

Inner Asian & Uralic
National Resource Center

Fall/Winter 2007 Newsletter

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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 region and Uralic peoples. The Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Center Newsletter is a biannual publication of the IAUNRC 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:

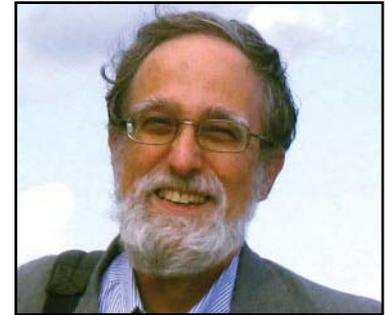
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On the Cover: A child takes candy from a *dastarkhan* in Zhetikazyna, Kazakhstan. Photograph by Brian Cwiek.

A Word from the Director

This summer I had the opportunity to spend five weeks in the Republic of Kazakhstan (RK). The majority of my time was devoted to research related to the changing status of the Kazakh language. Although Russian replaced Kazakh in many domains during the Soviet era, Kazakh has made something of a comeback in the past twenty years. It is used much more today on the streets of Almaty, the former capital, than even five years ago; the same is true in other urban areas of the country where Russian had practically squeezed Kazakh out of public life in the late Soviet era.



Despite Kazakh's partial recovery -- including a heavy dose of Kazakh language in the Russian school curriculum -- relatively few non-Kazakhs know Kazakh; furthermore, in most urban areas of the country, Kazakhs are by and large still fluent in Russian. Thus, although formally Russian is no longer the RK's "language of inter-ethnic communication," it remains the single language which permits one to communicate to the largest share of the country's population.

Does this imply that a student with a serious interest in Kazakhstan is well-advised to study Russian and ignore Kazakh? The answer is certainly "No!" Although Russian will undoubtedly remain critical for studying many aspects of contemporary Kazakhstan, Kazakh language is extremely important for engagement in the region, and its importance is likely to grow. Demographic changes suggest the language trends: Kazakhs, who comprised about 40 percent of Kazakhstan's population in 1989, today account for almost 60 percent. The shifts are even more visible in most urban areas, where in the Soviet era Kazakhs were a fairly small minority.

Obviously, anyone interested in rural Kazakhstan -- where Kazakh usually predominates -- is seriously handicapped without knowledge of Kazakh. Kazakh is also critical for access to perspectives on major social, cultural, and even economic questions that are not available in Russian. Not surprisingly, many Kazakhs perceive a foreigner's knowledge of Kazakh -- even at a very basic level -- as a sign of respect and seriousness of purpose. They are likely to reward such interlocutors with a degree of trust and openness that someone without Kazakh skills is unlikely to attain.

William Finner



The IU Hungarian Cultural Association celebrated the commemoration of the 1956 Hungarian revolution on October 23rd, 2007. As part of the celebration, Dr. László Kovács, an IU alumnus, gave a speech entitled "The Revolution of 1956 – The Refugee Experience."

New CEUS Chair

Interview with Christopher Atwood

By Kim Zapfel, LAUNRC staff

The staff of the Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Center recently interviewed Christopher Atwood, Associate Professor of Central Eurasian Studies and Chair of the Department of Central Eurasian Studies. The following are excerpts from the interview.

How did you first become involved in Mongolian Studies?

When I was a freshman at Harvard, Joseph Fletcher, a professor in Mongolian and Manchu Studies in the East Asian Languages and Civilizations Department, taught a class entitled Empire of the Mongols. After taking this class I decided to study Chinese and Mongolian, and never looked back. After graduation, I received a wonderful travel fellowship -- \$7000 to spend in Inner Mongolia. I spent two years there. My first year I traveled, and my second year I took a course (in Mongolian) at Inner Mongolia Normal University. I was the only American student studying there at the time. Later, I did my dissertation research in Ulaanbaatar in 1991 and 1992. It was a great time to be there. They had just loosened up the old economy, but hadn't yet reformed prices. Everything was available for dirt cheap, which meant that nothing was available at all. Everything was rationed, but it was an exciting time.

