

A black and white photograph of an elderly couple. The woman on the left is wearing a dark, patterned headscarf and a matching shawl. The man on the right is wearing a dark cap, a white shirt, and a dark shawl. They are both looking down and to the left. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

INNER ASIAN & URALIC NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER

Fall/Winter 2010

Celebrating Islam among the Turkic peoples
Central Eurasia in the arts
IU welcomes new visiting scholars

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The Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Center (IAUNRC) at Indiana University is a United States Department of Education Title VI-grant institution dedicated to increasing the general and scholarly understanding of the Inner Asian and Uralic region and peoples. The Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Center Newsletter is a biannual publication prepared by the Center's graduate assistants. To submit questions, comments, and suggestions about the newsletter or to request further information regarding the services of IAUNRC, please contact the office at: iaunrc@indiana.edu.

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On the Cover: An elderly Uzbek couple in Samarkand. Copyright 2006, Zilola Saidova. This and other photographs by Zilola Saidova from the IAUNRC's collection are currently on exhibit at IU's Mathers Museum of World Cultures.

Newsletter Editor: Margaret Sullivan

A Word from the Director

Late July brought long-awaited news that the IAUNRC had been awarded four more years of funding from the U.S. Education Department under its Title VI program. This award will allow us to continue with critical support for the less commonly taught languages within our region and for outreach programming to K-12 schools that, with videoconferencing, has become a nation-wide project. In addition to the annual funding of approximately a quarter million dollars, the Center has also received 9 academic-year FLASes and four summer awards.

As an indication of the kind of collaborative work with other IU units that the IAUNRC is committed to expanding, we are embarking on a major new venture—the Volga-Kama Initiative—with the Russian and East European Institute, the Sino Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, and the Islamic Studies Program. Stay tuned to our website for additional information as the initiative involving an important region within the Russian Federation develops. For now, we can announce that the supporting units are contributing considerable funds for the next four years to underwrite new relationships between IU, Kazan Federal University, and the Institute of History of the Tatarstan Academy of Sciences to support scholarly exchanges, inaugurate collaborative projects, introduce Tatar language study through SWSEEL, and establish the infrastructure for graduate students to study and research in the region. As an initial step, we will be hosting two scholars from Kazan during spring 2011, and for AY 2011-2012 we are planning a major rollout of our initiative by highlighting the nature and importance of Islam in this region through a number of colloquies, symposia, and dialogues with major international participants.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Lazzerini



Photographs of Uzbekistan taken by Zilola Saidova are on display at the Mathers Museum of World Cultures through December. For more information on Central Eurasia in the arts, see pages 3-4.

The Turks and Islam

Conference explores Islam's past, present among Turkic peoples

When Ottoman and Modern Turkish Studies Professor Dr. Kemal Silay decided to organize a scholarly event examining Islam and the Turkic peoples, he did not envision a two-day, international conference. "Initially, I was going to make it a very small workshop, inviting a couple of scholars," said Dr. Silay. "Then I said: Let me open this up to the whole world."

Open it to the world he did. On September 11 and 12, 2010, Indiana University hosted an international and multidisciplinary conference entitled "The Turks and Islam." Nearly half of the weekend's 70 panelists came from outside the United States, representing 13 countries including Turkey, Cyprus, Azerbaijan, Iran, Uzbekistan, and India.

Dr. Silay says that the impetus for the conference was the changing discourse on Islam and Islamism taking place in the United States and throughout the world.

"I am a Muslim, I am from Turkey, I am an American citizen, and I have been living here for more than 20 years," said Dr. Silay. "Obviously, 9/11 changed a lot of things in this country: the perception of Muslims, the collapse of the meaning of Islam with Islamism...One of my major goals in the organization of this conference was to distinguish Islam as a cultural phenomenon from Islam as a political program. This distinction is important for me, and I think that this conference somehow proved that there is such a distinction."

Dr. Silay also emphasized the multidisciplinary approach as an important feature of the conference. Panelists represented a wide array of disciplines including anthropology, history, political science, religious studies, and linguistics.

"When they say 'Islam,' people either focus on Islamism, which is not Islam—it is a political program, it is an ideology—or they focus predominantly on the theological aspects," Dr. Silay said. "No one discipline can explain this highly complex and remarkable cultural phenomenon."



Among the conference's unique aspects was the breadth of interpretations of "Turks" included in its panels. According to Dr. Silay, he sought to include linguistically Turkic groups beyond those in the Republic of Turkey, such as Azeris, Uyghurs, and Kyrgyz. Dr. Silay highlighted the shared experience of "Islam without Shari'a," a common feature that he says has shaped historical and contemporary Islam across Central Eurasia.

