

REECAS NEWSLETTER

RUSSIAN, EAST EUROPEAN AND CENTRAL ASIAN STUDIES CENTER

JACKSON SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON AUTUMN 2002/WINTER 2003

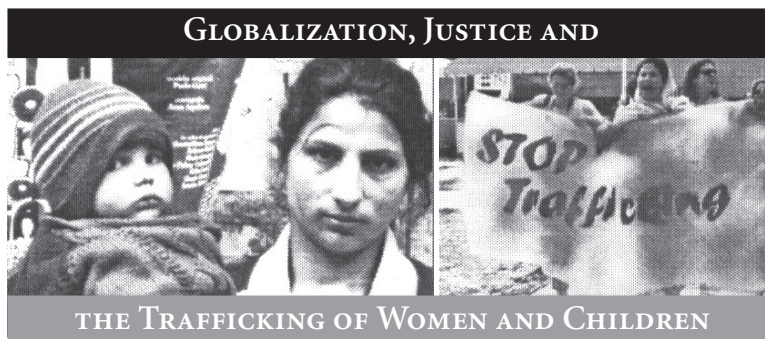
Trafficking Conference Update

BY SUTAPA BASU

On October 25 and 26, 2002, the University of Washington Women's Center, the International Studies Center and REECAS held an international conference entitled "Globalization, Justice and the Trafficking of Women and Children". Over 450 people attended the two-day forum, where experts and activists from around the world presented their work. Congresswoman Liza Maza, House of Representatives, Philippines, gave the keynote address, and Ambassador Nancy Ely-Raphel, Director of the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, US State Department, made opening remarks on the second day of the conference.

The conference was an opportunity for students in the Pacific Northwest and the surrounding community to learn about the global context of trafficking from the world's leading scholars and activists. It also shed light on the fact that trafficking is far more than merely an issue of migration. For too long, governments have viewed transnational trafficking as a crime against the state (illegal migration). The victim, thus, is made the perpetrator and often treated as a criminal. As it becomes more difficult each year for women to migrate legally, trafficking—that is, exploited migration—becomes more profitable and more commonplace. From a human rights perspective, however, trafficking is a crime against migrants, upon which the woman's desire to migrate is preyed.

The responsibility falls upon us to alter the popular view of trafficking, emphasizing it instead as a global human rights issue. We must push for the de-criminalization of trafficking victims, thereby releasing them from prosecution and making it easier and more probable for them to come forward. Possible solutions to this epidemic lie in activism on both a grassroots and a legislative



level. We must visualize a system of transnational justice that regards human trafficking not only as a migration issue, but as a public health, human rights and women's issue.

An Overview of the Panels

Trafficking—The Washington State Response: Washington State Representatives Velma Veloria and Phyllis Gutierrez-Kenny, along with State Senators Jeri

Costa and Jeanne Kohl-Welles, discussed ground-breaking state legislation to combat trafficking, which was signed into law by Governor Locke in November 2001.

Trafficking in Russia and Eastern Europe: The panelists included Dr. Juliette Engel, Founding Director of MiraMed Institute, Russia; Donna Hughes, University of Rhode Island; and Gail Kligman, UCLA. Dr. Kligman discussed the global context of trafficking and the economic and

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Letter from the Director

STEPHEN E. HANSON

It is my great pleasure to report some excellent news: the REECAS program is, as of the 2002-03 academic year, once again a Title-VI funded National Resource Center. In the wake of the tragic events of last fall, the US Congress voted to increase support of academic area studies centers, particularly those concentrating on strategically important regions such as the former Soviet Union and, in particular, Central Asia; no doubt our longstanding strength in the latter area played a crucial role in our reattainment of this Department of Education funding. Thus, our recent good fortune is due in large part to the tireless efforts over the past decades of faculty like Ilse Cirtautas, Daniel Waugh and Herbert Ellison—along with REECAS Central Asia specialists such as George Wright, Diana Pearce, Haideh Salehi-Esfahani and Beth Kolko—to ensure that Central Asian languages, history, politics and cultures were always at the center of our program's curriculum. This is a proud tradition upon which we plan to build in the years to come, through increased academic exchange programs with Central Asian educational institutions, through continued teaching of Kazakh, Kirghiz, Tajik and Uighur during the academic year and summer term and through institutional activities such as support for the Central Eurasian Studies Society, whose annual conference we are scheduled to host in the near future.

Plans are underway for the future development of many other important REECAS activities as well. The UW Baltic Studies Endowment, spearheaded by Guntis Smidchens, has reached its initial fundraising goal of \$750,000; further efforts are underway to support expanded program activities including the creation of a tenure-track faculty position in Baltic cultures and societies. We are exploring new collaborative endeavors with the Foundation for Russian-American Economic Cooperation to support student and faculty study of, and travel to, the Russian Far East. Our ties with the Evans School of Public Affairs continue to deepen, as illustrated by the successful summer 2002 pilot research

study on microfinance in Novosibirsk and Irkutsk carried out by REECAS MA students Will Bisch, Jonathan Carver and Justin Odum under the supervision of Professor Leigh Anderson. The UW Libraries' innovative Central Eurasian Information Resource database, containing photo images and regional statistics in a searchable web-based GIS format, is scheduled for public release in spring 2003. REECAS continues to sponsor timely conferences and colloquia on important topics, including the International Conference on Global Trafficking of Women and Children held in October 2002, with Ambassador Ely-Raphel of the State Department as keynote speaker, the series of talks by distinguished Poles and Polish-Americans (including Eva Hoffmann and the Polish Ambassador to the United States, Przemyslaw Grudzinski) organized by Katarzyna Dziwirek in honor of the 50th anniversary of the teaching of Polish at the UW and the annual REECAS-NW conference on "Shifting Boundaries and Changing Roles In Europe and Eurasia", to be held at the UW Bothell Campus in April.

We continue to benefit as well from the tireless efforts of our program staff and graduate students, including Newsletter Editor Heather Salfrank, Treadgold Papers Assistant Shannon Doherty and Website/Outreach Assistant Amy Frederick. Marta Mikkelsen, REECAS Assistant Director, plays an invaluable role in coordinating the day-to-day activities of the REECAS Center and in managing our numerous outreach programs to local public schools, community colleges and community organizations. The good humor and efficiency of Carrie O'Donoghue, REECAS Program Secretary, is also greatly appreciated.

Our outreach collection and resource center has also grown significantly over the last year, with important educational and informational contributions covering all REECAS-related areas. We have recently acquired *Silk Road* and *Silk Road II: An Ancient World of Adventure*, a 15 volume video documentary series. Video recordings of last year's REECAS co-sponsored Silk Road Seattle Series are

also available in the film collection. Other exciting new additions include *Bringing Down A Dictator*, a documentary film on the Otpor student resistance group's involvement in unseating Slobodan Milosevic; *The European Union Moves East*, a video taking a close look at the EU's eastward expansion; and *The End of the Soviet Union*, a video series featuring excerpts from meetings of key US foreign policy makers during the collapse of the Soviet bloc. Our curricular materials section now includes the guide *Inner Asia: The Bizarre Bazaar*, containing maps as well as historical, environmental and cultural information on Central Asia; and *Russia and the Other Former Soviet Republics in Transition*, an in-depth video and instructional guide that provides current information on the political, economic and foreign policy development of these countries.

I am happy to welcome the remarkably diverse and promising group of 14 new Master's students who have joined us for the 2002-03 academic year. I would also like to welcome two new REECAS visiting scholars from the former Soviet Union: Aurica Crozu from Moldova, a specialist in microfinance in Eastern Europe, and Andrei Korovin, a specialist in Scandinavian studies and comparative literature from Moscow Pedagogical University. Finally, we are happy to announce the three most recent additions to the REECAS faculty: Beth Kolko of the Department of Technical Communication is a specialist on the impact of the Internet and World Wide Web on social identities, with a particular focus on Central Asia; Andrew Nestingen is a specialist on Finnish culture and identity with an interest in both Finnish-Russian and Finnish-Baltic relations; and Simon Werrett of the Department of History is a specialist on 18th century Russian science. With current faculty searches underway in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures for a specialist in post-Soviet culture and in the Jackson School for a specialist in political Islam in Central and/or South Asia, the current dynamic growth of the REECAS program seems certain to continue in the years to come. ♦

Microfinance in Siberia: Tales from the Field

BY JONATHAN CARVER

For some of us in the field of Russian studies, the true Shangri-la is found in the regions beyond Moscow and St. Petersburg. We take pride in relating stories about adventures in the remote corners of Russia. Working in the field (whether in the Ural Mountain region, Siberia or the Russian Far East) is about connecting with the real Russia, or at least a non-Moscow oriented Russia. This is where the extraordinary happens rather regularly, where the rational and irrational occur simultaneously and where, I believe, more assistance programs and research should be directed.

In the summer of 1997, Leigh Anderson, an associate professor at the Evans School of Public Affairs, met Irina Bryzgolova and Tatiana Klepikova at a microfinance summit meeting in Denver. The two Russian academics had traveled from Novosibirsk and Irkutsk, respectively, to learn about microfinance lending methodologies from leading practitioners and theorists. They had already established small microfinance organizations in their cities, but wanted to learn more about managing clients, interest rates and growth. While microfinance has been an important development tool in Southeast Asia and Latin America, it has yet to take hold in Russia.

The idea behind microfinance is quite simple. Microfinance programs typically provide small loans to people to help them create businesses or "micro-enterprises". With access to small

amounts of capital (usually \$100 or less), these microentrepreneurs can start or expand their businesses, earn more income and eventually break the cycle of poverty.

Microfinance has become a credible alternative to the massive state-to-state aid packages that typified development policy throughout much of the 1970s and 1980s. It represents an important shift in the practical application of international aid because most of the funding goes directly to target populations. A lively debate within the microfinance field pits those who want to use microfinance as a tool for small-business development against those who advocate using it as a poverty alleviation instrument. While their overall goals are the same, those in the "poverty camp" see attending to the problems of the very poor as the immediate concern even at the expense of the financial sustainability of their programs. Those in the "sustainability camp" believe that the best way to help the poor is to create sustainable financial institutions, which can then cater to the needs of the poor after the foreign aid has long since departed.

Professor Anderson obtained funding in 2000 from the US Department of State for a joint program to build relationships between American and Russian institutions of higher education. The centerpiece of the grant was an initiative to research how microfinance could best fit within the Russian context. Professor

Anderson also wanted to develop teaching curricula and to facilitate student and faculty exchanges. Under the auspices of this grant, a team of University of Washington graduate students from the REECAS program and the Evans School of Public Affairs traveled to Novosibirsk and Irkutsk this past summer to conduct field research.

The student delegation consisted of me, Carrie Abendroth, Will Bisch, Justin Odum, Ken Peavler and Chris Runyan. Each student brought different strengths to the team. For example, Carrie assisted with research methodology and database management, while Will focused on developing the survey. Justin and I helped to provide a cultural context for the survey, as well as insight into the language and the cultural and the legal considerations of working in Russia. Ken and Chris chose to concentrate on broader project management issues, including financial accountability, personnel management and reporting. All of us learned tremendously from each other and from our Russian colleagues at the Siberian Academy of Public Administration in Novosibirsk and the Baikal Institute for Business Administration in Irkutsk.

In the months leading up to our departure last spring, the graduate student team created a survey of 38 questions that took approximately 15 minutes to complete. Our questions addressed the

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REECAS students Justin Odum and Jonathan Carver experience Russian hospitality while surveying in a village.

nature of local capital markets, interest rates and individual demand for financing and financial services. It also dealt with questions on individual attitudes towards risk and the future and inquiries attempting to measure the prevalence of social capital. One section of the survey focused on impediments to business development, including perceptions of crime, mafia, the legal system and banks.

REECAS Director Stephen Hanson critiqued numerous survey drafts and challenged us to think about how the wording of each question and certain word associations would affect our answers. Other faculty advisors included program creator Professor Anderson and Professor Andrew Gordon from the Evans School. Nothing, however, would prepare us better than actually conducting the survey on the streets in Novosibirsk and Irkutsk.

Siberia in the summer was different from what you might expect. There were no bears wandering the streets, the cities were not buried in snow and people were surprisingly willing to talk. In Novosibirsk, we found all the amenities for modern life on Lenin Street, which was lined with an Irish pub, an American pizza-restaurant and bar and a European coffee shop. Upscale supermarkets carried Tabasco sauce, Kentucky bourbon and other imported products.

