

By Christopher Burnett | Staff Writer

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## Experts discuss Eurasian politics, beliefs

“The Future of Eurasia: Cultural Perspectives, Geopolitics and Energy Security.”

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“The Future of Eurasia: Cultural Perspectives, Geopolitics and Energy Security” was the topic of a presentation by several experts on the region Sept. 29 in the Arnold Conference Room of the Lewis and Clark Center.

The Culture, Regional Expertise and Language Management Office jointly produced the event with the Missouri University of Science and Technology-Rolla, the Command and General Staff College and the Foreign Military Studies Office.

Dr. Mahir J. Ibrahimov, CRELMO program manager, served as moderator for the two-hour presentation that included three guest speakers.

Col. Greg Penfield, vice provost for Learning Systems, Army University, gave the keynote address to start the event.

“This panel is a great example of the collaborative efforts that are continually ongoing across TRADOC with our civilian academia partners,” Penfield said. “The panel topic, ‘Future of Eurasia: Cultural Perspectives, Geopolitics and Energy Security,’ is derived from a major collaborative anthology that is awaiting publication by Army Press. And, we are very fortunate today to have with us several panel members who were coauthors contributing to this anthology. The anthology goes beyond the obvious military strategic nexus and seeks to provide new spaces for planners and our policy makers alike. Today’s panel members are going to expand upon those themes and that line of thinking.”

Robert W. Kurz, a FMSO intelligence analyst and researcher, opened with “Observations from Ukraine: Ukraine’s Hidden Battlefield,” a presentation based upon his weeklong visit to the region for research purposes. Kurz presented key observations that spoke to the prevalence of Russian propaganda and Ukrainian perspectives of it in sectors such as the news industry, media and religious institutions. He also discussed how Russia uses indirect methods to influence the region.

The next speaker was Dr. Christopher Marsh, a professor at CGSC’s School of Advanced Military Studies. Marsh’s presentation, “Russian Public Opinion on NATO, War, and Other Events” focused largely upon the perceptions of average Russians. He noted that despite increases in wealth in Russia, daily life there is still a struggle for many. An example showed results of a July 2016 survey question that asked Russian citizens which events in the last four weeks were most memorable. The leading answer at 30 percent of those polled dealt with the campaign to ban Russian athletes from the Olympics because of doping scandals. By comparison, the decision to deploy NATO forces in Poland and the Baltics barely registered among them at 3 percent.

Dr. Tseggai Isaac concluded the formal presentations with his talk, “Cultural Studies in the Army.” An associate professor in the Department of History and Political Science at the Missouri University of Science and Technology-Rolla, Isaac discussed the context of cultures and the universality of the human quest. He further detailed analysis of the paradigm by speaking of the issues and challenges that define the three world cultures.

In conjunction with its subordinate organizations, CRELMO provides daily management oversight in directing, synchronizing and integrating the Army’s culture, regional expertise and language capabilities and requirements. The expected outcome is a comprehensive and balanced strategy that reflects best practices and is informed by emerging requirements for foreign language proficiency, regional expertise and cultural capability that supports Army 2020 force structure.

For more information, contact the CRELMO program manager at 684-3345 or <http://usacac.army.mil/organizations/cace/lrec>.



PHOTO/ PRUDENCE SIEBERT, FORT LEAVENWORTH LAMP

Guest speaker Robert Kurz, intelligence analyst/researcher for the Foreign Military Studies Office, talks about how Russian propaganda affects Ukrainian perspectives as fellow Future of Eurasia: Cultural Perspectives, Geopolitics and Energy Security speakers Dr. Tseggai Isaac, associate professor of history and political science at the Missouri University of Science and Technology — Rolla, and Dr. Christopher Marsh, professor at the School of Advanced Military Studies, listen Sept. 29 in Arnold Conference Room at the Lewis and Clark Center. Photo by Prudence Siebert/Fort Leavenworth Lamp