"When you look at the history of the Turkic peoples, they went through a similar process of interpreting Islam," said Dr. Silay. "Throughout the centuries, these people did not have direct access to the holy book, the Qur'an (for the obvious linguistic

reasons), so others interpreted 'Islam' for them...I see the same patterns among those Turkic peoples living outside of the Republic of Turkey."

Building on the success of the conference, Dr. Silay plans to publish some of the conference papers in an edited volume in the near future.

He also hopes to further develop the theme of Alevi Muslims in Turkey, which he says was one of the premier panel themes featured at the conference, in future workshops,

symposia, and conferences.

"The panel on the Alevi Muslims was quite fascinating," said Dr. Silay. "It manifested first-rate scholarship on the issue of Alevis in Turkey. There was some groundbreaking scholarship on that panel, painstaking manuscript scholarship that I value...Papers presented there will be a significant part of this edited volume."

Overall, Dr. Silay feels strongly that the conference laid a solid foundation for continuing a dialogue about Islam in Turkey and throughout the Turkic-speaking world.

"This conference was a wonderful beginning, and I will now try to close those gaps with future speakers, conferences, and other scholarly events," said Dr. Silay.



Defne Jones, center right, speaks at the Turks and Islam conference. Dr. Kemal Silay, center left, organized the conference, which took place Sept. 11-12, 2010.

Central Eurasia

Exhibit highlights Tibetan, Mongolian treasures

On September 25, the IU Art Museum opened a new exhibit entitled “From the Steppes and the Monasteries: Arts of Mongolia and Tibet.” The exhibit is the culmination of nearly two years’ planning, and marks a major milestone in collaboration between the IU Art Museum and the IAUNRC. Dr. Brian Baumann, a graduate of the Central Eurasian Studies department’s PhD program in Mongolian studies, cocurated the exhibit.

The exhibit features over 150 objects highlighting both the rich monastery tradition and nomadic lifestyle in Central Eurasia, including Tibetan *thangka* silk paintings, intricately engraved metalwork, scrolls, manuscripts, and even an almanac dating from 1921, the year of Mongolia’s Communist revolution.

“There’s an amazing scroll of a cosmological scene; it’s the tallest painting in the exhibition,” Dr. Baumann said. “It’s a very densely packed cosmology that shows the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. It’s full of symbols, and those symbols have an astronomical basis. That was very fun for me to see.”

The exhibit also features Mongolian *tsam* masks, a colorful element of *tsam* spiritual dances used in Buddhist religious ceremonies throughout India, Tibet, and Mongolia.

“Getting into the research on some of these pieces, I realized the *tsam* tradition has been largely lost in Mongolia, and our knowledge of it is very sketchy. There’s a lot of information that hasn’t been put together in a real scholarly work yet.”



A scene from a thangka painting. Photo courtesy of Indiana University.

According to Dr. Baumann, the catalyst for developing the exhibit was the contribution of a large number of materials from the private collection of Mrs. Martha Avery. Many of these pieces are being shown publicly for the first time, and very few of the objects have been previously available for scholarly study.

“One of the things that this collection makes possible is a bibliographical and research methods course for Mongolian studies, where you can have real hands-on experience in how to deal with texts,” Dr. Baumann said. “We had a few Mongolian

texts, many donated by Professor [György] Kara, but now we have quite a few more, and it really helps students in the program.”

Dr. Baumann says many of the exhibit’s pieces complement his own research interests.

“Right now, I’m working on a pre-classical text on apocalyptic literature, on salvation,” said Dr. Baumann. “It makes you study Buddhism in a very broad context, and a lot of the themes you find come out of natural history. In this exhibition, there’s a lot of apocalyptic stuff, a lot of prophecies by the Dalai Lama, a pictorial guide to the Buddhist tales, people being chopped up, the tortures of hell, things like that.”

In conjunction with the exhibit, the IU Art Museum and the IAUNRC organized a variety of other events to showcase Bloomington’s rich Tibetan and Mongolian cultural resources. On November 12, the IU Art Museum hosted a traditional Buddhist Consecration Prayer Ceremony

performed by Arjia Rinpoche of the Bloomington Tibetan Mongolian Buddhist Cultural Center.

The museum has also treated patrons to a concert of traditional Mongolian and Tibetan music and a workshop on Tibetan woodblock printing. Throughout the semester, the IAUNRC presented a film series of award-winning Tibetan and Mongolian films such as *The Saltmen of Tibet*, selected from the Center’s lending collection.

“*From the Steppes and the Monasteries: Arts of Mongolia and Tibet*” runs through December 19 at the IU Art Museum.

in the ARTS

Jubilee weekend celebrates Estonian composer Pärt



Photo used with permission, Mait Jürjado.