In both the Novosibirsk and Irkutsk oblasts, undergraduate Russian students volunteered to help us conduct the research and to navigate the cities and villages. We visited six villages in each oblast. Typically, one American was paired with two Russian students. The team would then work in a region or neighborhood of the city or canvass an entire village, keeping track of each street and neighborhood visited by highlighting that area on a map. Over the course of our stay, we became acquainted with the architecture, infrastructure and the daily pulse of each city.

In order to obtain as random a sample as possible, we talked with over 1,000 people between the ages of 18 and 75 in both Novosibirsk and Irkutsk. A typical strategy involved approaching someone on a bench in a park or near a public area, such as a grocery store, school or bank. After several days of surveying, each of us developed particular strengths and techniques. For example, Will had a penchant for talking with *babushki* (grandmothers) selling vegetables in makeshift kiosks on street corners. Justin preferred to work in the train stations and open public spaces, while Carrie had success talking with small business owners in shopping centers. I spent a great deal of time in the villages going door to door with the survey.

While the research presented its own challenges, we were surprised by the amount of information the locals shared with us. Complete strangers disclosed their personal and family incomes, savings levels, opinions of government and police and their hopes for the future. More importantly, these people gave us their time and were happy to listen to us and to answer our probing questions.

A woman in Irkutsk told me that more Americans should come to Siberia to engage in cross-cultural work. She said that it was crucial for improving relations between our two countries. Another woman commented that filling out the survey was the highpoint of her day. She thanked me for allowing her to express her views on the local capital market and asked questions about how microfinance works in the US and when it might come to Novosibirsk.

A farmer in the village of Leninskoe (Novosibirsk oblast) indicated that he needed a small loan to help purchase a new tractor. He noted that agricultural production had dropped in his village over the last ten years and that new investment in equipment and training was needed. For a man educated in the Soviet system, the farmer demonstrated an advanced understanding of market economics. He knew the current interest rates at the city banks, but added that he would never qualify because he lacked collateral. Besides, he claimed, big banks did not lend to farmers.

This conversation provided important qualitative data suggesting that there was a significant demand for capital in the rural regions of Russia. From other discussions with villagers, we learned that most of the local factories had been shut down long ago and that there were no economic opportunities for workers. High rates of alcoholism and evidence of despair characterized our visits to these villages. Groups of women making *pelmeni* (the Siberian equivalent of ravioli) said that their *sovkhov* (state owned farm) had not paid their wages in six months.

One interesting research finding was that most of the Russians selling their vegetables and homewares on the streets or at the markets did not consider themselves small business owners. The

very idea of a “business owner” conjured up images of Lukoil, BMWs and the mafia. Because of these negative associations, many of the people with whom we spoke found it absurd to refer to their endeavors as business. Instead, they identified themselves first by their traditional occupation or education and replied that they were only selling vegetables to make a living. One woman stated that she did not want to sell vegetables, but with her son’s recent wedding costing 10,000 rubles (approximately \$400), she needed all the money she could get.

We will finish analyzing the data in the coming months, but, in the meantime, I can offer some general observations and conclusions. First, there is tremendous demand for small loans and capital at all

Second, many people viewed the city and oblast administrations as major impediments to normal economic development. We noticed a blurring of the distinction between the mafia and the government during many interviews in both Novosibirsk and Irkutsk. Of those people who had registered a small business, most had to endure registration procedures that lasted between two weeks and a month. Also, those same people indicated that they paid bribes or gifts to ensure that their application would receive favorable treatment. Qualitative data revealed that gift giving and informal bribery is an important part of any bureaucratic procedure in Siberia.

Third, small business owners said that the business environment had improved significantly since the rough and tumble

Novosibirsk and Irkutsk. One female entrepreneur was investing the profits from her small business to finance a shelter for abused women. Others were more profit-driven. Whatever the motive, it was clear that women were actively involved in the marketplace and made up a large component of the small-business sector.

Finally, Russians realized that it would take time to build effective legal and judicial institutions to regulate the market. The rule of law is being established, yet the appellate and claims courts remain notoriously underdeveloped and corruption is widespread. According to one interviewee, business disputes were not handled in the courts. The lack of a viable legal system that systematically enforces the rule of law may be the single most important impediment to sustainable economic development in Russia.

This past autumn quarter, Carrie, Chris, Justin, Ken, Will and I, along with our colleagues in Siberia, began to analyze the data in an effort to understand better what economic, political and social conditions may contribute to the success of microfinance in Russia. This process will continue throughout the winter months as we look at what, if any, differences exist between the Novosibirsk and Irkutsk oblasts. The long-range plan is to develop a report with recommendations to the US Department of State for a microfinance initiative in Siberia.

Can microfinance work in Russia? What are the conditions that would ensure a successful program? How would the unique Russian demographic, economic and social landscape affect the implementation of a microfinance program? Irina Bryzgalova and Tatiana Klepikova originally asked these questions on their trip to Denver in 1997. We are now one step closer to answering those questions. Our results may lead to a new critical and effective understanding of economic development assistance in Russia’s Shangri-la. ♦

Jonathan Carver is a second-year REECAS MA student pursuing a concurrent Master’s degree with the Evans School of Public Affairs.



A street vendor in Irkutsk answers questions about business practices.

levels of society in the Novosibirsk and Irkutsk oblasts. While many people would have liked to get a loan to start a small business, the majority interviewed indicated that they would have also liked to obtain financing to finish home repairs or even to take a vacation. Most banks do not loan money to individuals. Unlike in the US, credit card companies do not mail advertisements with offers of endless lines of credit to the general public. Therefore, we assume that one of the major barriers to economic development in these two Siberian regions is the lack of access to capital.

1990s. A business code of ethics had started to develop. Business associations were increasing, including various Rotary Clubs, and expos and exhibitions shared successful practices. One of the many female small-business owners we met said that meeting with other industry businesses kept her abreast of changes in the field and has led to new partnerships. These changes in business norms portend well for the development of small business in Siberia.

Women appeared to be very active in small-business development in both

The Russian Oil Industry: Global Emergence and Future Challenges

BY CHERYL ICENHOUR GARNER

Last year, Russia captured international business headlines when it briefly surpassed the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in oil production levels. Media speculation ran high about whether Russia's oil sector could indeed become an alternate source of fossil fuels for the US and other industrialized nations. Historically one of the world's largest energy exporters, the Russian oil industry had been devastated by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent political and economic instability. Although the Soviet state had enjoyed peak production in 1988 and had surpassed Saudi Arabia as the world's number one exporter of oil in 1989, its primary successor state, the Russian Federation, then faced reduced production, a stagnated economy and depressed world market oil prices in the early 1990s. The Russian oil industry, however, has slowly been staging a comeback, a comeback that appears to be increasingly successful. Reforms and restructuring have allowed Russia to regain a share in the international oil market and to secure its position as one of the world's largest exporters of oil, second only to Saudi Arabia. Although the Russian oil industry's revival is often reported as an economic miracle, the truth is that both Russian industry and the government have undertaken measures to improve the health of the Russian oil sector. This "sudden" emergence is not the result of pure economic chance, but a combination of well laid plans and high oil prices. Despite the sector's impressive advancements, the Russian oil industry still faces considerable obstacles and challenges that could impede further progress and economic success.

During the Soviet period, the USSR's energy resources had become its primary source of hard currency. Indeed, by the mid-1980s, Soviet exports to Western Europe accounted for approximately 80% of all Soviet hard currency earnings and, of this, oil alone accounted for 60%.ⁱ Naturally, fluctuations in oil prices wreaked havoc on the Soviet economy; as oil prices dropped in 1986, hard currency inflows fell accordingly. Moreover, since

the Soviets sold their gas and oil exports at dollar-denominated prices, they were also greatly affected by the declining value of the US dollar in the mid-1980s. Diminishing revenue for the USSR eventually translated into lack of reinvestment in the Soviet oil sector, resulting in neglect of aging infrastructure. Despite high production and export levels, Soviet methods for extracting and refining its oil lagged severely behind those of the West. Reinvestment could have helped this situation, but instead the Soviets emphasized sustaining extremely high production levels.

In an effort to reinforce and to revitalize the oil sector, the new government undertook several restructuring and reform efforts in the early 1990s. Unlike many oil-producing nations, the Russian government decided to denationalize the oil industry, in effect rejecting a continued government monopoly of oil production. By 1992, Russia had abandoned the Soviet horizontal organizational structure, where extraction, production, refinement and distribution fell under different ministries, and replaced it with 10 to 12 vertically-integrated companies, similar to those in the industrialized West.

In order to implement this decision, the government initiated a two-step privatization process in 1993. In the first phase, Russia organized state-owned enterprises into joint-stock companies such as LUKoil, Yukos and Surgutneftegaz. In 1994, the second phase, which involves auctioning off large portions of government shares in these companies, began; it is still ongoing today. One exception to this privatization effort is Transneft, the government-owned and operated monopoly in crude oil pipeline transportation. Despite this retained monopoly, the Russian government has taken drastic steps to ensure the privatization of the rest of the oil sector. For example, pricing of export crude oil is no longer set by the government, as was done in the command economy, but is determined by market forces. The numerous old Soviet

ministries overseeing oil production and exportation have all been dissolved and replaced by the Ministry of Fuel and Energy, or Mintop (*Ministerstvo topliva i energetiki*). Mintop's role in the Russian energy sector is predominantly a regulatory one and has no operational control over production.

While the government's privatization plan completely reorganized the oil industry's structure, two major events greatly aided the plan: the financial crisis of 1998 and the rise in world market oil prices between in 1999-2000. Although the collapse of the ruble in 1998 and Russia's subsequent economic turmoil were disastrous for the country at the time, the crisis produced long-term benefits for the oil industry. As a result, several foreign firms withdrew from the Russian market and others reduced their market expansion, thereby opening sections of the Russian oil market to indigenous Russian companies. Moreover, since costs for Russian oil companies were ruble-based, they could now operate at a much cheaper rate as a result of the ruble's devaluation. Coincidentally, after the Russian financial crisis, the world oil price rose dramatically from about \$10 per barrel to \$27 per barrel. This jump translated into increased revenue flow for Russian oil companies. While this turn of events proved fortuitous, it is highly doubtful that the Russian oil sector could have capitalized on such events to the extent it did without the reforms and restructuring of the early 1990s. Privatization and industry reform deserve just as much credit in the Russian oil transformation as do world market forces.

There are still significant challenges facing officials in the Russian oil industry, especially if they wish to continue the industry's recent trend of growth and productivity. One of the more immediate challenges is Russia's lack of additional capacity in existing export pipelines. For example, the Druzhba pipeline, Russia's largest pipeline and export route to Europe, is operating near its maximum

capacity of 1.2 million barrels a day (bbl/d). Despite talk of increasing Druzhba's overall capacity, it remains limited.ⁱⁱ As the Russian government works to expand existing Transneft pipelines, Russian oil companies are also taking the initiative to increase their export capacity, specifically to other European nations, where there is a growing demand for Russian energy.

Although these steps toward expanded export capacity are in the right direction, the overall condition of the Russian pipeline system is poor and well below Western standards. The high amount of saline water and sulfur in Russian crude oil quickly corrodes the pipelines, and Russian Energy Ministry figures indicate that almost five percent of crude oil produced in Russia is lost through illegal tapping of Russia's pipelines.ⁱⁱⁱ Energy efficient technologies for the transport of crude oil are desperately needed; it is only with foreign direct investment (FDI) in the Russian oil sector that there is hope for the achievement of such advances.

Lack of FDI is one of the biggest long-term problems facing the Russian oil sector today. Although Russian firms reinvested profits made in the 1999-2000 oil boom, this is merely a drop in the proverbial bucket. At the German-Russian Energy Congress held last April in Hanover, Germany, Vladimir Katrenko, chairman of the Russian State Duma's Energy Committee, told Reuters News Service, "Russia's energy sector has received \$20 billion over the last ten years, but needs \$20 billion a year until 2020."^{iv} As during the Soviet period, Russian firms are still placing an emphasis on short-term production rather than future exploration and modernization of production capabilities. If the Russian oil sector is to maintain its progress in the world market long-term, Russian firms must attract foreign investment.