You were on sabbatical last year. How did you spend that time?

I spent the year at the School of Historical Studies at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Princeton, New Jersey. While I was there I was able to make a lot of progress on three different projects. My first project involved rethinking the social history of pre-modern Mongolia and particularly the nomads of the Mongolian plateau from the time of the Xiongnu in 200 BCE up to the Qing dynasty. Specifically, I've been looking at the concepts of "tribe" and "tribalism." The usual

anthropological definition of a tribe suggests that it is something that is in opposition to the state, functionally unspecialized, kin-based, collective property based, and relatively egalitarian. While some of these aspects do apply to Mongolia, overall I think the model is simply false.

My second project revolves around an important source on Chinggis Khan that was originally written in Mongolian, and is preserved in two translations -- Chinese and Persian. The Persian translation, or rather paraphrase, was written by Rashid-al Din, and is the basis of his biography of Chinggis Khan. I've been using translations of this text, and comparing them to the Chinese. Like the *Secret History of the Mongols*, there has been a lot of controversy on this source. Scholarship has been divided on its



Dr. Atwood in his office at CEUS.
Photograph by Kris Rees.

significance, when it was written, and what it is. While I was at the Institute I believe I was able to answer many of these questions.

My third project grew out of a cross between the first and second projects. It's really a project on historiography -- a study of history writing under the Mongol empire. I'm looking at how the people of the Mongol empire explained their state. Often readers assume that histories written during this time period, describing the tribal Mongol nomads, should simply be

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Chirgilchin performs at Lotus Festival. Photograph by Kris Rees.

The Tuvan *Khoomei* Comes to Bloomington

By IAUNRC Staff

From Thursday, September 27th through Sunday, September 30th 2007, downtown Bloomington hosted the 14th Annual Lotus World Music and Arts Festival. More than twenty-five local, national, and international musicians and other artists came to Bloomington and performed to a cumulative audience of more than 10,000. As in years past, the festival featured samplings of music from around the world.

One of the showcase attractions was Chirgilchin, a Tuvan *khoomei*, or throat-singing, group. *Khoomei* is the general name for the technique of constricting the throat to provide an overtone, which results in the simultaneous production of multiple pitches by one singer. It is a traditionally Tuvan form of musical production, having existed among the peoples of the region from time immemorial, and is considered a part of Tuvan identity. The themes of *khoomei* songs often revolve around the shepherd lifestyle common to Tuvans. Sounds often mimic those found in nature, such as galloping hooves and bleating sheep.

Building on the success of last year's popular performance by Huun-Huur-Tu, another highly regarded *khoomei* group from Tuva, Chirgilchin played to standing-room-only audiences during each of their four performances. Chirgilchin was greeted with an exceptionally positive response by the Bloomington community. As

one of the primary sponsors of the performance, the Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Center was pleased to be able to share a part of the rich cultural heritage of the peoples of Inner Asia with the general public.

Each of Chirgilchin's forty-five minute performances explored the range of the throat-singers' talents. In addition to stellar performances by the three founding members of the group, Igor Koshkendey, Mongoun-ool Ondar, and Aldar Tamdyn, female singer Aidysmaa Koshkendey stunned the crowds with her unique voice. Koshkendey, Ondar, and Tamdyn, all native Tuvans, founded the group in Russia's Tuva Republic in 1996. Throughout the performances, the enchanting sounds of *khoomei* were complemented by traditional Tuvan instruments, including the *igil* (a two-stringed lute-shaped bowed instrument), *doshpoulour* (a two-stringed plucked instrument), *bayan* (drum), *byzaanchy* (a four-stringed vertical fiddle), and *chan-zy* (two-string plucked lute).