On October 9-10, Indiana University hosted a weekend of events celebrating the 75th jubilee of renowned Estonian composer Arvo Pärt. The series of events were just a few of many being held across Europe and the world in honor of the composer. The jubilee weekend was organized by the Estonian Studies Program of the Department of Central Eurasian Studies and the Jacobs School of Music, in conjunction with the IAUNRC.

Arvo Pärt was born in Paide, Estonia in 1936 and studied at the Tallinn Conservatoire as a student of Heino Eller. His signature style of meditative, tonal music, called *tintinnabuli*, emerged out of a musical crisis he suffered in the 1960s and 1970s. The religious roots of much of his music led him into conflict with Soviet cultural authorities, resulting in his emigration in 1980 and his emergence onto the world stage.

"Given the religious bent of his second musical life, had he stayed in the Soviet Union, especially for the 1980s, he would have found it very difficult to reach his full potential," said Dr. Toivo Raun, Professor of Baltic and Finnish Studies at IU. "Ironically, his exile from the Soviet Union in 1980 really gave him the opportunity to emerge more broadly on a world scale."

The marking of Pärt's 75th birthday has demonstrated his growing popularity in mainstream classical music. Pärt now lives in Estonia, where he remains a prolific

composer, debuting his fourth symphony, titled "Los Angeles" in August 2010. His premiere of "Adam's Lament" at the Istanbul Music Festival in June was attended by the presidents of both Estonia and Turkey.

"In a real sense, he's bridging all kinds of political divisions," said Dr. Raun, "there's a very wide audience for his work."

IU's Pärt jubilee weekend began with a showing of the documentary film *24 Preludes to a Fugue*. Dr. Jeffers Englehardt, an assistant professor of musicology at Amherst College and a leading Pärt expert, discussed interpretations of Pärt's "iconicness," in contexts from Estonian national pride to contemporary hip-hop and new media. Following Dr. Englehardt's lecture, a panel discussion of IU musicologists and historians explored on Pärt's connections to Gregorian and early English musical styles, as well as his Estonian roots.

The jubilee weekend concluded with a portrait concert of some of Pärt's most iconic works, including "Spiegel im Spiegel" and "Missa Syllabica," performed by the Indiana University Contemporary Vocal Ensemble under the direction of Dr. Carmen Helena Téllez. Kyllike Sillaste-Elling, Deputy Chief of Mission of the Estonian Embassy in Washington, DC, attended the jubilee weekend and delivered

a complementary lecture on Estonia's foreign policy and EU membership.

"The celebration of Pärt's 75th birthday is the culmination of a recognition of his work...he is becoming a household name."

The jubilee provided a unique opportunity for the Estonian Studies program to collaborate with other IU departments and foster interest in the region outside of Estonian Studies, a trend that Dr. Raun says will continue in the future.