Finding investors is easier said than done. High political and financial risks, combined with severe institutional barriers, have all but prevented large influxes of FDI into the Russian oil sector. Two of the biggest institutional barriers to foreign investment are an inconsistent tax regime and the absence of an enforceable legal framework. Russian President Vladimir Putin is spearheading

Dynamics of Russian Oil Privatization

Percentage of Russian Government Ownership at the Start of the Year

COMPANY	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002
Sidanco	—	85.0	0	0	0
Sibneft	—	100.0	0	0	0
TNK	—	100.0	51.0	0	0
Surgutneftegaz	100.0	40.1	0.8	8	0
Onaco	—	85.0	85.0	85.0	0
Komitek	—	100.0	1.1	1.1	0
Yukos	100.0	53.0	0.1	0.1	0.1
VSNK	—	85.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
LUKoil	90.8	80.0	26.9	23.7	7.6
Tatneft	—	46.6	30.3	30.3	30.3
VNK	—	85.0	36.8	36.8	36.8
Slovneft	—	93.5	85.8	85.8	85.8
Rosneft	—	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

The Oil and Gas Journal, 27 May 2002, 100/21, p. 22

efforts to correct these problems and to restore Western faith in Russia's political and economic stability. Specifically, revisions to the Russian tax code, passed by the Duma in January, 2001, lowered overall corporate taxes from 35% to 24%, while granting a tax deduction for business expenses associated with daily operations. Under the old tax system, rates often fluctuated and lacked continuity, making it impossible for foreign firms to calculate long-term profitability accurately and, thereby, discouraging investment. Should the new tax laws prove effective and enforceable, they would help to alleviate this problem and to attract more FDI as a result.

Putin's efforts, coupled with the recent upswing in the Russian oil market, have convinced some foreign investors to give Russia another chance. Last year, British Petroleum (BP), which had abandoned the Russian market after losing approximately \$240 million in a deal with Sidanco (a Siberian oil firm), announced plans to invest another \$375 million in the same firm. A BP official in *Newsweek* magazine recently explained the rationale, "There's a general feeling of confidence in Russia."^v

If Russian oil companies are to capitalize on this "general feeling of confidence", expressed by some foreign oil firms, the current Russian government needs to do

everything in its power to help create a predictable and stable investment environment. Putin's reforms seem to be a step in the right direction. Although the Russian oil sector's efforts at reforming and restructuring over the past decade have allowed it a stronger foothold in the international oil market, only with large infusions of FDI is there hope of truly cementing its long-term position as one of the world's largest exporters of oil. Only with FDI is there hope of overcoming the challenges that lay before it. ♦

Captain Cheryl Icenhour Garner is currently enrolled in the REECAS MA program through the United States Air Force Foreign Area Officer Program.

The views expressed in this article are entirely those of Captain Garner and do not reflect the official policy or position of the United States Air Force, Department of Defense or the US Government.

i Angela Stent, *Russia and Germany Reborn: Unification, the Soviet Collapse, and the New Europe*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 64

ii Department of Energy, "Russia: Energy Sector Restructuring" (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2002), www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/russrest.html

iii Ibid.

iv Reuters News Wire, (Frankfurt), "Russia Needs Help to Lead in Energy", May 2002

v Christian Caryl, "All that Glitters", *Newsweek International*, 13 May 2002 Issue.

50 YEARS OF POLISH AT THE UW: CELEBRATING POLISH-AMERICAN HERITAGE



UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures

The Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures and REECAS at the University of Washington are hosting an exciting, year-long series of lectures featuring notable Poles and Polish-Americans and focusing on their achievements in order to highlight their contributions to Polish, American and worldwide cultures. This year marks the 50th anniversary of teaching Polish at the UW; a date of remarkable importance to our Polish community, especially as the UW is the only university west of Nebraska and north of California offering Polish language classes.

This past autumn quarter, Witold Rybczynski, Witold Sulimirski and Eva Hoffman presented lectures on Architectural Developments in Europe, Economic Transformation in Poland and Polish-Jewish relations respectively. All lectures were well-attended, drawing approximately 700 people from the UW and the greater Seattle community.

Upcoming lecturers include:

Friday, February 21, 2003 – Bogdan Czaykowski, “Czeslaw Milosz and the So-called Polish School of Poetry”; 7pm, Husky Union Building 106D, UW. Reception to follow.

Saturday, February 22, 2003 – Bogdan Czaykowski, a presentation of his work “Antologia poezji polskiej na obczyźnie, 1939-1999” (Czytelnik, 2002); Polish Home, 1714 18th street, Seattle. *Details forthcoming.*

February–March, 2003 – Alexander Wolszczan, a contemporary Polish radioastronomer and astrophysicist. *Details forthcoming.*

April–May, 2003 – His Excellency Przemyslaw Grudzinski, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland. *Details forthcoming.*

May 16–17, 2003 – Rafal Olbinski, renowned artist. *Details forthcoming.*

All lectures are free and open to the public.

For further information on coming lectures, please contact the Slavic Department, 206-543-6848, shoshw@u.washington.edu or visit the lecture series web page, <http://depts.washington.edu/slavweb/events/PolLecture.htm>

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The Chinese Miracle in Comparative Post-Communist Perspective

BY KAZIMIERZ Z. POZNANSKI

From the very beginning of the transition to a market economy in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, I have also looked carefully at China's economy. With my preference for periodically browsing through library stacks, or for random reading, I have found a great deal on China's economy. I was also very lucky to have a colleague, also an economist, who was very knowledgeable about China, Nick Lardy (now at the Brookings Institute). Early, I realized that China might also be undergoing a transition toward a market-run system, though by a different route. Moreover, I realized that this might be the only route that could lead to a successful resolution of problems inherent in the state-run economy.

Since then, I have become absolutely convinced that Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union are pursuing a reform track that leads to major, possibly historic, disappointments. This sober realization exceeded my initial misgivings. Meanwhile, China has indeed proven that its way of moving to a market-run economy has been the only successful way to make this type of transition. Since more than a decade has passed and there seems to be no end to economic adversity in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union and, conversely, no end in sight for China's miracle, the above conclusion could well be seen as a final verdict.

Of course, for this assessment of reforms to be meaningful, these countries would have to be comparable; they would all have to qualify as transition economies. In my opinion, they are, but there is a great resistance among those studying transitions to consider China as a point of reference. Among them is Mario Nuti,ⁱ a strong critic of East European transition, but one who claims that the reform road traveled by China is not adaptable to the East European situation. Nuti claims that China does not operate in a transition economy. At best, it merely resembles the most reform-advanced state-run economies of Hungary and

Poland immediately preceding their transition in 1989 or the situation in the least reform-oriented country, Belarus, since 1991.

If China still possesses a socialist economy, like Eastern Europe did until 1989, this raises a major challenge to all critics of a state-run economy, including myself. Namely, for these critics, a state-run economy is inferior to a market-run economy, or socialism is inferior to capitalism and, for this reason, it is unsustainable. How is it that China, a state-run system, has recently become the fastest growing economy in modern history when thus far records of growth have belonged to capitalist economies? This would suggest not the inferiority but the superiority of socialism, which cannot be correct, and is not, because the assumption that China is still a state-run economy is utterly false.

It is false, because China has definitely made progress in developing a market-run economy, no less than many East European economies classified as transitional. Nor is it true that China today resembles Hungary and Poland before 1989, surely not in terms of property rights. Today about 55% of China's national products come from the non-state sector, while in Poland, the only socialist country in Eastern Europe that had private farms, this share was under 25% in 1989. At the time, one third of all Polish goods were still priced by the state, while in China today, 95% are priced by the market.ⁱⁱ Furthermore, China's currency is practically convertible, but neither Hungarian nor Polish currencies were convertible in the 1980s.

When in China and exposed to everyday realities, one can feel the capitalist spirit everywhere and often in some rather extreme forms. This was my experience during two recent visits to give a few lectures at the Sichuan Normal University in Chengdu. Between my visits in March and September 2002, a huge building was finished in the center of campus. This building, five-stories high with an elaborate architectural design,

was to become a shopping mall. I immediately asked myself whether this could have occurred on a campus in the United States, where typically even product advertising is not welcomed or sometimes is even prohibited.



Sichuan Normal University in Chengdu.

I became increasingly surprised when told about the construction of apartment buildings immediately outside the walls of the university. Several blocks of tall buildings, providing spacious living quarters, were being readied for occupancy. Their sale was not restricted to the university's faculty; the apartments were available for anyone who could afford them. Some faculty members were buying these apartments before completion in the hope of benefiting from increased real estate value. I heard about these new constructions from a young assistant professor who was unable to meet with me because he was busy negotiating with potential buyers of his recently purchased apartment.

Many scholars find China incomparable without denying its major progress in market reforms by claiming that China's experience is irrelevant; it remains under the control of the Communist Party. Furthermore, these scholars argue that because Eastern Europe quickly democratized, certain policy options, including the Chinese reform track, have been closed to them.

This argument is weak, however. Although the contemporary Chinese political system does not resemble East European democracies (whose real status

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I must leave for another discussion), this does not mean that the former ceased to evolve while the latter progressed. China is a single party system today, but it is not the same centrally organized government it once was. Much of the authority has since been delegated to provinces and townships. If anything, this changed political structure resembles single-party systems of other East Asian countries, where many parties operate, but only one dominant party holds power for an extended period. This has been the case in post-war politics in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan.

I was made aware of this political evolution when my hosts from the Sichuan Normal, and from other universities that I had visited, chose my lecture topics. I mailed about six different titles, all of them related to economic transition except for one that I titled “Family and Morality as Economic Institutions”. I offered this one because, over the last few years, I have been exploring various themes and ideas raised by the so-called evolutionary economics of Hayek and Schumpeter. With all the political change, I did not think that the party would prefer I talk about the more familiar — society and ideology.

Much to my surprise, out of the five universities that I was to visit, four selected my lecture on “Family and Morality”. I asked my hosts why they selected this topic only to learn that the party is aware that Chinese society no longer responds to ideology as it had in the past. Chinese society is undergoing a very rapid change and the old ideology does not provide the necessary social coherence. There is, thus, a search for some other source of cohesion (socially responsible behavior); many within the party think that what the party cannot assure on its own anymore, the family, with its power base, might provide.

This explains why there is so much interest in China in restoring Confucian philosophy, which for centuries served as a source of moral guidance focused on family. I was able to witness the seriousness of this interest at the same Sichuan Normal University, where I gave one of my talks on “Family and Morality”. Their campus is quite lovely, with many green spaces, narrow streets with sycamores, and also some monuments. One of them



A statue of Confucius reminds viewers of traditional Chinese values.

caught my attention in September, as I did not remember it from my March trip. It had been erected recently—a gigantic statue of Confucius, standing not on a pedestal but, quite appropriately, directly on the ground.

The economic success of China is not due to country-specific conditions. Rather, its success is due to a proper choice of transition model, which certainly speaks to the critical role of the state in market reforms. Although, in all of these cases, it was the state’s choice concerning which reform route to take, only China selected a so-called gradual reform program (meaning that the reform pace was subordinated to the overarching objective of making sure that economic growth was strong and people had jobs). In other countries, reform focused on the radical remake of existing institutions, even though this route hurt both economic growth and job availability.

The difference in choices between China and Eastern Europe can only be explained by examining the states themselves. In their search for market-run systems, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union allowed their states to deteriorate, while in China, the state remained highly functional. Furthermore, in Eastern Europe, the state largely withdrew from representing general interest to engage in rent seeking by officials; in China, it did not.

It is important to note that states in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union have not chosen a radical pace of reforms for some ideological reason. One could have had such an illusion at the outset of their transition, but a careful examination of actual reform priorities should dispel such an impression. It is not so much radical reforms that were endorsed, but a radical sell-out of assets by the state. Moreover, this sell-out has been driven, not by general (national) concerns, but by narrow interests of the

state apparatus (i.e., personal gains are easier to maximize with radical, rather than gradual, state asset disposal). Another piece of evidence is that one by one, East European countries have given assets to foreigners. As a result, the local capitalist, or proprietary, class has been prevented from emerging. With an almost complete lack of transparency and an absence of legal control, states have been allowed to sell these assets at a fraction of their actual value. Evidence of such practices, suggesting a massive loss of wealth by these nations to the new—foreign—owners of their capital, appears quite compelling.

No such steps have been taken in China, since whatever its level of corruption, the state would not engage in a massive sell-out of assets to foreigners, and especially at questionable prices. In the first place, the state sector has only recently begun to offer assets, through direct sales or the stock market. While this provided an opportunity for price manipulations, they benefited local investors and not foreigners. Therefore, domestic distribution was affected, but there has been no loss of wealth. Foreigners access China mainly through joint-ventures, which, as a rule, do not allow them to gain controlling packets and/or control of boards.

It is not that ideology has been absent in Eastern Europe, but that it has been molded to meet the needs of defunct states. Since state actions are motivated mainly by the needs of officials, they have found it useful to substitute the language of “global economic interests” for that of “national interest”. They imply a vision of an interest-free world, where markets resolve all issues to the benefit of the national or non-national. Though, in places where states are well-composed, as in Western Europe, the “global economy” is understood only as an arena, where “national interests” are better served and related conflicts over distribution of gains are resolved within a context of more open relations.

