside Story of Putin’s War on America and the Election of Donald Trump (co-written with Michael Isikoff, Twelve,

It’s never too early to save the date for our upcoming events. The 2019 Berkeley-Stanford Conference will be held on Friday, March 15, in the Heyns Room of the Faculty Club on the UC Berkeley campus. The topic of this year’s conference will be “From Liberalism to Neoliberalism: the New Europe at 100.” This one-day conference will feature presentations by faculty from both Berkeley and Stanford, including Richard Buxbaum (Law, Berkeley), Robert Crews (History, Stanford), Steve Fish (Political Science, Berkeley), Victoria Frede (History, Berkeley), Anna Grzymala-Busse (Political Science, Stanford), Katherine Jolluck (History, Stanford), Jovana Knezevic (CREEES, Stanford), Norman Naimark (History, Stanford), Christine Philliou (History, Berkeley), and Amir Weiner (History, Stanford).

This year’s Colin Miller Lecture will be delivered by Dr. Edward Walker, Research Fellow at ISEEES. The talk titled “U.S.-Russian Relations and the Great Trump Disruption” will take place on Thursday, March 21, at 5:15 p.m. in the Geballe Room of the Townsend Center, 220 Stephens Hall. Lastly, this year’s Peter N. Kujachich Lecture in Serbian and Montenegrin Studies will be given by Professor Pavle Levi, Associate Professor in the Film and Media Studies Program at Stanford University and director of Stanford’s Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies. The talk is scheduled for Thursday, April 25, at 5:15 p.m. in the Geballe Room of the Townsend Center, 220 Stephens Hall.

Be sure to check our newly updated website [http://iseees.berkeley.edu/](http://iseees.berkeley.edu/) for other upcoming events and updates to the calendar. We look forward to seeing you at our events in 2019!

John Connelly
ISEEES Director
Professor of History

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**Campus Visitors**

**Dániel Róna** is a Visiting Fulbright Scholar with ISEEES during the Fall 2018 semester. He is currently an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Corvinus University in Budapest, Hungary. While at UC Berkeley, he will continue research on Eastern-European politics, far-right politics, political extremism in Europe, Jewish identity and politics, anti-Semitism, and xenophobia, mainly from a Hungarian perspective.

**Regine A. Spector** is a Visiting Scholar with ISEEES during the 2018-2019 academic year while on sabbatical. She is currently Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. While at UC Berkeley, she is working on new research projects at the intersection of political economy of development and energy/environment issues in Eurasia. One of these projects has been funded as a small grant by the National Council for Eurasian and East European Research, and is entitled “Hydropower Development and Sustainability Debates in Georgia.”
Mourning the Martyred Tsar. Notes from Ekaterinburg on the Centenary of the Romanovs’ Execution.

Joy Neumeyer
PhD Candidate, History, UC Berkeley

On July 15, as soccer fans watched France defeat Croatia at Moscow’s Luzhniki stadium in the final match of the 2018 World Cup, an estimated one hundred thousand pilgrims were heading east of the Urals. This year marked the centenary of the Bolsheviks’ execution of the last Russian tsar, whose transfiguration from “Bloody Nicholas” to holy martyr was central to the end of Soviet rule. Some worshippers set out on foot from Tambov, the city where the tsar and his family were brought in August 1917 before being relocated to the industrial city of Ekaterinburg 600 km to the southwest. From Moscow, Ekaterinburg is 26 hours by train. I set off alongside the pilgrims, intending to join them for several days before continuing farther east.

Around 5 pm, shortly before the train was due to depart, a priest stood on the platform, surrounded by several women in long skirts and head coverings holding icons of Nicholas II. Once seated in the third-class car, they gathered around an experienced pilgrim, who recounted the tsar’s trials and tribulations over tea—with occasional interruptions from the cheering passengers streaming the soccer final on their phones. Toward midnight, the women switched to singing a prayer for the tsar and his family, repeating their names over and over in a slow chant: “Nikolai Alexandra, Alexei Maria, Olga Tatiana, Anastasia.” The train bounced on the tracks as we sped towards the city where the Romanov dynasty had met its end.