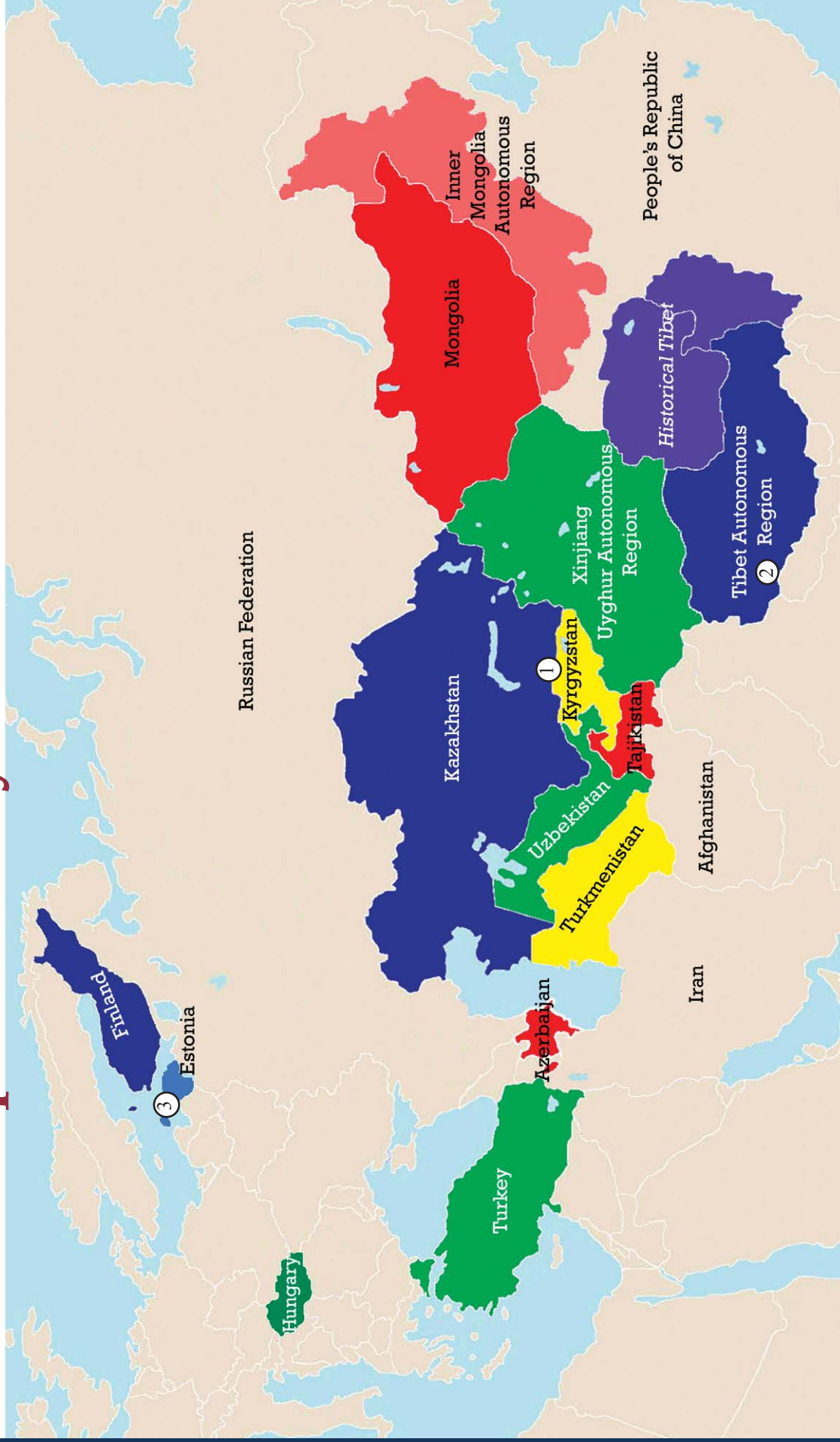
"I think it's a wonderful example of cooperation across the campus," said Dr. Raun. "If you break down these barriers to communication across schools, across units of the university, people are very willing to work together." In the spring, Dr. Raun expects to work closely with the Western European Studies program on a discussion of Estonia's accession to the eurozone. In celebration of Estonia's Independence Day on February 24, the Estonian Studies program hopes to bring the Estonian Ambassador to the United States to Bloomington.

The Pärt jubilee lecture and roundtable are available as part of the IAUNRC podcast series, which can be downloaded from the Center's website.



The IU Contemporary Vocal Ensemble performs Pärt. Photo by Terje Raadik.

Explore Today's Central Eurasia



A map of Central Eurasia for K-12 students from the IAUNRC at Indiana University, Bloomington

Please note: Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, and Tibet (including Historical Tibet) are all part of the present-day People's Republic of China.



Election monitors during the October 2010 parliamentary elections in Kyrgyzstan. U.S. State Department photo, public domain.

① Kyrgyzstan: Elections follow violence

Following the eruption of violence throughout Kyrgyzstan in April and the ouster of the government of Kurmanbek Bakiy, life is returning to normal in Kyrgyzstan. An interim government headed by veteran politician and former ambassador to the United States Roza Otunbaeva took power in July after former president Bakiy fled to Belarus. Unrest that continued in the southern cities of Osh and Jalalabad throughout the summer has since subsided.

On October 10, over 3,000 candidates representing 29 political parties participated in parliamentary elections, in which the pro-Bakiy *Ata-Jurt* party won a plurality of seats in the country's parliament, called the Jogorku Kenesh. International observers widely declared the elections to be free and fair.

Kyrgyzstan's interim government has scheduled presidential elections for October 2011, at which time current president Otunbaeva will step down.

Relevant Indiana Grade 7 Standards: 7.2.5, 7.3.1

Relevant Indiana High School Standards: GHW.7, GHW.10

② Tibet: Students protest language policy

On October 19, ethnic Tibetan students from six schools in the city of Rebkong gathered to protest language policy changes in local schools' curricula. According to the students, Chinese officials have proposed new guidelines for local schools, under which Tibetan-language instruction in most subjects will be replaced by Mandarin Chinese.

Reports on the number of protestors range from hundreds to nearly 9,000. Protests have thus far taken place peacefully, in contrast to high profile protests that occurred in Tibet in March 2008 and in the Uyghur-minority Xinjiang region in June 2009. Students carried banners with slogans such as "Ethnic equality and language autonomy." Demonstrations in support of the protest also took place in the capital, Beijing, and in the US and Europe.