No such confusion is present in China, as was made apparent to me on my last trip to Beijing. In a meeting with a Chinese economist, I came across a copy of an interview (in English) by a Polish journalist with the Director of China’s East European Institute. The Director was asked whether it was consistent with

their communist ideology to reform the system by bringing in market forces. Rather than taking a defensive position and trying to reconcile ideology and reforms, the director said “It does not matter whether reforms are consistent with ideology, what matters is only that they serve national interest.” I am almost sure that the Polish journalist did not get the point.

In fact, I learned this lesson much earlier, during my first trip to China in 1994, when I was a part of an official delegation of economists invited to talk about market reforms and about bankruptcy procedures specifically. This particular agenda was high on the minds of Chinese leaders, since they already faced a mounting deficit of state-owned companies. We were invited for a meeting with Zhu Rongji, then in charge of the economy and now China’s prime minister. He attentively listened to our group for at least an hour.

Some of the most fluent on the bankruptcy issue, like Oliver Hardt, came up with very sophisticated schemes on how to protect banks from “bad loans” through bankruptcy and called for decisive actions by the Chinese state to ensure that state companies did not abuse credit. I am not sure that our host understood all the details, but despite the merits of these schemes, he tactfully refused to take them seriously. He reminded us that even though China’s mining sector was in the red, if he tried to get tough with the sector, he would have to face the fact that mining provided jobs for millions of people. He was not ready to sacrifice these jobs in the name of cleaning the balance sheets for the banks.

There is hardly any evidence that leaders of, say Poland, have ever taken seriously the consequences of reforms on their labor markets or have developed programs to cope with unemployment. When the reform started, the rate of unemployment jumped immediately to 15%, then went down a bit, only to start increasing again in 1997. The official rate is now close to 20%, but the actual total is higher, since many people have left jobs for early retirement or have moved back to the countryside.ⁱⁱⁱ Even in the face of this recent surge, no measures to combat unemployment have been taken. Further-

more, early accession to the European Union is moving forward, even though it will cost more jobs.

What is happening in Poland can be found anywhere in the region, especially in Russia, where the state has abandoned the nation in an even more dramatic fashion. It was Steve Holmes who first raised this point, by saying that in Russia, the state does not need the nation. The state can take care of its own (state officials), without any need to ensure economic prosperity, because officials exploit national resources without reinvesting and can meet their consumptive needs without relying on the domestic economy — they buy imports or take their money abroad.

Surely, Poland is not in the same situation, since it lacks natural resources and its state is not as damaged as that of Russia, but the state has also achieved great autonomy from the nation. What is “looted” in Poland are capital resources, which are not regenerated through investment, but simply sold largely to foreigners for personal gain. No dynamic investment into capital expansion from within is possible, since credit, now coming from commercial banks, has been excessively priced from the start of reform. The poor status of domestic industry is of no major concern, since consumer imports — stimulated by a permanently overvalued domestic currency — suffice. ♦

Kazimierz Z. Poznanski, a professor at the Jackson School and a specialist in East European economy, has recently published two books in Poland on transition that sold about 35,000 copies. An English version of the second book is ready for publication. He is also preparing a collection of his 12 articles on transition previously published in American journals. China’s Academy of Social Sciences has signed a contract for his book on privatization in Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and China scheduled for early 2003. Three of his articles have already been translated into Chinese and published in China, including one printed in 2002 in “Trends in Western Economics”.

i Mario Nuti currently is Visiting Professor of Economics at the London Business School and Economic Advisor to the Polish Government. He has written numerous articles on capital theory and on comparative economic systems.

ii “Poland 1999-2000. The Economic Performance”. Government Center for Strategic Studies Republic of Poland

iii Country Profiles for China and Poland 2002, Economist Intelligence Unit.

Secrets at Sillamäe? Or the Political Uses of Pollution

BY ROBERT W. SMURR



A 25-meter tall uranium tailings pile in Sillamae, Estonia.

To most foreign observers who watched East European events unfold in the late 1980s, Estonia seemed to emerge from more than 40 years under Moscow's domination as a curious and dignified David, slinging deliberately aimed but carefully weighted stones at an aging Soviet Goliath. To be sure, many Estonian complaints about Moscow-mandated policies were similar to those voiced by diverse peoples and nations throughout the Soviet empire. Certainly, every one of the Soviet Republics had to endure, at differing times and to differing degrees, forced deportations, collectivization, state terror and economic dictatorship. In addition to these more familiar forms of repression, Soviet environmental practices also foisted untold miseries upon millions of the empire's citizens—to say nothing of the havoc the practices wreaked on the natural world at large. Yet, the Estonian path to independence was particularly methodical and peaceful. For various reasons, Moscow's callous disregard for environmental safeguards sparked Estonia's ultimately successful drive for independence from the once mighty empire in 1987. Curiously, however, scholars have largely dismissed the role that environmental politics played in the collapse of the USSR. The tendency has been either to ignore the issue altogether, or to dismiss it as merely a surrogate for political (read, *nationalist*) speech. The former interpretation (or more correctly, the lack of it) is a result of nescience, whereas the latter is the result of simplistic analysis.

In short, the role of nature in Estonian political speech was complex. It stemmed

from a tradition reaching back more than 100 years in which proponents elevated both the environment and depictions of landscape in national and nationalist rhetoric. Since the place of the natural world in this discourse fluctuated over the decades, analysts looking at glasnost-era protests too frequently placed contemporary environmental concerns solely in a modern Soviet (and political) context. Developments in the northeastern Estonian town of Sillamäe illustrate the complexity of the issues, the delicate balance of the politics, ethics and aesthetics of the Estonian environment.

Most Estonians who protested the Baltic republic's environmental degradation realized that the myriad of other pressing social, political and economic concerns had a similar source: Moscow's persistent refusal to accept any form of genuine democratic representation. Thus, in 1989, after years of attempting to "speak truth to power", some of the republic's scientific elite shifted to the practice of speaking half-truths to delegitimize power further. They desired to incite their co-nationals into greater anti-Soviet action and they found issues of environmental degradation to be an expedient political tool. Because the Soviet Union had operated for decades under strict secrecy and censorship rules, and because its careless oil-shale and phosphorite mining operations had also visibly wreaked havoc on great swathes of Estonian territory, Estonian environmentalists found it easy to convince their less informed co-nationals that threats to their republic's environment and their families' health were even more dire than

they had feared. Indeed, as concerned as he was with the degradation of Estonia's environment, Endel Lippmaa, the Director of the Institute of Chemical and Biological Physics of the Estonian Academy of Sciences, realized the broader possibilities of environmental dissent: "Ecology is a safe subject," he noted, "but you can actually handle any issue you want through it."¹

One issue, which gained an enormous amount of press coverage, centered on environmental and health threats that arose in the top-secret mining town of Sillamäe—an "Estonian" settlement of 20,000 residents, entirely off-limits to all but a handful of Estonians. Indeed, secrecy cloaked the town since the spring of 1945, when miners discovered uranium in its alum shale. Lavrentii Beriia, Kliment Voroshilov, Georgi Malenkov, other high-ranking Soviet governmental officials and leading scientists then resolved to build the Sillamäe plant with prison labor and to transform the vicinity into a top-secret facility capable of extracting uranium for the construction of the USSR's first generation atomic bombs. Large-scale production began in 1948. Subsequent intensive development of the Sillamäe 'Baltiys' plant resulted in great amounts of uranium and thorium tailings, which covered over a square kilometer of the district's land.

Because strict secrecy rules kept Sillamäe's production facilities entirely off limits, suspicion and rumor became the only guide for regional residents who feared that the mysterious work might be linked with mysterious health problems. Indeed, it was not until an emboldened glasnost-era public demanded more information concerning cases of alopecia (hair loss) among many of the town's school-children that Estonia's Chief Medical Inspector and Deputy Minister of Public Health, Jaak Uibu, felt compelled to release a report in 1989 about environmental conditions in northeastern Estonia. He wrote of the findings in the republic's main daily, concluding, "The reason for the children's hair loss and other health abnormalities is, in all likelihood, the

pollution of the environment and of daily living conditions in the region.”ⁱⁱ

Some of the republic’s journalists seized upon Uibu’s report as a means to further the attempt of independence-minded scientists to sow outrage and fear. For example, despite Uibu’s call for north-eastern Estonia to be considered “an environmentally critical region, where no more polluting enterprises can be built,” many journalists were incensed that he did not even mention the high radiation levels discovered at Sillamäe. The Deputy Health Minister had not taken glasnost far enough for the increasingly empowered and enraged Estonian public. In May 1989, one journalist reported that the findings of a republican commission, which had investigated the Sillamäe factory, made it “clear that the level of radioactivity on the territory of a former uranium depository was the same or higher than that in Chernobyl at present” [sic].ⁱⁱⁱ

The picture the Estonian press painted of Sillamäe could have been confused with a gruesome composition by Hieronymus Bosch. Reports of irradiated children, lakes filled with uranium and kindergartens built over radioactive shale deposits led to “radiation-phobia” (*radiofobia*) in the post-Chernobyl period of the secret city. But in this new era of increased press freedom, some Estonian environmental activists tended to exaggerate the extent of the environmental catastrophe facing the country. Much of the region’s environmental condition was indeed gloomy, but the immediate threats to human health from the uranium processing plant were nowhere near as dire as press reports suggested. In fact, the town of Sillimäe remained, and remains, entirely habitable.

In the late 1980s, however, Estonian scientists did indeed discover a shallow, uncovered pond that contained 12 million tons of radioactive waste. Use of the hazardous dumpsite had begun in 1959. During the intervening years, the only barrier separating it from the Gulf of Finland was an earthen wall and a 65-foot strip of land. To make matters worse, no preliminary insulation was used when miners created the dump, nor was any cover placed over the material. Yuri Averbukh, the plant’s technical director,

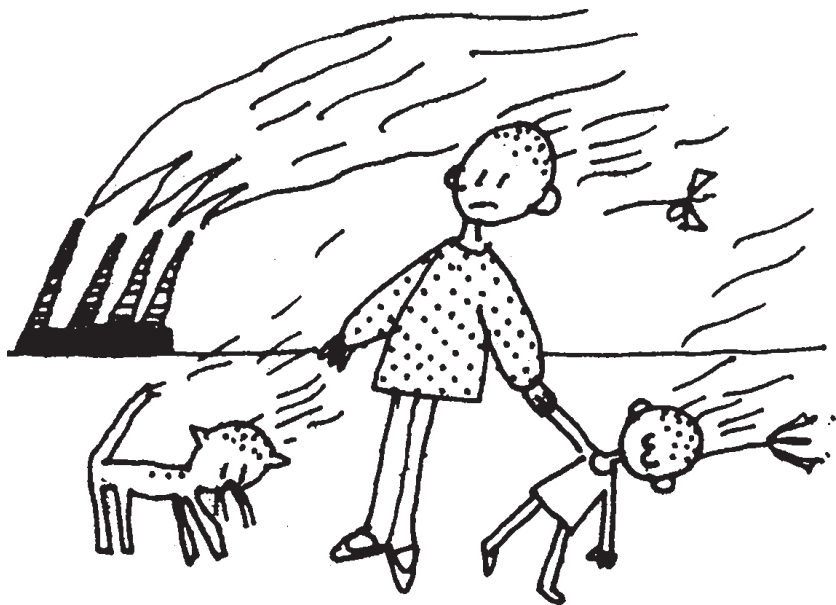
said that he did not know precisely how much uranium the huge processing plant had produced since its first days of operation in the late 1940s, but added, “We know we made a lot.” Averbukh postulated that the Sillamäe facility could have produced up to 50% of the Soviet Union’s processed uranium.

The hazardous “uranium lake” was located one and a half to two kilometers from Sillamäe’s residential areas, but it was strictly off-limits to non-essential personnel. Within the cordoned zone, however, some 12 million tons of uranium tailings mixed with oil-shale ashes to create the plastic-clayish or slurry-like consistency that characterized the Sillamäe lake. The “uranium lake’s” greatest hazard was to the environmental viability of the Gulf of Finland, where nitrogen, uranium and thorium threatened to seep through the thin barrier to the sea located 24 meters below the “lake” itself. Initially, the possibility of wind-born dust particles being carried from the lake to the town during dry seasons also gave great cause for concern to Sillamäe’s health officials. For, should these particles bind with radon gasses emitted from degrading shale deposits, the result could lead to cancer. Further studies, however, found that this hazard, at least, posed very little threat to the town’s inhabitants.