Nicholas II, together with Empress Alexandra Fedorovna, their children, and several staff, was confined in Ekaterinburg’s Ipat’ev house from April 1918. On the night of July 16-17, as anti-Soviet forces approached the city, the group was led into the basement, where they were shot and stabbed with bayonets. The house was destroyed in 1977 on the orders of the Politburo, a decision carried out by then-head of the regional party committee Boris Yeltsin. In 1998, their remains were removed to the St. Peter and Paul Fortress in St. Petersburg, and they were canonized as passion bearers two years later. President Yeltsin attended the reburial, calling the murder “one of the most shameful pages in our history.” Every year since 2002, pilgrims have walked the 21 kilometers from the execution site to Ganina Yama, the forest mineshaft where the bodies were dumped.

Today, the white Church on the Blood stands on the spot of the murder, and a monastery and memorial complex occupy Ganina Yama. In 2017, MSNBC host Rachel Maddow described the church in a conspiratorial segment suggesting that Russia might be scheming to annex the state of California. The basis for this claim was that the trolling head of a California secession movement had turned out to be a resident of Ekaterinburg. “Their biggest tourist attraction is the Cathedral on the Blood… on the blood,” Maddow repeated. What could be more indicative of Russia’s sinister intentions for world affairs, it seemed, than its worship of a crime scene? (Meanwhile, the United States, in the throes of its own brand of imperial decline, has produced The Romanoffs, a Netflix show by Mad Men creator Matthew Weiner about the debauched hijinks of the dynasty’s descendants in emigration).

Ekaterinburg is Russia’s fourth-largest city, with a population of 1.5 million. In the 1930s, its north side became the site of Uralmash, a sprawling heavy machine building factory erected under the First Five-Year Plan. The city is also known for its Constructivist architecture, including a House of Culture for secret police workers in the shape of a sickle. The Church on the Blood stands on the east bank of the Iset River, across the water from the sleek building that houses the Yeltsin Center. To the west is the stadium that hosted four World Cup games in June. The streets in between have an abundance of craft beer and vape shops, both trendy in Russia’s major cities.

When the train pulled in around dusk on July 16, huge crowds had already gathered around the church, where at midnight Patriarch Kirill was slated to lead an open-air service. A large green banner heralded his arrival: “Your Holiness! We welcome you to the Ural lands!” A tent city had been erected to house the pilgrims on the slope leading down to the water. It was hot out; many people were eating ice cream as the sun went down. Nearby, a red World Cup sign served as a popular backdrop for selfies. In his sermon that evening, the patriarch identified the cause of the Romanovs’ murder as “foreign thoughts, foreign ideals, a foreign worldview.” He warned that “no promises of a new happy life, no hopes for help from outside” should tempt the Russian people. Around 2:30 a.m., a mass of pilgrims bearing icons and imperial flags set off along Lenin Prospect to Ganina Yama, singing “lord have mercy” as they walked until dawn. Lacking the fortitude of the devout, I skipped the procession and retired to a hostel.

The next morning, the church was still full of pilgrims filing past icons of the imperial family. Murals on the walls depicted scenes from their lives: Nicholas and Alexei reviewing the troops, large photographs of the tsar and his family had been set up in the trees, and clusters of pilgrims kissed icons and sang prayers in the open air. Inside, the complex’s museum emphasized Russia’s economic growth in the years before the revolution. Interactive touchscreens provided an overview of the oil industry, the spread of railroads, and the autocracy’s care for the poor. One display quoted a statement by Stolypin’s minister of agriculture Alexander Krivoshein, who estimated in 1912 that “Russia needs 30 years of peace in order to become the richest and most developed country in the world.” Rejecting one of the Bolsheviks’ central foundation myths—that Communism turned a backward sea of peasants into an industrialized powerhouse—the church argues that with autocracy, Russia could have achieved development without disaster.

[Continued on Page 6]
Make a Gift to ISEEES!