Relevant Indiana Grade 7 Standards: 7.2.5, 7.3.1

Relevant Indiana High School Standards: GHW.7, GHW.10



Tibetan students protest in Beijing. Photo used with permission, Students for a Free Tibet.



The Turku cathedral. Photo by Andrei Niemimäki.

③ Tallinn, Estonia and Turku, Finland: European Capitals of Culture 2011

Turku, Finland and Tallinn, Estonia have been named the European Capitals of Culture for the year 2011. The two cities, chosen from among dozens of applicants by the European Commission in 2007, will host a yearlong calendar of events such as concerts, art festivals, and sports competitions.

The selection of the two cities is remarkable because it is the first time that two linguistically Finno-Ugrian cities have been recognized as centers of European culture and history. The vast majority of Europe's languages fall in the Indo-European family, which includes the Romance, Germanic, and Slavic languages.

Tallinn, Estonia's capital, has existed in its present location on the Gulf of Finland for nearly a millennium and is famous for its medieval Germanic architecture. Turku is the oldest city in Finland and a historically important center of culture and commerce.

Relevant Indiana Grade 7 Standards: 7.1.12, 7.3.2

Relevant Indiana High School Standards: WH.6.6, S.2, GHW.10

The state of Hungarian studies

Returning György Ránki Hungarian Chair Dr. Laszlo Borhi offers insights on Hungary, IU's program

This year, Indiana University welcomes returning György Ránki Chair of Hungarian Studies Dr. Laszlo Borhi.

Dr. Borhi came to IU in 1988-1989, a pivotal time in Hungary's history, as a student of US history and political science. He began his first tour as the György Ránki Chair of Hungarian Studies at IU in 1997 and has returned several times since; this year marks his fourth term as the Ránki Hungarian Chair.

"I've always really enjoyed doing this," Dr. Borhi said. "I have excellent students, and I enjoy having the chance to organize a conference every year in the field of Hungarian studies."

Organizing the György Ránki Hungarian Chair Symposium each spring is one of the main responsibilities of the visiting Chair. The 2011 Symposium, currently in its 31st year, will take place April 2-3 and will examine Hungary and Central Europe twenty years after democratic transition. According to Dr. Borhi, the theme is particularly relevant to discussions taking place within and outside Hungary.

"All over Eastern Europe, the democratic experience has run into problems: economic problems, social problems," said Dr. Borhi. "Many people all over the Eastern bloc feel that the transition and membership in the European Union have not worked as well as they expected."

"People want to see an improvement. I think we want to see the future: where we're heading, where our place is in the world, where our place is in Europe, economically and politically, security. So there are a lot of issues that make this conference timely."

This conference also comes at a critical time for US-Central European relations, according to Dr. Borhi. "We have enjoyed tremendous successes in every walk of life. These are now open countries, open societies, members of NATO. We are helping out in Iraq and Afghanistan; all of these countries are contributing to the security of

the Western world. But there are still some problems that have to be dealt with. American educators and politicians may be comfortable in feeling that everything is going alright there, but this is not quite true, and it should be regarded once again as an area which is worthy of attention."



In addition to organizing the Symposium, Dr. Borhi describes teaching as his "number one assignment" and greatest passion while at IU. During the fall semester, he taught three courses, including a history course on Hungary from 1891 to 1989 and a Hungarian readings course. His third course, entitled "The Dark Decade: Hungary between Hitler and Stalin 1938-1948," examined the major development of the 20th century from outside the typical Great Powers perspective and highlighted his own research interests.

"Small countries, their politicians, their experiences, their societies, are often left out, even though they themselves are at least as interesting," said Dr. Borhi. "An understanding of these smaller countries can really add to our understanding of big questions in history."

Among Dr. Borhi's plans for his term at Indiana is the development of a Fulbright exchange between IU and Hungarian universities. While details have not yet been specified, both sides are "enthusiastic" about finalizing arrangements for the exchange program as soon as possible. Indiana University is currently the only institution in the United States or Canada where students can earn a full degree in Hungarian Studies. "It seems that Indiana University is going to be the place to study Hungary in North America," Dr. Borhi said.

When finalized, the Fulbright exchange program would attract Hungarian scholars from a diverse field of disciplines, including political science, sociology, economics, medieval history, linguistics, and others. The initial phase of the exchange agreement would last for a trial period of three to five years.

IAUNRC welcomes new visiting scholars

Elina Pallasvirta comes to Bloomington as an independent visiting scholar from Helsinki, Finland. Pallasvirta is currently working on her PhD in the University of Helsinki Department of Finnish, Finno-Ugrian, and Scandinavian Studies. Her primary research field is the history of linguistics; she is currently researching transatlantic relations in Finnish linguistics during the Second World War and the Cold War. While at IU, Pallasvirta has made use of the university's archives, after which she will move on to conduct similar research at Columbia University.