Those Estonian scientists and journalists who sowed fear and concern through truths and half-truths found their task to be relatively simple. Enough evidence based on scientific fact had already circulated for decades in widely-read republican journals. Reliable health statistics indicated that air and water pollution tied to the republic’s oil-shale and phosphorite mining industries resulted in markedly increased levels of respiratory and blood ailments. And, if the word of elites and journalists were not enough, individuals could have easily come to such conclusions on their own. Horribly polluted air, enormous mountains of waste, sickly forests and rivers of slurry were impossible to hide in the tiny republic. Moreover, even if the health threats spawned by environmental degradation were not as severe as some of the republic’s elite suggested, they spoke from positions of power, whereas, at least to the Estonian audience, the Soviet elite spoke from positions of illegitimate power. Given Estonians’ historical concern for their native environment, as well as the numerous measures they had taken to try to protect it, the republic’s ground for an environmentally charged political protest was fertile.

For example, after the former manager of the defense industry ‘Baltiets’ admitted

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A Soviet-era political cartoon depicts a reported case of alopecia in a kindergarten and local fears of radiation poisoning.^v

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in March 1989 that his company had dumped radioactive wastes in the town of Sillamäe itself, the republic's press was quick to come to doomsday scenarios. Reports circulated throughout the Estonian and international press about kindergartens having been built over toxic dumps with only thin layers of sand to separate the pupils from the hazardous waste below. It was these kindergartens, the journalists concluded, that reported high levels of alopecia in their pupils.

At least one kindergarten was indeed built on top of shale waste, but Tamara Makarova, Estonia's current Deputy Director of the Estonian Radiation Protection Center, and her investigators found the background radiation readings there normal, as did subsequent surveys conducted by international specialists. Moreover, other towns in Estonia and in other Soviet Republics also reported contemporaneous alopecia outbreaks, but none of these towns had any history of radiation exposure. Attempt as she might to reassure Sillamäe's inhabitants that they faced no more threat from radiation illness than did residents of distant Tartu (for example), most remained incredulous. The daily *Sillamäeski Vestnik* reported that too many "emotional obstacles" blocked the acceptance of medical truth, but it was precisely such obstacles that Estonia's eco-nationalists had desired to erect throughout the republic.

Of course, the alarmist news reports that circulated throughout Estonia (no matter how poorly supported by scientific evidence) were entirely understandable. This is especially true in the case of Sillamäe, given the secrecy and paranoia that cloaked its operations ever since the plant's founding by some of the Kremlin's most notorious figures. (Although not official policy, residents of the town would often refer to it in jest by using the moniker 'Narva-10,' suggesting that merely speaking the name of Sillamäe—located ten kilometers to the west of Narva—was taboo.) Dozens of Sillamäe children were afflicted with alopecia, but not a single specialist could ever pinpoint the cause; a "lake" was created by toxic radioactive waste, but its isolation (as slight as it might appear) was enough to protect the town's inhabitants from harm; at least one

kindergarten was built over "radioactive" shale deposits, but its radiation levels were entirely within the normal background range. Indeed, Endel Lippmaa, Estonia's most respected academician and eco-nationalist assured me (*after* Estonia had won its independence, that is) that numerous Finnish towns built on shale foundations have far higher background radiation readings than those found in Sillamäe, yet even those towns are entirely safe.

Through means direct and indirect, Estonian environmentalists brought great change to the republic's political milieu. Monopolistic Moscow ministries, extensive technological exploitation of natural resources and an overwhelming orientation to output production led to enormous environmental (and ultimately political and psychological) problems in the republic. As Endel Lippmaa noted, one cannot simply divide the consequences from their causes: "It is not just ecology," he remarked, "Ecology leads to the question of technology, to central planning, politics, constitutional change and sovereignty." Drawing such linkages in turn led some critics to blame the Soviet way of life for matters far more elemental than environmental devastation or political and economic repression. In 1989 Ants Paju, the editor of an influential Estonian nature journal, argued that for many Estonians Soviet practices and policies led to a sort of spiritual devastation: "We have turned into living corpses." This peculiarly Soviet form of ennui, he believed, was inextricably tied to its visible manifestations as well: "The worse our internal state, the greater the possibility to do terrible things to our environment."^{iv}

Today, fortunately, Estonia already feels much more like the FSE (the Former Swedish Empire) than it does the FSU (Former Soviet Union). The tiny republic has once again publicly embraced European culture as its own, and it is quickly healing the wounds left by nearly half a century of callous Soviet rule: social wounds, environmental wounds. The enormous gains post-Soviet Estonia has made in consolidating its environmental, economic and political security help to explain why environmental issues are no longer at the center of national attention. Quite simply, they no longer

have to be. Most of the demands protestors articulated in the late 1980s have been, or are currently being, addressed. For example, largely because it was ranked in 1991 as fourth among European environmental "hot-spots", Sillamäe's "uranium lake" is undergoing a radical transformation. Generous support from the European Commission and many Baltic Sea nations has led to the completion of nearly two-thirds of the remediation work necessary to ensure the safety of the site and to make it blend with the natural environment.

Of course, this process will take time. But if my May 2002 sojourn to Sillamäe is any indication of the progress Estonia is making on its road to recovery, the country's future looks very promising. Once I had arrived in Sillamäe, I needed to purchase a phone card in order to call the town's former head physician, Dr. Anatoly Novokhatskii. I parked my car (on Gorky St., no less!) and entered a tidy, well-stocked grocery store in the center of town. The picture and short text on the phone card that I purchased indicated this was a "Scene from Estonian nature." Here I stood in the heart of an industrial town, once so secret that it was off-limits to all but the most trusted members of Soviet society—a restriction that also excluded all but a handful of Estonians. That was then. Now the sky was clear and sunny. The town center was surprisingly attractive and the leaves green. The day was warm and the people friendly. Gorky St. and Estonian nature: it seemed to me the latter again had the upper hand. ♦

Robert Smurr is a graduate of the REECAS MA program (1992), and recently earned a PhD in History from the University of Washington. His dissertation dealt with the history of the Estonian environmental movement. He is currently teaching History at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington.

i AP release, June 19, 1989.

ii J. Uibu, "Obrashchenie zdavookhraneniia ESSR," *Sovetskaia Estoniia*, May 1, 1989.

iii Anneli Rõigas, "Valusate Sõnadega," *Noorte Hääl*, No. 118, 23 May, 1989.

iv AP release, June 19, 1989.

v *Sovetskaia Estoniia*, March 23, 1991.

Central Asian Languages and Culture: 2002 Summer Program

BY ILSE CIRTAUTAS

This year's summer language program offered intensive advanced Uzbek for a small, but very committed, group of five students. They also attended a course on Uzbek literature (offered A term by Professor Cirtautas) and participated in a translation workshop, during which each student translated texts from Uzbek literature and historical documents under the guidance of Professor Cirtautas and Visiting Lecturer Dr. Muhammad Ali Akhmedov. Dr. Akhmedov chaired the Department of Ethics and Aesthetics at the National University of Uzbekistan from 1995 to 1997. He is currently the President of the International Charitable Foundation *Oltin Meros* (Golden Heritage) in Tashkent.

The language classes, which lasted four hours each day, were conducted entirely in Uzbek; English was not allowed. Dr. Akhmedov and his teaching assistant, Dilbar Akhmedova, strictly enforced this rule. All four language skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) received attention, but the class primarily focused



Students Hilary Chan and Olga Donohue learn aspects of traditional Uzbek culture from Dr. Akhmedov.

on oral communication. Throughout the course, an Uzbek atmosphere was maintained as students learned and practiced various daily Uzbek functions, such as receiving and entertaining guests and presenting papers at scholarly meetings. Each day, the students wrote a short paper and role-played presenting its main points at a conference in Tashkent. Because all role-plays were

supposedly formal events, students observed the protocol for an Uzbek conference, such as addressing and thanking the audience and inviting questions from them. Topics were drawn from short stories, as well as historical and contemporary documents (e.g. on the status of Uzbek women and current events), which were read at home and discussed in class.

On July 31, the students invited the public to a "Reading of Translations of Uzbek Poetry and Prose". Through this event, they honored Dr. Akhmedov, who holds the title of "Distinguished Writer of Uzbekistan". The program included translations of Dr. Muhammad Ali Akhmedov's own poetry and those of two other well known poets, Abdulla Oripov and Erkin Vohidov. Uzbek short stories, translated by this summer's students and participants of previous Intensive Uzbek Summer Programs at the University of Washington, were also presented.

An On-line Uzbek-English Dictionary

BY HILARY CHAN

The rapid growth of the Internet has brought an unprecedented opportunity for students of foreign languages—the emergence of on-line language dictionaries. Although they vary in degree of quality and usability, this resource has helped many students in their efforts to master foreign languages. Unfortunately, for the less commonly taught languages, such as Uzbek and other Central Asian languages, on-line dictionaries are still quite rare. Indeed, in these languages even traditional hardcopy, bilingual dictionaries are often difficult to find and limited in content.

As a participant of the Intensive Intermediate Uzbek Summer Program and a computer programmer by training, I borrowed a copy of Professor Cirtautas' Uzbek-English dictionary file set,



Dr. Olga Kegan, UC-Berkeley, observes an Uzbek language class as Dr. Akhmedov and students discuss Uzbek literature.

compiled entirely from her studies over many years of Uzbek literature, newspapers, articles and television and radio programs, and began to implement a prototype for an on-line dictionary. The focus has been on producing a constantly updatable dictionary, otherwise known

as a "living dictionary". The program I developed, applicable also for other languages, allows users to update the dictionary. Students of this year's advanced Intensive Uzbek Summer Program were the first to test the scope of the dictionary. As hoped, they added several entries based on their own readings and translations of Uzbek literary and historical texts, thus becoming instant contributors.

We also intend to collaborate closely with native Uzbek speakers, specifically writers and scholars, at the Institute of Language and Literature in the Uzbek Academy of Sciences, Tashkent, to ensure the continued exchange of scholarship as well as cultural communication and understanding across international borders. ♦

Orphanage Work in Uzbekistan: Challenges and Rewards

BY PAULA QUIGLEY, with contributions from Christina Szabo

In the early 1990s, orphans in Uzbekistan, like orphans throughout the former Soviet Union, became the responsibility of a new republic that was poorly equipped to care for them. Over the past decade, many Uzbek orphans have suffered unspeakable neglect in the absence of the once guaranteed food, shelter, basic medical services and education under the Soviet system. My husband and I learned of their plight while visiting Tashkent for the first time in 1993. During our trip, the conditions of an orphanage we visited compelled us to find ways of helping these children. We gradually realized, however, that this official city orphanage was something of a showcase, exhibiting the best conditions for average, healthy orphans. Behind this façade, the situation was actually much bleaker. Since then, we have witnessed severe poverty and neglect among orphans as well as the power of well-placed aid, training and dedication to transform bleak conditions into a hopeful future.

Before we left for Central Asia in 1993, friends in Seattle requested that we investigate the needs of orphanages in Uzbekistan. On a rainy Monday, after an adventurous ride down narrow, bumpy streets, we arrived at a city orphanage for pre-school aged children. Orphanages in Uzbekistan are stigmatized by shame and consequently are hidden from public view; no welcoming signs marked the entrance or even indicated that we had arrived at the correct place. The orphanage director, a pediatrician, was pleasant and gracious. She took us on an extensive tour of the facility and introduced us to the children, whose ages ranged from six weeks to six years.

At the time, we were struck by the children's good behavior and the passion of the director for their care, despite the poor condition of the facility. Medicines for treating common illnesses were scarce, the nutritional value of everyday meals was low and there were no supplemental vitamins. The staff did the best it could with what it had. There were obvious and serious needs, not only for medical supplies and vitamins, but also for warm clothing and toys. At the end

of a lengthy interview with the director, she placed her hand on mine and said, "I hope you are not like the rest." Apparently, many others had preceded us, taken photos and made promises, but never returned. Despite my uncertainty about the next step, I found myself promising to return, challenged to investigate the situation further and to help.

Back in the US, my husband and I began looking for organizations that worked with orphanages in Uzbekistan. After a few months of extensive research, we were unable to find any such groups. Surprised by this result, we decided to start a non-profit organization specifically directed at the needs we witnessed in Tashkent. Our organization is officially registered as Orphan Care for Central Asia. Due to the stigmatized nature of the word "orphan" in Uzbekistan, we are known as Partnership for Healthy Children. This name also more adequately represents our goals and philosophy. Our mission is to facilitate the growth of Uzbek children into healthy, productive citizens. As we have explained to Uzbek officials, we believe that if the children of Uzbekistan grow up strong, educated and healthy, they will contribute to making their country a viable member of the global community.