Following their performance in Bloomington, Chirgilchin continued touring the United States. Their most recent album, *Collectible*, is available for purchase on the group's website, www.chirgilchin.com or is available at the IAUNRC for short-term loan to students and educators. More information about Bloomington's annual Lotus Festival may be found at www.lotusfest.org.

Summer among the Tajiks

By Christina Stigliani

Last summer I found myself using Persian well outside of my usual research areas, modern Iranian literature and cinema. I was one of fifteen American graduate students spending the summer in Dushanbe, Tajikistan in the State Department's Critical Language Program for Persian, administered jointly by the Council of American Overseas Research Centers and the American Institute of Iranian Studies. AIIRs had reopened the language program in Tehran beginning in the late 1990s, but because American students have had difficulty obtaining visas in the last several years, it was moved to Dushanbe for the first time in 2007.

For someone coming from a Middle Eastern studies background, everything about the city was a new experience. There were only a few state-licensed mosques and no calls to prayer. Empty cans from Baltika beer floated in the roadside drainage canals. Russian and French soldiers chain-smoked at outdoor cafes. I had never seen a glacier before our weekend hiking trips to the mountains.

In fact I, along with most of the other students, had never been to Central Asia or any other post-Soviet country. Few of us spoke Russian or were even familiar with the Cyrillic alphabet. We were frustrated in our first weeks of Tajik class: while we understood most of what the instructors said, we had to awkwardly sound out the texts of our assignments word by word. It was our own crash course in alphabet reform.

As our Tajik literacy and conversational abilities improved over the summer, Persian classes were a blur of literature, newspapers and historical texts. We attended near-daily lectures, films, or private tours. The scholars of the Ferdowsi National Library, the Tajik Academy of Sciences, the Bactrian Cultural Center, and other academic institutions, educated under the old system, now spend their days with the

manuscripts and artifacts of the pre-Soviet past as they carefully constructed a new identity for the country.

We took weekend trips around the country, traveling to Hissar, west of Dushanbe, to Kulob, near the Panj River which forms the border with Afghanistan, and to Khojand in the north, on the Syr Darya. Everywhere we went we gravitated to riverside *chaikhanehs* to escape the heat, which reached 110 degrees at the lower elevations. Visiting the local bazaars, we bargained with Tajik and Dari speakers selling

“Few of us spoke Russian or were even familiar with the Cyrillic alphabet...It was our own crash course in alphabet reform.”

produce, clothing, and souvenirs.

In Dushanbe, everyone noticed the cluster of American students going to the language center. We became local celebrities, appearing on several Tajik television stations, on a Russian-language Central Asian regional news channel, and on both the radio and online editions of BBC Persian. Television crews arrived at the center and politely asked for classroom footage, interviews, and even poetry recitations. We became accustomed to performing on the spot.

On my last day in Dushanbe, a few hours before going to the airport, I went to buy some last-minute gifts. As I looked through neat pyramids of hats in the Barakat bazaar, the proprietor told me, “I saw you on television! You Americans speak Tajik very well!”

“*Mashallah,*” I said, and we sat down to tea and negotiations.

Christina Stigliani is completing a Master of Arts in CEUS.

Curriculum Development

By IAUNRC Staff

The Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Center has recently produced two sets of curricular materials.

First, in cooperation with IU's School of Public and Environmental Affairs the IAUNRC created a five-week integrated science and social studies unit for middle school teachers.

This unit introduces the cultural and ecological “worlds” of Central Asia. It covers Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan. Middle school students will approach the content from the different perspectives of science and of social studies. The overarching concept behind the unit is: “The natural world affects the daily functioning of the man-made world and may determine its fate; but also, the man-made world affects the daily functioning of the natural world and may determine its fate.”

The teacher will have an option of separating the lessons according to primary subject area (science or social studies). Whether taught in an integrated or separated manner, the unit is designed so that students will gain an accurate and in-depth understanding of the region and the issues which they will be able to present to their peers, families and community. The unit is available on the Center's website.

