

REECAS NEWSLETTER

JACKSON SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON SPRING 2007

REECAS at Sixty: A “Liminal Stage” in the Life of a Program?

BY DANIEL C. WAUGH

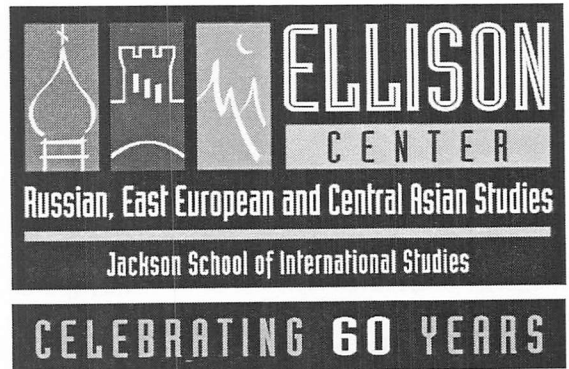
We have much to celebrate, whether our association with REECAS/The Ellison Center is of long standing (as in my case) or only of more recent memory. None of the founders are any longer with us, few are the representatives of the second generation, the future success of the program is in the hands of those who were not yet a gleam in anyone’s eye in 1947. As Arnold van Gennep put it in his classic formulation regarding the “rites of passage”: “For groups, as well as for individuals, life itself means to separate and to be reunited, to change form and condition, to die and be reborn...to begin acting again, but in a different way. And there are always new thresholds to cross.” We are celebrating the moment of our program’s birth; we might argue where we stand in the life cycle. Certainly no one would wish to contemplate that there be an end to the enterprise. I wonder whether we might not be in what the anthropologists call a “liminal” phase of transition between structured stages in life. A liminal phase is one involving some ambiguity and “disequilibrium,” but one considered therefore to be particularly creative.

Before I comment on our transition and the challenges it presents, let me say a precautionary word about memory. Moments such as a sixtieth anniversary invite recollection and, I suspect, a certain amount of nostalgic invention of a past which was perhaps never quite like what we now claim. It is well known that the Slavophiles in Russia did this in the 19th century when they created an idealized image of Russia.

When we think about REECAS in its early days, in the Far Eastern and Russian Institute as it was then called, we do need to remember that it (as with the other Russian/East European studies programs which emerged at the same time around the country) was a product of the Cold War. That could not but have an impact on the research and teaching, the results of which, from our early twenty-first century perspectives, might have some dubious aspects to them. So, even if we look at memoirs by the founders (and some exist) and a certain amount of good scholarship which has been done on those early

years of Russian/East European Studies, we may have a very hard time envisioning the realities of the experience of the participants and sharing their excitement and convictions about their project.

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I would like to think that the “founders” had a great advantage over us today. Were not things smaller and simpler then? (That is nostalgia speaking about a past that I never actually experienced...). Might there not have been a more tightly knit intellectual community then, where people could and did attend each other’s seminars and came to all the presentations by visiting speakers? It is easy to understand, I think, how in that context someone like Russian historian Donald Treadgold could have become interested enough in comparative history to tackle learning Chinese. How many faculty today, well established in their careers, would jump into learning a notoriously difficult language perceived as belonging to a different “field”?

Yet it was not just in the simpler days of yore that this was a vibrant intellectual community of scholars and students with diverse interests. In fact, one of the great achievements of REECAS has been to continue to challenge its participants with what has become an ever broader range of opportunities. The program as situated now in the Jackson School is in one of the more complex institutions ever created. In fact, it is hard to imagine anyone consciously trying to invent such a beast, analogous in its seeming ungainliness, perhaps, to a camel. Not only have most of the intellectual approaches shifted significantly from what they were in 1947, but the number and range of disciplines represented is infinitely greater.

We have arrived at this challenging moment in our institutional life by passing through what surely was one of our “liminal stages,” in 1989–1991, when our “subject” rather abruptly changed, catching most of those in our “field” by surprise. True, well prior to the collapse of Communism in the part of the world we were studying, there had been, and there persist to this day, criticisms of the whole enterprise. “Area studies” are dead, many of the social scientists were proclaiming. And then to have the area itself seem to disappear should in fact have been the *coup de grâce*.

Yet, as we know, old academic programs

never die, they just reinvent themselves. And in fact there are all sorts of good things which emerged in the next stage of our program’s life. Let me mention two with which I have been closely involved. We now have a Baltic Studies program of great distinction, located where it should be in Scandinavian Studies, not in REECAS or Slavic, where in the Cold War days it would have been concealed. And Central Asian studies, which had been a distinguished part of the Far Eastern and Russian enterprise from nearly the start, is now entering a period of expansion which it long has merited. Geopolitics, of course, played a role in the founding years, and in both of these examples continue to play a role in the constructive re-shaping of the academic landscape.

REECAS and the Jackson School, and all their associated programs and departments which embrace a good part of our campus, can be a bit intimidating. There are far too many lectures and seminars on far too many subjects that might well interest us. I wonder, have we ever, and, certainly, do we now take advantage of all there is in this stimulating environment? Can we in fact even begin to do so? I tend to think that one of our greatest challenges for the future is precisely that of how, within the context of a program such as ours, a program without walls separating it into component departments and disciplines, we can maximize the benefits it offers us as faculty and offers our students.