In December of 1994, I returned to Uzbekistan under the auspices of our newly formed organization in order to research the specific needs of these children and the existing institutional structure of the country's orphanages. While meeting with both officials and orphaned children in Tashkent and Samarkand, a more complete picture of the orphans' plight began to emerge. In the ensuing months, I uncovered problems even more fundamental than the need for physical therapy, surgery and medicine. One orphanage did not have enough diapers or staff to change and wash each child more than once a week. Children were suffering and dying of infectious diseases and a lack of physical contact.

In Uzbekistan, there are two types of orphanages: one for relatively healthy

children and another for children with physical, mental and emotional disabilities. The shame associated with the latter runs even deeper than that of a "healthy" orphan. I became aware of this disparity through a contact made in Tashkent. While researching, I was introduced to Cindy Edson, an ex-patriot with the organization World Concern, which supports relief and development programs in needy areas. Around this time, Cindy had also begun to investigate the conditions of local orphanages.

On Christmas Eve, Cindy and I visited Orphanage Number Two. During a discussion with an interpreter, we discovered that "other children" were confined to a separate part of the building. Although the caregivers did not



© PAULA QUIGLEY

Caregivers at Orphanage Number Two learn massage techniques.

want us to visit this hidden section, after several minutes of persuasion, they agreed to take us there. What we witnessed was a shocking scene of neglect. This group of children was housed in an unheated part of the building and was obviously receiving the least amount of care in the orphanage.

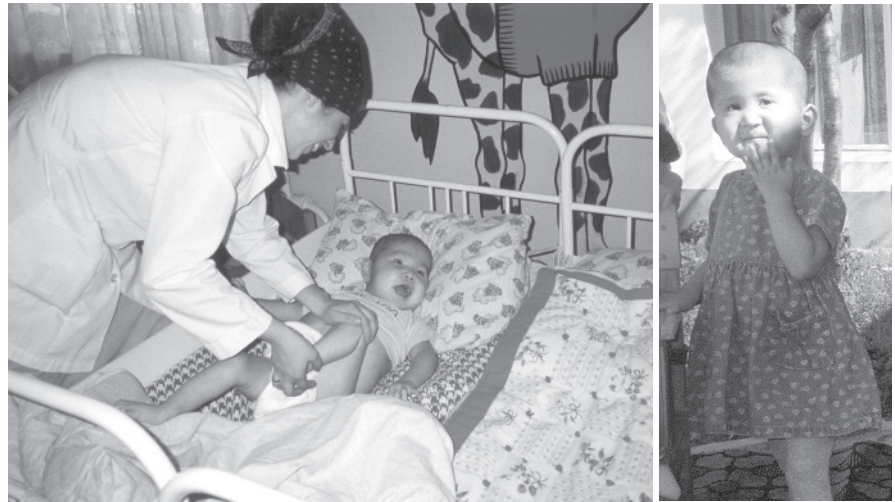
They had cerebral palsy, cleft palates, mental illnesses and other physical and emotional disabilities. This segregated section of the orphanage housed the

children with some of the greatest need for medical services and attentive parental care in Tashkent. Most of them had living parents, who either could not afford to care for them or were not capable of handling their disabilities. Ignored due to a lack of resources and further stigmatized by their disabilities, they were considered hopeless. Most caregivers, directors and officials with whom I talked, initially believed that the orphanages' limited resources were best used elsewhere.

Partnership for Healthy Children, with the help of Cindy Edson, began searching for ways to improve the conditions in both types of orphanages. It took most of the year to convince the director of Orphanage Number Two to agree to invest donated resources in physically and mentally challenged children. As director, she was in a difficult position. Not only was she skeptical herself about allocating greatly needed resources to these children, but state and city officials also wanted to know why foreigners insisted on investing in "hopeless cases". Our relationship with Cindy proved invaluable. After my return to the US, she was able to maintain contact with the director and city officials. When they finally agreed to allow us to help these children, she became the trusted local person through whom we could send supplies.

We have been partnering with Cindy Edson and World Concern since 1995. She is an established, well-known and respected foreigner in Tashkent and understands better than we, not only the needs of the orphanages, but also the intricacies of Uzbek culture. Our relationship with World Concern determines (to some extent) the work of Partnership for Healthy Children. Following this second trip, we began to act as a facilitator in the US for Uzbek orphanage projects. We also began to generate and to investigate new ideas for improving the plight of orphans. Cindy keeps us abreast of the situation in Uzbekistan, informing us of pressing issues, and we network with people in the US to meet these needs.

In the beginning, one of our main tasks was the collection of non-prescription medicines, vitamins, clothing, toys and basic medical supplies for children with



Left: A volunteer massage therapist works with Matsuda. Right: Returning a year later, Partnership for Healthy Children discovered that Matsuda could stand alone and feed herself.

disabilities and for other orphans in Tashkent and Samarkand. Many generous and compassionate people, as well as several organizations, have collaborated with us. One of our first shipments contained, among other things, 100 pounds of non-prescription medicine. It took months to get these items processed by customs officials in Tashkent. Having sent them in July, some of the medicine had already expired by the time it was finally released in October. Further shipments were carried over by volunteers, who held official letters of request for humanitarian aid from World Concern.

Excluding the aforementioned ordeal with customs, our supplies have never been confiscated. This may be partly because we now carefully consider items in view of customs policies before packing them for transport, taking only non-prescription drugs and surgical supplies less likely to sell well on the black market. Our official letters, Cindy's well-known reputation as a humanitarian aid worker and the growth of our reputation have also contributed to successful deliveries. During our eight years of work in Uzbekistan, we have had the privilege of delivering approximately \$31,000 worth of vitamins and medicine and over 20 large duffle bags filled with clothing, educational toys and medical supplies.

We have also striven to provide a link between World Concern and other non-profit organizations. For three consecutive years, Partnership for Healthy

Children co-sponsored a surgical team with the organization Healing the Children, which networks with volunteer physicians to provide free medical care to needy children. Doctors performed cleft palate repairs in Nukus, a town located in the autonomous region of Karakalpakstan. Our partnership with these medically focused teams prompted us to begin looking for new, innovative ways to meet the needs of the physically and mentally challenged children whom Cindy and I had encountered in 1994.

This ambition became a reality two years ago, when we led a team of massage therapists back to Orphanage Number Two in Tashkent. These children suffered, not only from genetic handicaps, but also from a lack of physical touch. Some of them could not sit, stand or walk. One little girl, Matsuda, was eight years old and unable to sit up or to feed herself. Not only does massage therapy provide needed relief and treatment for certain physical conditions, it also addresses the fundamental human need for touch.

We began our program by demonstrating different therapeutic massages on the caregivers. We then demonstrated it on select children, later training the caregivers themselves in the technique. The results of the project had consequences that exceeded our highest expectations. At the beginning, the director of the orphanage, persistently skeptical about helping "hopeless" children, remained cold and indifferent

continued on page 18

to the project. By the end of our trip, she was deeply impressed with the results. Already children with chronic insomnia had begun to sleep through the night. Others, who had previously struggled to keep food down, had begun to eat like normal children.

Returning a year later to deliver supplies and to visit, we witnessed even more amazing results. One of our primary goals in teaching massage therapy was to foster a sense of connection between the caregiver and the child. This goal was met with amazing success. Massage therapy and other important skills in childcare had been implemented in Orphanage Number Two with outstanding results.

Matsuda was taking tentative steps. This was only one story among many. The caregivers were as excited to share their success stories as we were to hear and to see them.

A vision for the future involves expanding our focus on healthcare into the field of dentistry. One pediatrician on a recent medical team commented that the dental health of the children needed improvement. Another future project involves the collection of rudimentary school supplies and materials for building and repairing school desks. World Concern recently expressed the desire to aid school children in Afghanistan.

Over the past eight years, we have gradually watched the lives of Uzbek children as well as the lives of their caregivers transform. Although there remains a great deal of need among orphans in Uzbekistan, our success at Tashkent's Orphanage Number Two encourages and inspires us to continue reaching children throughout Uzbekistan and to expand our work to other countries in Central Asia. ♦

Paula Quigley is the Director of Partnership for Healthy Children and serves on the Board of Directors for the Tashkent-Seattle Sister City Association with REECAS Professor Ilse Cirtautas. Christina Szabo, a second-year REECAS MA student, volunteered this past summer with Partnership for Healthy Children.

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THE NINTH ANNUAL NORTHWEST REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR RUSSIAN, EAST EUROPEAN AND CENTRAL ASIAN STUDIES WILL TAKE PLACE ON SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 2003, AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, BOTHELL CAMPUS

We are currently soliciting papers, panels or roundtable presentations for this one-day interdisciplinary conference. Proposals from faculty, graduate students and members of the general public are welcome.

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Against the Odds: A Russian Hospital's Medical Staff Accomplishes Much with Little

BY PAMELA JEFFCOAT

It is old news that, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the availability and quality of healthcare for most Russians have declined, the price of care has skyrocketed and many of Russia's best doctors have emigrated. Those who have remained are typically overworked and underpaid. These problems have already been widely reported in the press. The doctors at Mechnikov Hospital in St. Petersburg, Russia, while willing to answer my questions, felt that further discussion of the hospital's financial crisis was pointless.



Workers air out bed mattresses at Mechnikov Hospital.

Since 1991, medical care in Russia has undergone the same polarization as other goods and services. In private (for-profit) hospitals and clinics, new medicines and technologies are becoming available, but only a small segment of the population can afford them. The remaining public hospitals find themselves in the same funding crisis as public schools and other government institutions: low or non-existent pay for staff, crumbling infrastructure and shortage of equipment.

This past summer, I volunteered as a nurse's assistant at Menchikov Hospital (recently renamed Peter the Great), a government-run hospital consisting of 41 buildings connected by stately tree-lined avenues and grassy courtyards. Because the hospital does not have the funds to maintain all of its buildings

adequately, the buildings are in various stages of repair (or disrepair) ranging from freshly painted, to worn, to completely abandoned and gutted. Each functioning building houses its own department: cardiology; internal medicine; neuropathology; ear, nose and throat; and surgery. There is also a building each for instrument sterilization, general IV solutions and special IV solutions, which are too expensive for indiscriminate use and are tightly controlled by the head of the transfusion department.

Many doctors have left Mechnikov since 1991, emigrating to the West or working in new private hospitals in better-paid positions. Others have given up the field of medicine altogether. Those doctors still at Mechnikov view their situation with cynicism and resignation. One physician declared, "Doctors are not important to the government at all. They give us just enough so that we do not simply die like dogs." All the doctors lamented the shortage of nurses and the complete absence of *sanitarki* (orderlies), who used to help feed and transport patients, change bed linens and keep equipment clean. When the pay disappeared, so did the *sanitarki*. As a result, nurses must fulfill those duties as well, leaving less time for skilled patient care. Compounding the problem further is the fact that very few young people are choosing nursing as a career, with its reputation as a grueling, low-paid profession.

The shortage of staff and supplies has had a devastating effect on patient treatment. For example, a 52-year-old woman who had suffered a stroke three months earlier could move, sit and walk, but the muscles that controlled her speech and swallowing were paralyzed. She needed to be fed through a tube and grew weaker every day, because no one (nurse or family) could take the time to feed her. Usually, stroke patients regain mobility through intensive physical therapy, proper medication and nutrition. Mechnikov, however, is unable to offer

any such treatment because of financial constraints.

When a patient is admitted to the cardiac intensive care unit, their relatives usually come to the department for advice on what additional items the family will need to provide. Medical care is "free" for the patient, but relatives understand that the more supplies they bring (along with a box of chocolates or a basket of fruit for the staff), the better the care will be. The nurse will make a list, based on the notes the doctor has written on the patient's condition. To one new patient's family, the nurse replied, "We have enough furosemide (a standard, blood pressure medication)...and glucose. You will need to buy pirotsetam (a medicine that aids memory in patients with dementia) and Vitamin C. Bring nightclothes, a dish, a bowl, a teacup and spoon, a towel and drinking water. If you want him to have a change of sheets, you must bring the sheets from home, and he is going to need liquid feeding, so buy formula."

"What about syringes and needles?" asked the relative.

"If you can bring them, please do," replied the nurse.

Mechnikov Hospital has single-use syringes (plastic) as well as sterile glass syringes, but faces a daily threat of running out of the plastic variant. If patients bring their own, the hospital is more likely to have enough single-use syringes in its daily ration for other patients. Once that supply is gone, they have to use the glass syringes and re-sterilized needles, which are extremely dull. If nurses are injecting medicine into an IV bottle or tube, they will use a glass syringe. If they are injecting medicine directly into a patient, a new, sharp single-use needle is obviously better than a dull one.

Each morning, one of the nurses must go to the syringe dispensing station with the department's logbook and account for all the single-use syringes and needles used in the previous 24-hour period.