The loyal support of private donors like you supplements the funding we receive from other sources and enables us to meet the standards of excellence required of us by the University of California, Berkeley as an organized research unit and by the U.S. Department of Education as a Title VI National Resource Center. Your support helps to expand and sustain a robust area-specific international education for our students, furthers research opportunities for faculty focusing on our region, and allows us to respond to new programming opportunities and to expand public outreach.

Our Federal and state funding have faced continued reductions, compelling us to draw more and more on our modest endowments to maintain the superior programming and research and academic support our student, faculty, and public constituents have come to expect. As a result, we have expanded opportunities for more targeted giving in order to encompass a variety of ISEEES programs. Contributions of any size are appreciated and contribute directly to ISEEES’s continued accomplishments. We would be very happy to discuss details of these funds or other giving opportunities. Jeff Pennington, executive director of ISEEES, can be reached at jpennington@berkeley.edu or (510) 643-6736.

GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

**ISEEES General Support Fund**
The ISEEES General Support Fund is an unrestricted fund that is used to: provide travel grants to affiliated graduate and undergraduate students for the purpose of presenting papers at academic conferences; provide research assistance to affiliated faculty members; convene conferences, open to the public, that examine current topics in Slavic, East European, and Eurasian studies; host an annual reception to foster community building among faculty, students, and the public; and augment the state and grant funds that provide minimal support for ISEEES operations.

**ISEEES Graduate Student Support Fund**
The ISEEES Graduate Student Support Fund is a new UCB Foundation endowment that was established by a generous gift from an anonymous donor. When fully funded, the ISEEES Graduate Student Support Fund will be used to support graduate students in the field of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies. The endowment was launched by the initial gift and matching funds from the Graduate Division. Additional gifts to the Fund are encouraged and gratefully accepted.

**Colin and Elsa Miller Endowment Fund**
The Annual Colin Miller Memorial Lecture honors the memory of a journalist and radio and TV producer who was devoted to the Center for Slavic and East European Studies (as ISEEES was called before the year 2000). The endowment funds an annual lecture given by a respected scholar in the field of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies.

**Hungarian Studies Fund**
This fund promotes the teaching of the Hungarian language at UC Berkeley, provides research assistance to faculty and students studying Hungarian topics, and supports lectures, workshops, and conferences devoted to Hungarian studies.

**Fund for Romanian Studies**
This fund promotes the teaching of the Romanian language at UC Berkeley; supports lectures, workshops, and conferences devoted to Romanian topics; and provides research assistance to faculty and students pursuing Romanian studies.
Support Our Institute!

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ISEEES acknowledges with sincere appreciation the following individuals who made their annual contribution to ISEEES between December 2016 and May 2017.

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Your gift will qualify you for membership on our annual giving program: Associates of the Slavic Center. Descriptions of membership benefits by level are included below. Thank you for your continued support.

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It is a policy of the University of California and the Berkeley Foundation that a portion of the gifts and/or income therefrom is used to defray the costs of raising and administering the funds. Donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

You can contribute online by visiting the ISEEES website - http://iseees.berkeley.edu/give - and selecting the fund to which you would like to make a gift.

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This idea is not far from Vladimir Putin’s ambivalent thoughts on the subject, expressed at the Valdai Forum in October 2017: “Was it not possible to follow an evolutionary path rather than go through a revolution? Could we not have evolved by way of gradual and consistent forward movement rather than at the cost of destroying our statehood and the ruthless fracturing of millions of human lives?” The Russian president did not publicly mark the revolutionary centenary last year, nor did he come to Ekaterinburg. In previous remarks on the execution, Putin has criticized the killing of children and servants as a hypocritical example of the type of violent repression the Bolsheviks were supposedly combatting. Yet his comments have been decidedly more circumspect than Yeltsin’s, and he has stopped short of praising the tsar or directly condemning his murder.