For Pallasvirta, who had spent a year in Connecticut prior to her time at IU, acclimating to life in a college town was one of the few surprises awaiting her during her exchange. "It's really interesting to see a university town like this, in the middle of nowhere," said Pallasvirta. "It's very different from what you'd have in Finland; it's more cohesive, so I've definitely enjoyed getting to know this part of the U.S." In the time that she has been at IU, she has found time to visit Chicago and enjoyed hiking around Bloomington.

Ondřej Klimeš comes to IU from Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic, where he received an MA in Chinese Studies and is now a PhD candidate. Klimeš chose Indiana because of the opportunity to work with IU Professor Gardner Bovington. Klimeš is currently carrying out research for his dissertation, a study of Uyghur national identity and nationalism in 1884-1949 as reflected in Uyghur writings of the period.

For Klimeš, a year at Indiana is a major change from the Czech Republic, where he is one of two Uyghur scholars. "What I enjoy the most is the fact that there are professors and students who are involved in the same area of research as me and I can talk with them about what we are all doing," said Klimeš. "I have never really

"SCHOLARS" continues on page 11...

Field reports

Capturing culture on Azerbaijan's loom

by Aimee Dobbs

Throughout 2009-2010, I spent my time on dissertation research in Baku, Azerbaijan. I basically lived in the city's archives, museums, libraries, and manuscript institutes; however, over the year I had a couple of short travel opportunities to Baku's surrounding towns.

In July, my friend's officemate offered to show us around her hometown of Quba, located just north of Baku and once home to the famous Azerbaijani enlightener, Abbasquluğa Bakıxanov. She also offered to give us a tour of a workshop-center where women made hand-woven carpets. The center was supervised by her mother, Fatima Agamirzoeva. Upon our arrival, Fatima xanim warmly greeted us with tea and Şəki's famous halva. Of course, we accepted.

As we sat in the rose garden enjoying her hospitality, she explained the center's multi-purpose character. It was a free space for women to congregate and to share the craft of carpet-weaving while also acting as a direct market supply site from which the artisans reaped the majority of the profits from their art. It was also a workshop

that concentrated on yarn and dye quality as well as reconstructed hundreds of designs from fragments of Azerbaijan's historical past. Ms. Agamirzoeva's workshop was nothing less than a live cultural archive, one which preserves and promotes traditional Azerbaijani art.

After our tea, Fatima xanim gave us an in-depth tour of the site. She explained the process of making hand-woven carpets; however, beyond carpet typology and the hundreds of designs, she shared with us the centrality of this tradition among Azerbaijani women. Carpets have served as furnishings and as household ornaments, but more importantly, they were once the main component of any Azerbaijani bride's dowry. Taking up to a year to weave, the bride often began her task long before her wedding date. Generally three or four carpets were presented in a dowry and, as noted by Fatima xanim, most every choice--colors, symbols, design--reflected a conscious decision on the part of the bride. Often the carpet's design indicated her family background or that of her future husband's. In those days, dyes were made from beetles,



Women sit at the loom of the Quba Women and Family Business Center, Baku

flowers, roots, nuts, seeds, vegetables and other plant parts. Yarn was spun by hand. So the entire process, from wool to carpet, was tremendously laborious. Over time, however, machine-spun yarn, followed by machine-made carpets, signaled the evolution from cottage industry to industrial factory. Still, Fatima xanim emphasized the point that hand-spun yarn holds dye better than its machine-spun counterpart, just as hand-woven carpets fair better over time than do machine-made ones.

Fatima xanim's tour left me with a new understanding regarding the fundamental role carpet-weaving has played in fostering and sustaining links between women across communities. Each carpet has a history of its own, a story to tell. Carpet-weaving thus has brought women together century after century over the time-consuming and intricate tasks of spinning, dying, and then weaving carpets on ceiling-high looms, tool in hand for knotting and cutting woolen strands a thousand times over. I tried it myself, but no matter how many times I tried, I just could not master the left-hand "separate threads and hold," with the right-hand "loop-knot-cut" combination. My "instant teacher," a fifty-some-year-old woman who had been weaving since she was a child, just laughed. In the end, she suggested that I return to the archives.

Aimee Dobbs is a PhD candidate in the History Department. She traveled to Azerbaijan on a Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Research Fellowship.