The second set of curricular materials is part of a four-year project. Each year a competitively selected team of graduate students from Central Eurasian Studies and the School of Education will create lesson plans corresponding to standards for the new Indiana high school course, The History and Geography of the World. The course will soon be mandatory for all college-bound high school students in Indiana. In spring 2007 the first unit was produced. It focuses on Standard Four for History and Geography of the World: “Exploration, Conquest, Imperialism, and Post-Colonialism.”

The first year's unit is based on Mongolian history and geography, and examines the physical and human geographic factors associated with the origins, major players, events and consequences of worldwide exploration, conquest, and imperialism. Three lessons have been organized as a six- to seven-day unit (or a five- to six-day unit under block scheduling). However, teachers who cannot devote that much time to this region can use individual lessons. The unit provides a variety of resources and content information so that teachers can meet the individual needs of their classrooms and students. Teachers may also request a CD with the unit free of charge from IAUNRC's website.



A Dushanbe memorial to Tajik soldiers killed in Afghanistan. Photograph by Christina Stigliani.

Visiting Scholars Fall 2007

Otgon Borjigin is a return visitor from the Lanzhou University Institute of Dunhuang Studies. Mr. Borjigin teaches Mongolian Historical Documents at Northwest University for Nationalities in Lanzhou.

Zsombor Csata is a doctoral candidate at the Corvinus University of Budapest in the Department of Sociology and Social Policy and at Babeş-Bolyai University in the Department of Sociology and Social Work.

Roza Ergeshbaeva is a faculty member of the Russian State Social University in Osh, Kyrgyzstan. She is researching the social and political context of Central Asian poets of the imperial and early Soviet period.

Aida Huseynova is an Associate Professor in the Department of Music History at the Baku Music Academy. She received her Ph.D. in Musicology from the Saint Petersburg Conservatory.

Anna Kalinina is a doctoral student from Russia. She is currently studying the historiography of Soviet policy in Xinjiang from 1918-1949.

Iryna Lytvynchuk is an Associate Professor of Psychology at the Crimean Republic Institute of Post-diploma Pedagogical Education. She is also an Associate Professor of Psychology at the Taurida National V.I. Vernadsky University.

Margarita Madanova is a Senior Scientific Researcher in the Department of World Literature and International Relations at the Institute of Literature and Art in Kazakhstan.

Kassym Maulenov is a Professor in the Chair of Philosophy and Law at the Kazakh-British Technical University. He is also a member of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan's working group on law project preparation.

Ablet Semet is a Research and Teaching Assistant at Freie Univeristat Belfin Institute of Turkic Studies. Mr. Semet's research area is "Islam in East Turkistan from the 16th century to the present."

Körpü-Köprü: Reading in Azerbaijani by Using Turkish as a Bridge

By Suzan Özel

Körpü-Köprü: Reading in Azerbaijani by Using Turkish as a Bridge is a beginning reader for students of the Azerbaijani language. This work is, however, unusual because it does not start at the level typical of introductory-level readers. It follows instead an approach that is customized to the needs of a special group of learners, namely those who have studied Turkish and wish to gain reading competency in Azerbaijani.

Turkish and Azerbaijani belong to the Southwestern or Oghuz branch of Turkic languages and are linguistically so similar that they are normally characterized as being mutually intelligible. Forming the Western sub-branch of the Oghuz dialects, they represent the official languages of two neighboring states, languages that are regarded as nearly identical in their basic components, i.e., phonology, morphology, lexicon and syntax. Yet, in spite of these similarities, speakers of Turkish often have difficulty in understanding the full meaning of what they hear or read in Azerbaijani. This is mostly due to the differences in the lexicon between the standard versions of the two languages. Azerbaijani possesses a large number of words of Persian and Arabic origin that, while still known to older speakers of Turkish, are not familiar to those born in the second half of the twentieth century. In addition, differences in such critical elements as postpositions and verb forms are frequently responsible for gaps in comprehension.