© PAMELA JEFFCOAT



Cardiology equipment in the Intensive Care Unit at Mechnikov Hospital.

Every syringe used, whether glass or plastic, must be returned to the station and recorded in the book. The nurse submits an estimate of how many syringes the department will use in the next 24-hour period and is given a daily ration. If syringes are missing from the day before, the worker at the dispensing station will dock an equal number of new syringes from the amount requested that day. "It is ridiculous! What do they think we will do, steal the syringes?" commented a nurse. But clearly, that is the fear. The hospital cannot afford any extra expenses.

As with syringes, obtaining IV solutions for patients is a daily ordeal. A doctor must write an order for a specific solution and attach it to a patient's chart. A nurse then takes the paperwork to the transfusion department and Andrei Yakovlevich, the transfusion director, looks over the orders. On one occasion, the interaction was extremely tense: "You are asking for reamberin for this patient again?" he thundered. "You gave it to her yesterday and the day before, too!"

"Yes, well, she has pneumonia," the nurse explained. "She was on a respirator for five days. It is in the chart..."

The patient's chart described her condition (still critical) and had notes from the examinations of every doctor since she had been admitted. However, one blood analysis, which confirmed the necessity for this IV fluid, was missing. Andrei Yakovlevich called the unit and spent five minutes yelling that without the needed analysis he was absolutely, positively not giving out the last bottle of reamberin for this patient. In the end, he did give it to the nurse.

Although it may seem that this exchange was merely a demonstration of power, the situation was not that simple. As the transfusion director, Andrei Yakovlevich only gets a few bottles of each medicine a month, not nearly enough for everyone who needs them. He cannot order more. Therefore, every decision concerning when and to whom he allocates medicine may

mean someone else will have to go untreated.

The physicians at Mechnikov are well aware of advances in medical technology and treatment and understand their usefulness. Doctors in Russia, however, are experienced in working with limited supplies and technology. Often, they must diagnose and treat without ultrasound, echocardiography, CAT scan or MRI equipment. The diagnostic equipment in the cardiology building consisted only of EKG machines, heart rate and blood pressure monitors and an X-ray machine. Dr. Nechiporenko, the director of the cardiology unit, commented with dismay that doctors in the West were not accustomed to making diagnoses without advanced technology. He explained that, in Russia, doctors must use all of their senses to diagnose a problem. Dr. Nechiporenko then qualified his observations by admitting that if he had the equipment, he would certainly use it. He added that perhaps he took pride in his ability to diagnose patients without advanced technology merely to console himself.

The severe shortage of equipment and personnel is true only for government hospitals, which provide free health care. Private hospitals, requiring payments by patients or by fledgling insurance companies, are doing better. A new institution since 1991, the private clinic makes enough money to pay its doctors and nurses a living wage, to supply medicine to its patients and to acquire new technology. Newspapers and television programs advertise high standards of care and painless procedures. More often than not, the new clinics specialize

in dentistry, gynecology, urology and dermatology, sometimes considered "cosmetic" fields of medicine in Russia. These specialties, in comparison with cardiology or internal medicine, tend to attract younger patients. With their higher income, they are more likely to be able and willing to pay for these kinds of services. But people who have not found high-paying jobs in the new economy, especially the elderly on meager pensions, have no recourse but to turn to government hospitals like Mechnikov.

These patients seem polite and grateful toward the staff for the most part, not complaining as much about their ailments or the hospital as the patients with whom I have worked in the US sometimes do. There was an air of appreciation for the care they received. Despite the fact that there are provisions enabling a patient to take a doctor to court, patients often recognize the difficult conditions under which the doctors operate and accept the situation. Malpractice suits have been rare. Of course, it would be difficult to prove that a doctor made a mistake in treatment without the evidence provided by technology. Furthermore, in government hospitals, there is little money to be gained by suing.

It is common to hear of the worsening state of the "average" Russian's health since the collapse of the Soviet system: alcoholism is growing, HIV and tuberculosis cases are increasing and life expectancy is decreasing. The doctors I interviewed at Mechnikov believe that people are trying harder now to stay out of hospitals. Dr. Tatiana Stepanova explained that before when a person fell ill, he would be put on a doctor's list and would continue to receive his salary while away from work. Many people took advantage of that system. Yet, in the current competitive job market without a safety net, a person with a chronic illness will not be hired or will be fired if his health often prevents him from working. "Now," states Dr. Stepanova, "People can no longer afford to be sick." ♦

Pamela Jeffcoat is a second-year REECAS MA graduate student and a certified medical assistant. This past summer, she was placed as a volunteer in Mechnikov Hospital through a contact at her language school in St. Petersburg, Russia.

THE DONALD W. TREADGOLD PAPERS

IN RUSSIAN, EAST EUROPEAN AND CENTRAL ASIAN STUDIES

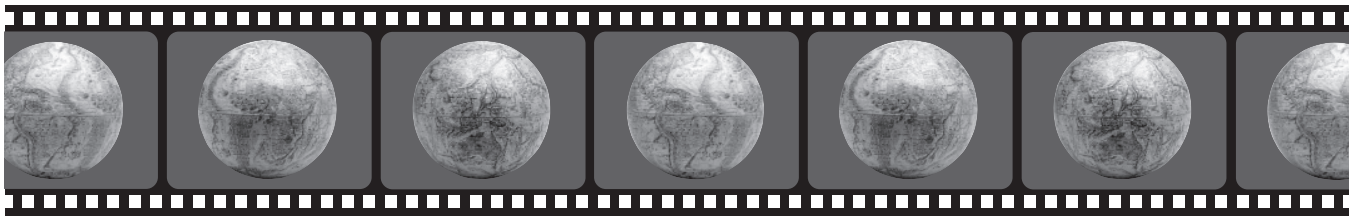
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Scholar from Kyrgyzstan Examines Teaching Methods and Programs at the University of Washington

BY HEATHER SALFRANK



Liudmila Konstants

Liudmila Konstants, a visiting scholar at the University of Washington's Business School this past autumn quarter, examined methods of education and the structure of both the Economics Department and the Business School. In

January, she will return to her position as associate professor of economics at the American University-Central Asia in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, established as an independent university in 1997 with help from the US government. Through a four-month grant from the Eurasian Foundation, she focused her examination of the UW's educational system on a comparison with her home university in Kyrgyzstan and other universities she has visited in Europe. Dr. Konstants is particularly concerned with ensuring that her students, many of whom continue their studies in the West, are receiving the same level of education as students in Europe and North America.

Convinced that young people are the future of Kyrgyzstan, Dr. Konstants views her students in Bishkek optimistically. She finds them to be hard-working with new and innovative ideas. Her preferred method of teaching is discussion-oriented and interactive; consequently, she has also learned a great deal from the fresh ideas of her students. At the University of Washington, she particularly enjoys the lectures of Dr. Edward Rice, who teaches graduate level courses in the Business School's evening program. In describing his teaching style, she asserted, "To be a truly excellent teacher, you need a special gift. Dr. Rice has this gift."

In 1995, Liudmila Konstants graduated from the National Academy of Sciences in Bishkek, where she wrote a thesis on the process of privatization in the Kyrgyz Republic. Since then, she has worked with various programs sponsored by USAID in Kyrgyzstan. Prior to her research at the University of Washington,

she also traveled to the US through IREX and ACCELS grants and studied in Germany with a program for national economic consultant training.

Professor Konstants has also had the opportunity to examine the quality of education in Europe through a program with the Center for Economic Research and Graduate Education (CERGE) at Charles University in Prague. While at CERGE, she was surprised by the low level of theory required to graduate with a Bachelor's degree in Economics, with only five to ten percent of the program devoted to theory, while the remaining percent focused on mathematics. In contrast, she appreciates the more balanced proportion of theory and mathematics required by the University of Washington, which more closely mirrors program requirements at the American University-Central Asia in Kyrgyzstan.

The most important aspect of the UW's system that Dr. Konstants would like to implement in her home university's program is separate economics theory courses for business and economics students. Currently one course on economics theory (ECO 303) is taught to both business and economics students. She will insist on separate theory courses for these students. Although many graduates of the American University in Kyrgyzstan find good jobs, some with international corporations, business students want and need more practical application in their classes.

Although the division of this course will improve the quality of education for her students, Dr. Konstants believes that an integrated balance between theory and application should not be sacrificed in the process. One suggestion she offered to professors at the University of Washington concerned the coordination of subject matter between various programs. She believes that the coordination of certain mathematics and economics courses could greatly enhance programs. For example, economics and mathematics courses often cover the

same subject matter, approaching it from different perspectives. She proposes that classes with significant overlap be combined into one joint course for a more well-rounded approach. This type of course exists in the Economics Department at CERGE, where an economics professor explains the theory and a mathematics professor formulates it in mathematical terms. Dr. Konstants also intends to recommend these changes to her university in Kyrgyzstan.

Listening to the lectures of Dr. Rice and other professors at the UW has reinforced another important aspect of Dr. Konstants' teaching philosophy. She wants to ensure that courses at the American University in Kyrgyzstan remain interactive and discussion-oriented. Having conducted numerous interviews with both students and faculty at the UW, as well as at her home university in Kyrgyzstan, she feels that this is the best method for fostering in-depth understanding of the subject matter and meeting student needs. While at the UW, Dr. Konstants familiarized herself with the use of course and instructor evaluation forms as a tool for assessing student needs. Although believing student input crucial to effective teaching and learning, she questioned whether this was the best method. One student, whom she interviewed at the UW, said that sometimes it can feel as though professors are trying to impress the students for the evaluation by entertaining the class. Although this is only one student's opinion, Dr. Konstants sees how this could happen. She does not think forms should supplant in-class discussion and one-on-one contact with students to evaluate the effectiveness of the course and the instructor.

Following her research in Seattle, she will develop manuals on applied microeconomics, designed especially for business students. ♦

REECAS NEWS

LAADA BILANIUK, Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology and Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Department of Linguistics, was on leave from the UW last year, during which she spent eight months at the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute on a Shklar Fellowship, conducting research and writing a book on the politics of language in Ukraine. She conducted interviews and studies of contemporary news, as well as archival research, using information from memoirs and plays to enrich the picture of language politics from the last century through today. She is currently revising the manuscript for publication with an academic press. Dr. Bilaniuk spent the last four months of her leave this summer conducting fieldwork in Kyiv, Ukraine with support from IREX and Fulbright-Hays fellowships. She researched gender and language issues through interviews, a survey and study of television programs.

REECAS graduate **JAMES BREWCZYNSKI** (MA, 2001) is currently working at the US Embassy in Moscow, having been accepted into the Department of State's Fancell Fellows Program. He is assisting the Minister-Counselor for Administrative Affairs in preparation for negotiations with the Russian government on a range of bi-lateral issues.

DOUGLAS CARMAN, a graduate student in the REECAS MA program and at the School of Law, presented his analysis of the Russian Security Council in his paper, "Doctrine of Information Security of the Russian Federation", at the UC Berkeley conference, "Power and Power Relations in East European Politics and Societies", in November.

ILSE CIRTAUTAS, Professor in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization, has recently undertaken an Updatable Uzbek-English Dictionary Project with the help of student Hilary Chan. The focus has been on producing a constantly updatable dictionary, a program that allows users to submit words for inclusion.

REECAS graduate **AUTUMN LERNER CUTTER** (MA, 2002) was interviewed and extensively quoted in an article by Douglas Birch, the Moscow correspondent for the *Baltimore Sun*, on her MA Thesis, "Sexual Silence and the Challenge of Sex Education in Contemporary Russia". Birch's article, "Russia's Sexual Counter-Revolution", was printed August 7, 2002. This past October, Cutter gave a talk, "American Sex Education: A Model for Russia?", to Russian students at Moscow's International University.

REECAS graduate **KELLI HASH** (MA, 2001) is pursuing a PhD at American University's School of International Service, where she received full funding for three years.

STEPHEN KERR, Professor in the Department of Education and REECAS faculty member, was recently named Associate Dean of the College of Education.

REECAS graduate **FRITH MAIER** (MA, 1998) will publish her thesis work, *Vagabond Life: The Caucasus Journals of George Kennan*, with the University of Washington Press in January 2003.

DANIEL C. WAUGH, Associate Professor of History, has made significant contributions to the forthcoming work. In 1996, through grants from Chevron and General Motors, Frith Maier was able to follow Kennan's path with documentary filmmaker, Christopher Allingham. This documentary of Kennan's travels has not yet been released. Prior to her enrollment in the REECAS MA program, she managed an adventure travel program in Russia for nine years. She currently runs a software company, founded four years ago, which employs 15 programmers in Russia.