A colorful finished carpet at the Quba Women and Family Business Center, Baku

OP-ED: Chinese Policy in Xinjiang

by Ondřej Klimeš

In a recent RCCPB colloquium, Xinjiang University School of Humanities' Associate Prof. Yang Zhongdong spoke about July 2009 unrest in Urumchi. He argued that the clashes should be interpreted as a mass incident resulting from economic and social transformation of the PRC, rather than ethnic conflict between Uyghurs and Hans in Xinjiang. He also underlined the long history of the region's connections with China proper and stressed that in future, Xinjiang will always remain a part of China. Regrettably for academics, the conclusions presented by Prof. Yang do not qualify as independent research or seriously meant discussion of the problem. But the speech was extremely illuminating because it provided the audience with a telling exhibit of the PRC's official approach to Xinjiang's ethnic affairs. One particular point made by Prof. Yang is directly related to my research at the Department of Central Eurasian Studies and inspired my further thoughts on broader issues.

When referring to the history of Xinjiang insurgency, Prof. Yang emphasized that the vast majority of unrest was created or supported by interests of foreign powers. He specifically highlighted Great Britain's support of the East Turkestan Republic (ETR) founded in 1933 in southwest Xinjiang. Similarly, PRC white papers *Development and Progress in Xinjiang* (新疆的发展与进步, September 2009) and *History and Development in Xinjiang* (新疆的历史与发展, May 2003) point out that East Turkestan was originally a geographical concept misused for political purposes by an insignificant group of "so-called East Turkestan forces" (‘东突’势力). The ETR is portrayed as an "illegal regime" (非法政权) established by a small number of "fanatical separatists and religious extremists" (极少狂热的新疆分裂分子与宗教极端势力) who were aided by "instigation and support" (怂恿支持) of "hostile foreign forces" (外国敌对势力). Other influential PRC publications, such as *Evanesence of "East Turkestan" Delusion* ("东突厥斯坦国"迷梦的幻灭, 2006), *History and Present of Chinese Xinjiang* (中国新疆历史与现况, 2003) or *History of Republican*

Xinjiang (民国新疆史, 1999) also underscore the illegality, lack of popular support, historical insignificance, separatist and extreme Islamist nature and involvement of foreign powers in proclamation of ETR.

Contemporary documents related to formation of the ETR dating from around 1933 suggest that the PRC's official interpretation disregards several important aspects of the whole event. The "East Turkestan Republic" (*Sherqiy Türkistan Jumhuriyiti*) emerged as a result of a large scale "national liberation movement" (*millet qutulush hêrikiti*) which was motivated primarily by the discontent of people today called Uyghurs with Han rule. The ETR's theoreticians systematically listed the modalities of Han mismanagement, e.g., economic exploitation, absence of a just legal system, privileged status of Han immigrants, violation of local religious and cultural principles, obstruction of local education and publishing, and so on. The "government" (*hökümet*) and "state" (*dölet*) of East Turkestan were specifically declared to be both "religious and national" (*diniy we milli*). The shari'a indeed was the base of ETR's legal system, but the constitution also endorsed "people's representatives" (*millet wekilliri*), "reformed schools" (*islâh medrise*) and "national publishing" (*milliy metbu'at*). The state structure was chiefly modeled on and oriented toward Mustafa Kemal's Turkey, and its elite were strongly influenced by reformism and jadidism.

From the point of view of China's central government, the ETR was naturally an illegal state. But it was illegal in exactly the same way in which the PRC remains an illegal state from the point of view of the government of the Republic of China. Today we have no way of assessing the degree of popular support for the ETR at the time, and therefore we cannot prove that such support did not exist. However, historical sources do prove that, albeit in reality short-lived and largely dysfunctional, the ETR was conceived of by its protagonists as an "independent nation state" (*musteqil milli dölet*) of "East Turkestanis" (*Sherqiy Türkistanliqlar*) who simply did not want to be ruled by Hans as a part of China and

therefore staged an "uprising for national liberation" (*milliy azadliq inqilabi*).

Turning a blind eye to the root causes of a problem is a strategy applied by the PRC organs not only to the past but also to the present. Official description of the July 5, 2009 events in Urumchi ranges from "mass incident with Xinjiang characteristics" through "serious violent criminal incident of vandalism, looting and arson" to "a riot." State sources attribute the violent episode not to widespread popular dissatisfaction of Uyghurs but to behind-the-scenes manipulators, variously a "handful of demagogues," "domestic and foreign terrorist, separatist and extremist forces" and so-called "East Turkestan forces" supported by "foreign anti China forces." Such heavily armed rhetoric unwittingly engenders doubts about its credibility and the self-confidence of its authors.