For most of the Soviet era, Nicholas was at best portrayed as a weak-willed fool overrun by the grotesque Rasputin, as in the 1974 epic Agony. However, Mikhail Gorbatchev’s rapprochement with the church also opened the door to reevaluating the Romanovs and their fate. In Karen Shakhnazarov’s film The Tsar’s Assassin, released several months before Gorbatchev dissolved the remains of the Soviet state in 1991, the imperial killing is reimagined as original sin. The movie’s plot follows a guilt-wracked psychiatric patient who thinks he is Yakov Uryovsky, the man who led the execution. A psychologist attempts to cure his neurosis by pretending that he himself is the tsar, still alive and well. “If there’s no victim,” he hypothesizes, “there’s no crime.”

After descending into a fantasy recreation of the past, he proves unable to absolve his patient (or Russia): the film ends with the death of both tsar and psychologist.

Last year, the movie Matilda recast the tsar as romantic lead, depicting his premarital relationship with the ballerina Matilda Kshesinskaia. After Orthodox activists attacked an Ekaterinburg theater and called in threats, some theaters canceled screenings, and the film’s stars declined to attend the premiere. Though Matilda angered some believers, its portrayal was resoundingly positive, framing the affair as the final step in Nicholas’s transformation from starry-eyed youth to strong-willed gosudar’. In the film’s conclusion, he immediately dashes to Khodynka upon hearing that thousands have been crushed in a stampede at mass celebrations of his coronation. In reality, the imperial family infamously did not call off that evening’s ball; he and Alexandra only visited the following day.

Public opinion about the Romanovs is mixed. On the eve of the centennial, state polling agency VTsIOM conducted a survey which found that 43% of respondents viewed Nicholas II positively, while 22% viewed him negatively. The huge crowds at the execution centenary should be seen primarily in the context of Russia’s booming tradition of religious pilgrimage, rather than as an endorsement of autocracy. Many of those I spoke with in Ekaterinburg had made previous trips to holy sites. This fall, pilgrims lined the banks of the Moscow River for weeks when the relics of Saint Spyridon were on display at Christ the Savior Cathedral, with total worshippers in the hundreds of thousands.

Foreign media coverage often frames the church as Putin’s right hand: the New York Times wrote last fall that he has “all but enshrined conservative Orthodoxy as a state ideology.”

The close relationship between church politics and state aims was on display this October, when the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church cut ties with the patriarchate of Constantinople over its decision to grant independence to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. The announcement came after months of condemnation state TV segments about Kiev’s campaign to separate from Moscow, an obvious proxy for the bitter conflict over Crimea and the Donbass. In Ekaterinburg, Kirill issued a statement condemning the proposed split as an attempt by “politicians of various stripes” to institute “unnecessary, incorrect, and unnatural forms of church structure to the benefit of their political views.”

On the ground, however, Orthodox belief is fluid in form and political affiliation. At the centenary, I met a programmer and snowboarder named Roman, who had made the pilgrimage from Omsk. He was holding a shopping bag from the Yeltsin Center bookstore, and referred to himself as a liberal. Russia’s religious renaissance exists simultaneously with the growing popularity of the country’s Communist party, especially in the wake of the highly unpopular pension reform announced this summer. Many of the young people I met while traveling said they were planning on voting for KPRF candidates in the countrywide elections in September, often citing a desire for more development in the regions. (The Communist candidate for governor in the Primorsky Region almost won with 95 percent of votes counted before the United Russia candidate claimed a curious last-minute victory—an embarrassment for the ruling party that sparked protests against election rigging). One political movement, “The Essence of Time,” encapsulates both these tendencies. In November, the group held a rally in Moscow against pension reform that called for the creation of a “USSR 2.0” based on Orthodox principles.

Russia’s World Cup was an exciting spectacle that brought swarms of tourists and a rare bout of positive press; it didn’t hurt that the home team advanced to the semifinals. But the tournament also highlighted the inequality that still plagues the country’s regions. In Ekaterinburg, huge sums were spent on reconstructing the city stadium, while the nearby streets remained full of potholes. The pilgrims who gathered at the Church on the Blood did not share a devotion to any single solution, whether to resurrecting the autocracy or the Soviet Union—or seizing the state of California. Yet the enduring appeal of Putin’s promise of stability was inadvertently apparent across the river at the Yeltsin Center, which celebrates the dawn of capitalism with little thought to its demons.