To the students who are familiar with the basic features of Turkish and who intend to develop reading skills in Azerbaijani this situation presents a mixed blessing. Evidently the breadth of shared features are an advantage; however, they also disadvantage the students because courses and instructional materials that are targeted towards "true novices" offer far more basic contents than these students need. The *Bridge* is designed to meet the special needs of these learners by providing them with linguistic information they need to bridge the gap between written Turkish and Azerbaijani.

The first part of the *Bridge* titled "Azerbaijani and Turkish in Contrast" emphasizes principal grammar points that, as seen from the vantage point of Turkish, are characteristic of Azerbaijani.

Because of the challenge posed by lexical differences, the "Contrast" also presents numerous tables illustrating phonological and semantic correspondences between the two languages.

The second part consists of readings that are presented over ten chapters. The topically organized chapters feature authentic texts



The Bosphorus Bridge in Istanbul, Turkey.

published in newspapers, journals, books, and on the Internet. Devoted to such topics as "Schools and Education," "The News," and "The Geography of Azerbaijan," the readings also function as a basic introduction to the target culture. The readings are accompanied by partial glossaries and graded tasks that are designed to guide students towards becoming independent readers.

This project was funded by a materials development grant from the Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Center. *Körpü-Köprü: Reading in Azerbaijani by Using Turkish as a Bridge* may be obtained from IAUNRC.

Relative constructions

-(y)En

In Azerbaijani the participle ending in -(y)En works as a modifier like in Turkish.

çay içən kişi	the person drinking tea
oxunmayan kitab	the book that is not read/has not been read

However, unlike Turkish, Azerbaijani makes use of this participle also in the following type of relative clause:

Maryam evlənən kişi Gəncəlidir.
Meryem'in evləndiği adam Genceli.
The man Maryam is marrying/has married is from Ganja.

Mən anadan olan kənd çox kiçik idi.
Benim doğduğum köy küçüktü.
The village where I was born was very small.

Mongolian Offered at SWSEEL

By IAUNRC Staff

This summer, Indiana University once again offered intensive language training through its Summer Workshop in Slavic, East European and Central Asian Languages (SWSEEL). The workshop gave students the opportunity to complete two semesters of language classes over the course of a two-month period.

This year, for the first time ever, Mongolian language classes were added to the SWSEEL program. Four students took advantage of this opportunity to study introductory Mongolian. These students attended class for four hours each morning, and spent many afternoons practicing their language skills outside the classroom.

Introductory Mongolian was taught by Tserenchunt Legden, a Visiting Lecturer in Central Eurasian Studies. Ms. Legden is from Middle Gobi, Mongolia, and has been teaching Mongolian to foreigners since 1993. She has been at IU since 2004, and was excited to become involved with the SWSEEL program for the first time this summer.

In her class, Ms. Legden worked with students using a course packet which she had developed herself. Included in this packet, and a favorite among students, was a section on Mongolian riddles. According to Ms. Legden, there are many riddles in Mongolian based on words associated with the human body. Over the course of the summer, students learned several of these riddles and also created their own.

In class, students also learned Mongolian food vocabulary. They were able to put this knowledge into use when they attended a Mongolian cooking demonstration organized by SWSEEL. In addition, Ms. Legden also invited

her students to her house to learn more about Mongolian food. Together, Ms. Legden and her students prepared *buuz*, a Mongolian national dish which resembles meat dumplings, and capital salad, which consists of potatoes, egg, carrots, onion, sausage, and cucumber.

Over the summer, there were also several extra-curricular activities which allowed the students to interact with native-language speakers. One of the most memorable events, according to Ms. Legden, was the Naadam celebration. Naadam, which takes place on July 11th and 12th, is a traditional Mongolian holiday. Here in Bloomington, numerous members of the Mongolian community and their friends gathered in Cascade Park to celebrate the event. Students from the Introductory Mongolian class were also able to participate in the celebration. Class members performed a song which they had learned for the event. They also enjoyed the Naadam sporting events, and one student even participated in the wrestling competition.