DIANA PEARCE, Senior Lecturer at the School of Social Work, spent about three weeks in August/September 2002 in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan as a consultant for NOVIB-Oxfam, researching the work of women's organizations on the issue of domestic violence. Dr. Pearce visited Tashkent, Jizzak, Karshi and Shahrisabz

in Uzbekistan and Dushanbe, Kirquanchtepe and Khohjand in Tajikistan.

REECAS graduate **VJERAN PAVLAKOVIC** (MA, 1999), received an IREX fellowship to Croatia for research on his dissertation "Nasi Spanci—Croatian Volunteers in the Spanish Civil War". Pavlakovic is pursuing a PhD in the UW History Department.

NIKOLAI POPOV, Senior Lecturer in Comparative Literature, won the Griffin Poetry Prize and the Washington State Book Award in 2001 for his work, co-translated with Heather McHugh, *Glottal Stop: 101 Poems*, a translation of the work of Romanian poet Paul Celan. The Griffin Poetry Prize is a Canadian prize with two annual awards, one for Canadian poets and one for international poetry.

SARAH ABREVAYA STEIN, Assistant Professor in the History Department and at the Jackson School of International Studies, has two forthcoming publications: "Faces of Revolution: Yiddish Cartoons of the 1905 Revolution", *Slavic Review*, *American Quarterly* of *Russian, Eurasian and East European Studies* 61/4 (Winter 2002) and *Making Jews Modern: Yiddish and Ladino Newspapers of the Russian and Ottoman Empires* (Indiana University Press, 2003). During the 2001-2002 academic year, Stein was chosen as a University of Washington Royalty Research Scholar and served as a participant in the Walter Chapin Simpson Society of Scholars. In collaboration with Resat Kasaba, she is currently co-editing *Empire and Ethnicity: Coexistence and Conflict in Ottoman Society*.

NATHANIEL TRUMBULL, a PhD candidate in the Geography Department received support from IREX's Regional Scholar Exchange Program for nine months of dissertation research in Russia.

GLENNYS YOUNG'S article, "Terror in *Pravda*, 1917-1939: All the News That Was Fit to Print", was published in Catherine Evtuhov and Stephen Kotkin, eds. *The Cultural Gradient: The Transmission of Ideas in Europe, 1789-1991* (Rowman and Littlefield Press, 2002). This volume is a festschrift in honor of Martin Malia. Glennys Young is an Assistant Professor in the History Department and at the Jackson School of International Studies. This past May, she presented a paper, "The Aesthetics of Violence in Soviet Public Culture: The Case of *Pravda*" at a conference on Political Violence in Russia and the Soviet Union at the University of Maryland. She also participated in a roundtable discussion, "Imagining the Enemy: Siege Mentalities, Conspiracies and Collusion", at the 2002 AAASS Conference in

Pittsburgh. In January of 2003, she will present the paper "Popular Orthodoxy in Interwar Russia: A Pan-European Perspective" at the American Society of Church History in Chicago, Illinois. Glennys Young is also the editor of the Treadgold Papers.

REECAS graduate **MAJOR IRA QUEEN** (MA, 1997) was recently interviewed and quoted by James Brooke of the *New York Times* in the article, "Romanians Join American Patrol in Afghanistan", (Sept. 22, 2002). Major Queen is currently serving as the Chief of the Office of Defense Cooperation, a US military program, in Bucharest, Romania.

DR. ANAND YANG, the newly hired JSIS Director and Golub Chair of International

Studies, is providing REECAS and the rest of the Jackson School with impressive leadership. The REECAS program is happy to welcome him.

CRAIG ZUMBRUNNEN, Professor in the Department of Geography and Co-Director of the Program on the Environment, recently co-authored two articles with Nathaniel Trumbull: "An Emerging Northwest Russia Environmental Information Network: IT Capacity Building for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development", in *NETCOM*, 16/1-2 (2002); and "Environmental Policy Challenges", in *Russian Policy Challenges in the 21st Century*, Stephen Wegren, editor (Armonk, New York: ME Sharpe, 2002).

Trafficking Conference Update continued from page 1

social issues that underpin the problem. Dr. Hughes shared the research she conducted in the Ukraine, and Dr. Engel spoke about the difficulty of assessing, and hence preventing, the trafficking problem in Russia due to the country's corrupt civil society and complicated crime networks.

Trafficking in Asia: Therese Caouette, UW; Yuriko Saito, Keisen University, Japan; and Jacob Thomas, Former Chairman, Kerala Women's Commission, India were the panelists. The panel illuminated how extensive trafficking is in Asia. Therese Caouette discussed trafficking in Thailand, while Professor Saito talked about the legal status of trafficked women in Japan. Dr. Jacob Thomas broke common myths and stereotypes about trafficked victims and the trafficking industry.

Forced Migration and Labor: Panelists included Lauren Engle, External Relations Coordinator, International Organization for Migration; Masuda Hossain, Chairwoman, National Women's Organization, Bangladesh; and Vidya Samarasinghe, American University. The panel members discussed what motivated women and children to migrate and how they are often victimized through the migratory

process. The panelists also touched on what course of action governments should take when trafficked women are apprehended in a destination country.

Global Legal Systems and Human Rights:

Panelists Sutapa Basu, Director, UW Women's Center; Joan Fitzpatrick and Mohamed Mattar, Co-Director, The Protection Project at Johns Hopkins University, discussed why the practice of human bondage persists in the 21st century and the variety of forms it takes. The panel discussed prevention of trafficking and punishment of traffickers, as well as the integration of human rights norms into national strategies at the international and local levels.

Political Economy and Globalization:

The panelists included State Representative Veloria and Nancy Hartsock, UW. Nancy Hartsock focused on the ways global capitalism encouraged the traffic in persons, while Velma Veloria discussed how international trade agreements have intersected with issues of trafficking.

Public Health and Human Services:

Maria Cecilia Flores-Oebanda, President, Visayan Forum Foundation, Philippines; Sally Neumann, Program Analyst, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons; and Julie Stachowiak, Executive

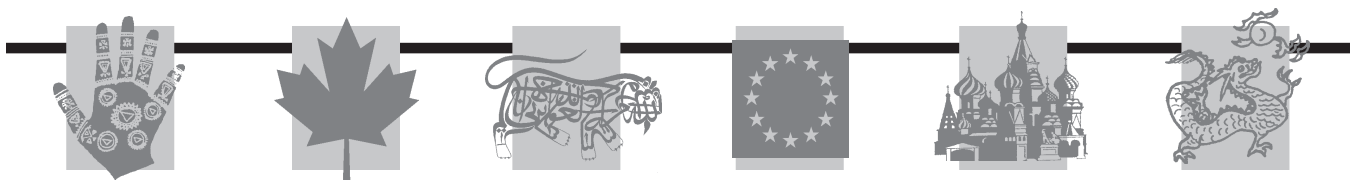


A trafficking victim.

Director, AIDS Infoshare, Russia were the panelists. Maria Cecilia Flores-Oebanda discussed work with children trafficked into the Port of Manila and her assistance in rehabilitation and resettlement. Sally Neumann gave an overview of the US policy towards trafficking and its work globally to combat trafficking. Finally, Julie Stachowiak talked about trafficking in Russia and the public health issues associated with the industry, including the spread of HIV and other STDs. ♦

Sutapa Basu is the Director of the Women's Center at the University of Washington. The Women's Center offers classes, workshops and lectures on various topics and issues each quarter.

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International Updates 2003

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INTERNATIONAL UPDATES LECTURES, 2003

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29

International Business

Security in a Changing World

Ray Waldmann, Lecturer, Marketing and International Business, School of Business Administration, UW

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12

Western Europe

Twin Towers, Two Pillars: Divergent US and European Responses to Terrorism

John Keeler, Director, Center for West European Studies and the EU Center of Seattle

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Middle East

Tunisia: Problems and Prospects of Liberalization

Laurence O. Michalak, Vice Chair, Center for Middle East Studies, UC-Berkeley

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12

Southeast Asia

Repairing Indonesia: Post-New Order Politics of Reform

Dan Lev, Professor Emeritus, Political Science, UW

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9

Central and South Asia

The Great Game Revisited

Daniel Waugh, Professor of History, International Studies and Slavic Languages and Literatures, UW

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23

International Studies

Creating Dialogue in Deeply Divided Societies

James D. Clowes, Associate Director, Comparative History of Ideas Program, UW

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7

Canada

Canada: A Future of Political Uncertainty

The Honorable Howard Pawley, Visiting Professor, Canadian Studies, UW; Former Premier, Manitoba

WEDNESDAY, MAY 21

East Asia

Women's Work in Japan: Sacrifice or Opportunity?

Dr. Leila Madge, Freeman Postdoctoral Fellow, UW

WEDNESDAY, MAY 28

Latin America

Race and Gender Relations in Latin America: Lessons for the United States

Jonathan Warren, Chair and Director, Latin American Studies Program, UW

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INTERNATIONAL UPDATES REGISTRATION, 2003

LOCATION: Walker-Ames Room, Kane Hall, University of Washington, Seattle

TIME: 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

COST: Lecture-Dinner fee is \$25.00 per session, per person. Check or money order only, payable to the University of Washington.

DEADLINE for registration is one week prior to each session. Please register early, as space is limited.

Participants are eligible for 3 clock hours per session. They will receive clock hour forms at each dinner.

For more information, call 206-543-4800 or e-mail sascuw@u.washington.edu.

Please mail registration form and fees of \$25.00 per session, per person (payable to the University of Washington) to:

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c/o South Asia Center
University of Washington
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Seattle, WA 98195-3650

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- ☐ Vegetarian meals are desired
- ☐ Clock hours are desired

Please mark the dates for which you are registering:

- ☐ Wednesday, January 29: International Business (Waldmann)
- ☐ Wednesday, February 12: Western Europe (Keeler)
- ☐ Wednesday, February 26: Middle East (Michalak)
- ☐ Wednesday, March 12: Southeast Asia (Lev)
- ☐ Wednesday, April 9: Central and South Asia (Vaugh)
- ☐ Wednesday, April 23: International Studies (Clowes)
- ☐ Wednesday, May 7: Canada (Pawley)
- ☐ Wednesday, May 21: East Asia (Madge)
- ☐ Wednesday, May 28: Latin America (Warren)

UPCOMING REECAS-RELATED EVENTS

FEBRUARY 1: International Documentary Film: Effective Use in the Classroom

A workshop for educators. 413 Balmer Hall, UW, 8:30-4:30 pm. See p. 22 for more information.

FEBRUARY: Film and Discussion Series on the REECAS Region

Edmonds Community College, Tuesdays, 6:30 pm. Films from the Balkans, Czech Republic, Central Asia and Russia will explore human emotion and reaction to the challenges of war and overcoming historical biases; love and jealousy; and coming of age. Following each film, a professor will lead a discussion about the film and provide a political and cultural context.

FEBRUARY 2-16: *The Suicide: A Russian Comedy*

The UW School of Drama presents a play written by Nikolai Erdman and directed by Mark Weil (Guest Director from Kazakhstan). Meany Studio Theatre, Meany Hall, UW.

FEBRUARY - MAY: 50 Years of Polish at the UW

Lecture series celebrating Polish-American Heritage. See p. 8 for more information.

MARCH 1: REECAS Speaker Series

"The Weakness of Civil Society in Post-Communist Europe", Marc Morjé Howard, Assistant Professor, Government and Politics, University of Maryland. 317 Thomson Hall, UW, 3:30 pm.

MARCH 10: *The Marks of Cain*, Showing and Discussion with the Film-Maker

This intriguing documentary explores the meaning and hierarchy of tattoos in the Soviet gulags. UW Campus, 5 pm.

APRIL 9: REECAS International Updates Lecture

"The Great Game Revisited", Daniel C. Vaughn, Professor, History, International Studies and Slavic Languages and Literatures, University of Washington; Walker-Ames Room, Kane Hall, UW, 5:30-8:30 pm. See p. 26-7 for more information.

APRIL 28: The Donald W. Treadgold Memorial Lecture

"Belief and Knowledge in Islamic Central Eurasia: The Northern Tier in the 18th and 19th Centuries", Dr. Edward Lazzerini, Visiting Professor of Central Eurasian History, Indiana University; Professor, History, University of New Orleans; Parrington Hall Forum, UW, 3:30 pm. A reception will follow.

APRIL 26: 9th Annual REECAS-NW Conference at UW/Bothell

"Changing Roles and Shifting Boundaries in Europe and Eurasia." UW Bothell campus, 9:00-5:00 pm. See p. 18 for more information.

For further information on these or other upcoming REECAS events, please see our website, <http://depts.washington.edu/reecas>.

REECAS NEWSLETTER

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