After filing through an installation that recreates Yeltsin’s defeat of the August coup, visitors are invited to play a video game called “Could you have become a millionaire in the Russian ‘90s?” They are given the choice of where to invest vouchers, which together with basic questions testing their financial acumen result in impoverishment or reward. (I invested in “GazDom,” and ended up with a million rubles). Discussion of the 1998 default that upended many Russians’ lives is limited to a small placard on “the economic crisis,” which concludes that “it took only a few months for a positive dynamic to reemerge.” Despite the patriarch’s warnings, most Russians are all too aware that it is not only “foreign ideals” that are to blame for the country’s troubles after the Romanovs’ rehabilitation. The failed “promises of a happy new life” made by the native son who reburied them also bear some responsibility.
Faculty and Student News

Sarah Goldwasser (Graduate Student, Law) will be presenting her published thesis, “The Rhetoric of Buried Testimony: Memory and Absence from the Warsaw Ghetto” and leading a panel on Cultural Memory at the University of Latvia’s “Riga Readings in Social Sciences” conference on November 23, 2018.

Zachary Johnson (PhD, Slavic) has published his path-breaking and paradigm-shattering article, “Margarita’s Orgasms: Reading the Erotic in Bulgakov’s The Master and Margarita” in the latest issue of Russian Review 77 (2018): 4.

Joseph Kellner (Visiting Lecturer, History) won American Councils Academic Fellowship in Russia to do research over the summer.


Marika Kuzma (Professor Emerita, Music) will be leading a choral concert of music from Ukraine in Seattle, Portland, and San Francisco. The program will include ancient chants from Kyiv and Galicia, folk carols from the Carpathians, traditional music by Bortniansky, Stetsenko, and Koshetz; songs from the diaspora, and music by current composers in Kyiv. It will also incorporate “spoken word” elements for a culturally immersive experience.

Hilary Lynd (PhD Candidate, History) received a Fulbright-Hays fellowship for research in Russia and South Africa in 2019.

Mirjam Voerkelius (PhD Candidate, History) is currently in Berlin at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science enjoying the incredible interlibrary loan service, the reading group on conservation, learning about a variety of things, e.g. commentary in ancient Chinese mathematics, and finishing her dissertation.

Lida Zeitlin Wu (PhD Candidate, Comparative Literature) had an article published over the summer in The Nabokov Online Journal entitled “Nabokov’s Optical Paintbox: Color in the Real Life of Sebastian Knight.” The article is available online at http://www.nabokovonline.com/current-volume.html.

FLAS Fellowship Awards - Summer 2018

Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships enable US citizens and permanent residents to acquire a high level of competency in modern foreign languages. FLAS funding for Russian and East European languages came to UC Berkeley through a Title VI grant from the US Department of Education to ISEEES.

Marcos Cisneros, Department of Rhetoric, received funding to study Kyrgyz in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

Jennifer Flaherty, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, received funding to study Russian in Moscow.

Cade Hermeling, Russian major, received funding to study Russian in St. Petersburg.

Kylen Gensurowsky, Slavic and Legal Studies major, received funding to study Russian at Middlebury in Vermont.

Ryan Gourley, Department of Music – Ethnomusicology, received funding to study Russian in St. Petersburg.

Zachary Hicks, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, received funding to study Russian in Moscow.

Justin Knight, Linguistics major, received funding to study Russian in St. Petersburg.

Andrew Kuznetsov, Comparative Literature major, received funding to study Yiddish at the Uriel Weinreich Program in New York City.

David Parker, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, received funding to study Bosnian in Sarajevo.

Kathryn Pribble, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, received funding to study Russian in St. Petersburg.

Maria Whittle, Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, received funding to study Kyrgyz in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

Lida Wu, Department of Film and Media, received funding to study Russian in Moscow.
## Fall 2018 Courses

Selected course offerings and selected area-related courses

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