Overall Ms. Legden considered the addition of Mongolian to the SWSEEL program to be a success. Both she and the students were exhausted by the end of the program. However, all also felt a sense of accomplishment. Ms. Legden looks forward to seeing Mongolian classes continue to be offered in the SWSEEL program.

This article was written with the assistance of Tserenchunt Legden, Visiting Lecturer in Central Eurasian Studies, and Benjamin Hahn, a graduate student in the IU Department of Central Eurasian Studies. For more information about SWSEEL, please visit <http://www.indiana.edu/~iuslavic/swseel/>.



Ms. Legden (second from right) and her Introductory Mongolian students.

Fulbright-Hays Recipients

IAUNRC congratulates the eleven IU graduate students who have been awarded Fulbright-Hays grants for travel related to their dissertation research. Among these eleven, four students will be travelling to the region covered by our Center:

Brent Hierman, from the Political Science Department, will be conducting research in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

Barbara Junisbai, also from the Political Science Department, will travel to Belarus and the Kyrgyz Republic.

Gabriel McGuire, from the Folklore Department, will be conducting research in Kazakhstan.

Nicole Wilcock, from the Religious Studies Department and the Central Eurasian Studies Department, will be in China and India.

New Finnish Professor at IU

By IAUNRC Staff

This fall, the Department of Central Eurasian Studies welcomed its newest faculty member, Dr. Pia-Maria Paivio. Dr. Paivio is Finnish by nationality and was born in Järvenpää, Finland, a city well known as the hometown of Jean Sibelius and other Finnish Golden Age artists.

Dr. Paivio received her Ph.D. from the University of Turku's Finnish Department. She initially studied Finnish-English translation, but later decided to focus on syntax and semantics. Dr. Paivio finished her dissertation on this topic in 2007.

Since 1999, Dr. Paivio has been teaching Finnish to foreigners. Currently at IU she is teaching both the Introductory and Intermediate Finnish language classes. This spring, in addition to her Finnish language courses, Dr. Paivio will also offer a course on the rise of Finnish culture in the 19th century.

Dr. Paivio has twin daughters who are bilingual in Finnish and German. Dr. Paivio has been recording her daughters' speech since they were young. When her daughters are old enough to give consent, Dr. Paivio hopes to use these recordings as part of a case study on bilingual twins.

Studying Entrepreneurship in Transylvania

By Zsombor Csata

This year brings me to IU as a visiting scholar from Babeş-Bolyai University (Romania) and Corvinus University Budapest (Hungary). At my home universities I am a doctoral student in the sociology departments. My doctoral work focuses on the spread of entrepreneurship in Eastern Europe, and in particular in Transylvania. I am especially interested in understanding why entrepreneurial propensity and entrepreneurial inclination are higher in certain regions than in others.

In order to study this issue, my colleagues and I have worked on several case studies over the past few years. In one of our original case studies, we focused on the Sekler region (Secuime in Romanian, Székelyföld in Hungarian) in Transylvania. As part of this case study, we examined various factors which we believed might influence the development of entrepreneurship. The results of this case study suggested that particular local conditions have a large impact on entrepreneurship development.

This conclusion further peaked my interest in this subject and so I decided to study entrepreneurship in greater depth. In order to do so, my colleagues and I began to look for cases in which local social networks have encouraged independent entrepreneurship. We hypothesized that social networks could be instrumental in promoting efficient entrepreneurial cooperation, even when these networks were not initially created for economic purposes. In order to test this hypothesis, we again developed several case studies in rural Transylvania.