But more importantly, the tactic of studiously ignoring root causes also signals that even after more than sixty years of PRC's jurisdiction over Xinjiang, Communist planners refuse to reflect on the essential fact that there simply are a lot of Uyghurs who resent the predominantly Han Communist Party rule and who do not feel free in their own homeland. It is striking that if read out loud, the grievances toward the Han administration articulated in ETR documents from 1933 sound just like those one might hear today from a random Uyghur acquaintance at just about any late night *kawap* stand in Xinjiang. Sadly, for the Chinese Communist Party, no problem exists in Xinjiang. Instead, the administration insists on "staying the course" of Xinjiang ethnic policy and on "strengthening the ethnic unity" of the Chinese nation. It is truly shattering to realize that not even the death of several hundred citizens of the "People's" Republic last summer convinced the party to reevaluate its Xinjiang policy. Obviously, Xinjiang retains its timeless antiquity even in the 21st century. Only in this case, it is not the mystique of ancient Silk Road that is surviving but politics of the region, petrified since 1949. Now, is China really modernizing into a responsible superpower, as her leaders claim?

OUTREACH HIGHLIGHTS

Spotlight: Afghanistan

This year, the Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Center has expanded its outreach programming to explore conflict, rebuilding, and cross-cultural links with Afghanistan.

Throughout 2010, the IAUNRC sponsored the “Cultivating Afghanistan” project, which supported award-winning journalist Douglas Wissing as he embedded with the Indiana 1-19th Agribusiness Development Team (ADT). Before deployment to Afghanistan’s eastern Khost province, the team studied Pashto language and Afghan culture through the IAUNRC affiliate Center for Languages of the Central Asian Region (CeLCAR).

For the six months he lived with the ADT, Wissing filed stories on issues ranging from culture shock and security concerns to irrigation system and goat husbandry. As a result of the “Cultivating Afghanistan” project, Bloomington NPR outlet WFIU broadcast Wissing’s stories and published his photographs on its website. Over the summer, IU’s Herman B. Wells library also organized an exhibit of Wissing’s photographs, along with other photographs, antique objects, and artwork from university collections in an exhibit entitled “Indiana in Afghanistan; Afghanistan in Indiana.”

This fall, the IAUNRC also launched its newest interactive videoconference, “The Roof of the World: Real-life Locations from Three Cups of Tea.” The *New York*



Afghans and Americans gathered for a shura (council) under a village tree. Photo by Douglas Wissing.

Times bestselling book by climber-turned-humanitarian Greg Mortenson chronicles Mortenson’s efforts to build a school in rural Pakistan and has become a favorite of reading groups, book clubs, and school-wide reading initiatives.

The IAUNRC has worked with a number of groups, including book clubs, student groups of all ages, and teachers preparing to use the book in their classes. The videoconference contextualizes some of the au-

thor’s anecdotal experiences by discussing the geographic complexity of development in Afghanistan and local perspectives on gender, religion, and education.

“I realized how roads and bridges are the lifeblood of cultures,” writes educator Margaret Weinberger of New Jersey. “I also was interested to know about the women there and how they live; it was so clear to me after seeing the physical region how the people suffer hardships related to weather and ‘remoteness.’”

In October, Mortenson visited Indianapolis to discuss his latest book. In addition to representing the Center at Mortenson’s talk, IAUNRC staff also worked with coordinators to make Mortenson’s visit with local Indiana elementary school students available to partners across the country via live web streaming.

Videoconferencing is becoming one of the most popular outreach programs presented by the IAUNRC. Since September, the Center has presented 42 videoconferences to schools and community centers in 20 states, reaching nearly 1,000 students and educators.

“*Cultivating Afghanistan*,” including Wissing’s stories and photographs, can be viewed on WFIU’s website.

For more information on the IAUNRC’s videoconferencing program, or to schedule a videoconference, please contact us at (812) 856 1126 or iaunrc@indiana.edu.

SCHOLARS...*continued from page 9* had this opportunity before and I am very grateful for it.”

As to major developments happening in the field of Xinjiang studies, Klimeš responded, “In recent years, there has been an increasing number of studies and analyses of contemporary Xinjiang and Uyghurs written by specialists who know the language, have a long-time personal experience with the region and understand it profoundly. Also there is more and more research published by Uyghurs themselves. I hope this trend will continue in the future.”

The IAUNRC is also honored to host scholars Halema Abliz of China and Qomiljon Sharipov of Tajikistan this fall.

The IAUNRC Podcasts

New! Fall 2010 Lectures

“Bad Islam: The Myth of Uzbek Radicalism in Kyrgyzstan” *Rebekah Tromble*

“Arvo Pärt: Icon of an Age”
Dr. Jeffers Engelhardt

“Challenges Facing Mongolian Culture, Language, and Identity in China” *Naranbilig*

“The Modern Fate of the Historical Buddhist Kingdom of Muli”
Dr. Lara Maconi

Check the website for the latest podcasts!
www.indiana.edu/~iaunrc/news/podcasts.shtml



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