First, we examined the experiences of Adventist communities in rural Central-Transylvania. We noted that these communities, which observed a “no work on Saturdays” commandment, had chosen not to participate in the mainstream communist economy. This meant that they did not work in farmer’s cooperatives or industry. However, during the communist era, these communities established quasi-small ventures within the secondary economy. Our research suggested that they were able to do so by drawing upon their church’s religious networks as a channel of information. We also found that after the collapse of the communist regime, these Adventist communities continued to make use of these social networks. Specifically, we found that they utilized their religious networks to promote the emergence and growth of small enterprises in the beginning of the nineties.

As part of our second case study, my colleagues and I chose to focus on a community of former professional ice-hockey players from the Sekler region. These former players had developed small ventures and enterprise networks in the wood industry. Studying this phenomenon, we found that these hockey players had benefited from historical circumstances which had allowed them to build extensive so-



Erdely, Transylvania. Photograph by Laslo Vargo.

cial networks. These networks included party bureaucrats and leaders of state-owned companies (who were sponsors of first-league teams). The results of our research suggested that these networks also proved to be useful during the privatization process which followed the change of regime in Romania. During the economic recession at the beginning of the 90s, the former ice-hockey players were able to use their networks to receive market information that considerably reduced the risks of business activity.

Thus again we noted that entrepreneurship in the post-communist period was enhanced by the use of local social networks.

We are continuing our research on regional differences in entrepreneurship in Transylvania. This year at IU will allow me to draw on the resources available here to pursue this topic in greater depth.

News from CeLCAR

By Dave Baer

The Center for Languages of the Central Asian Region (CeLCAR) has developed new introductory-level textbooks and CDs for Uzbek, Tajik and Pashto. These introductory textbooks include authentic materials collected by CeLCAR developers on-site in Central Asia and Afghanistan. Each textbook is accompanied by two CDs, which include original video and audio recordings.

CeLCAR has also developed a series of online multimedia modules for students of Central Asian languages. These modules are designed for use by intermediate-level students of Uzbek, Uyghur, Tajik, Mongolian and Pashto languages. The modules allow students of Central Asian languages to build their listening and reading skills, broaden their vocabulary, enrich their appreciation of grammar, and deepen their understanding of the cultures of the region. Each module features original texts that present language structures in authentic cultural contexts. The texts are accompanied by a series of multimedia exercises created by CeLCAR’s native-speaker developers.

The Uzbek, Tajik, and Pashto Introductory Textbooks are available for purchase from CeLCAR. All modules are available free of charge on the CeLCAR website and are also available in CD format.

Dave Baer is the CeLCAR Assistant Director. Further information is available on the CeLCAR website: <http://www.indiana.edu/~celcar>

New CEUS Chair

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treated as an uncomplicated portrayal. But it needs to be treated as a retrospective account. Readers must be aware that the concerns of the people who wrote these accounts affect the portrait which they drew of the nomads.

What classes do you teach here at IU?

When I became a faculty member here, the first class I taught was called Mongols of the 20th century, which was then renamed Modern Mongolia. I also taught the Mongol Empire class, after the previous professor, Larry Moses, retired. I designed a class on Inner Mongolia, which basically covers 19th and 20th century, and later created a class on Mongolia's middle ages. It's a difficult class because it covers such a long period of time – 500 years in one semester, but it's a class that is designed to provide students with the big picture. This Spring I'll be teaching a seminar, the Secret History of the Mongols. I'm really looking forward to the class. It will involve a line-by-line study of the *Secret History of the Mongols*. It's a text which is well worth that kind of intense approach.

What do you plan to do as CEUS department chair?

I know how important the question of financial support is for where graduate students decide to study. I'm not sure if I can do any more than others have done, but I do want to do something about this as chair. It's a long-term goal, but we really need to do something, because if we don't, we are setting ourselves up for mediocrity.



*The Dalai Lama came to IU in October. He met with CEUS students and Professor Sperling during his visit.
Photograph by Coline Sperling.*

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