The culture of modern academia in many ways is curiously narrowing — we as faculty define a research specialization and all too often tend to stick with it, if for no other reason than to keep our jobs. Apart from pressures to publish in a defined “field,” the demands on our time are substantial. I might note, for example, that were I not now retired and spending the year about as far away from Seattle as I could get (in Sweden), I would have been faced during January and early February with something on the order of a dozen and half job talks, the associated interviews, and the faculty meetings to discuss and to vote

on the candidates. That alone, even for one not serving on one of the search committees, would constitute more than a full-time “load.” It is perhaps not surprising then if the historians do not always come to the talks presented on literature, the economists attend a seminar on art history, or the East Europeanists cross the boundaries into Central Asia....

I wish though that it could be otherwise. As I know from my personal experience of serving simultaneously in three departments and teaching pretty much anything you might name across two millennia of Eurasian culture and history, the danger of the mind-expanding experience of trying to do everything is that one may end up accomplishing too little. Maybe in fact a program such as ours by definition is in a stage of perpetual liminality, where for those in that particularly creative phase, the accompanying challenges and uncertainties simply are a part of life. I would argue that a program such as ours is precisely what our students need if they are to be prepared to face the real world. We as faculty should not be trying to make them into clones of ourselves, if that means wishing that they become narrow specialists. Indeed, it is not just the students who can benefit from the fact that REECAS, as it has now been for three score years, is such a vibrant and varied intellectual community. ♦

Now Professor Emeritus, Daniel Waugh taught at the University of Washington from 1972 until 2006, in his last years as a member of the History Department, The Jackson School of International Studies and the Department of Slavic Languages and Literature. He chaired the REECAS program from 1991 to 1996. His ongoing research reflects the breadth of his academic interests, which include both pre-Modern Russia and the history of Central Asia.

While poring over past issues of the REECAS Newsletter in preparation for the 60th anniversary, we came across this wonderful article on the early days of what would become the Ellison Center. It seemed a fitting addition to our reflection.

Establishing Russian Programs at the UW

BY DONALD W. TREADGOLD, SPRING 1991, REEU NEWSLETTER

Russian studies began as study of all aspects of civilization of a country, like classics (i.e., study of ancient Greece and Rome). There had been Sinologists or Indologists, terms applied to scholars of rarefied attainments, but who had no defined discipline in the contemporary sense. The word Russology was seldom if ever used but might have been when people were around such as Ivar Spector (UW) and Edward Parry (Colgate). Spector, whose doctorate was in Semitics, was hired by UW to teach English composition in 1931, later came to teach Russian language, literature, history under the rubric of "civilization," and in 1946 inaugurated biweekly *Soviet Press Translations*, carefully selected and accurately translated, which was however overwhelmed a few years later by the competition of the much larger and more ambitious *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, the creation of Leo Gruliov. It is an item of oral tradition at the UW that the Yudin collection, the nucleus of

today's great Library of Congress collection of Slavic materials, was offered to our library after the October Revolution but was declined on the grounds that few were much interested in Russia. However, much later, in the 1950s, we managed to build one of the premier Russian and East European collections in the country, in which researchers have found items not available in Widener or the Library of Congress.

A new era began in 1939 when George E. Taylor, a British China scholar and truly gifted administrator, was brought to UW to head a Far Eastern Institute which soon became Far Eastern and Russian. Two new men joined the Russian faculty in 1948: William Ballis, political scientist recently with naval attaché's office in Moscow, and Victor Erlich, Polish refugee just finishing dissertation in Russian literature at Columbia; a third in 1949: I, having just finished doctorate in Russian history at Oxford; in 1955 W.A. Douglas Jackson with PhD in geography

from Maryland; 1957 John Reshetar replaced Ballis, who went to Michigan. In 1947 and 1949, respectively there arrived two men whose fame was worldwide in their fields and whose secondary interests included the USSR: Nikolai Nikolaevich Poppe, former academician of USSR Academy of Sciences and world's greatest specialist in Mongolian studies, today still alive and active at age 93, and Karl August Wittfogel, who died in New York a couple of years ago at age 91, who has been called the last great German system-builder. In 1950s, appointing a faculty member was a relatively informal affair. Of course no affirmative action, but WASPs were rare; at one point a count of faculty revealed only 4 US-born people, 2 of them WASPs (I was one) and the other 2 Nisei; there was only one woman, but at that time there were very few women indeed who had PhD's in any of the studies represented. By 1966, the

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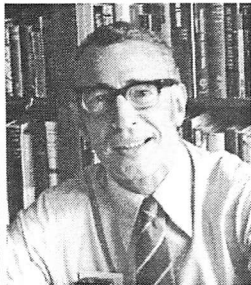
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Institute listed 24 faculty teaching courses on Russia and the Soviet Union and 9 teaching courses on East Central Europe, and figured that graduate students had been drawn from 98 universities including 21 from abroad. One might note that Russian and East European studies, especially after appointment of Peter Sugar in history in 1959, have all along co-existed harmoniously at UW, a happy condition not enjoyed by all other centers in the country.



© DONALD TREADGOLD

Donald Treadgold in his office in the early days of the REECAS program.

Russian studies at UW, however, were established on a firm foundation through association with Far Eastern Studies, or East Asian as we came to

call them. The 1950s were the great years of building the FERI, an institution embracing chiefly Chinese and Russian studies but including work on Japan and Inner Asia (Mongolia and Tibet, little done at UW on Sinkiang). We had outside grants from Rockefeller and Carnegie Foundations and later from Ford, enjoyed solid University and state support, and a string of notable outside visitors.

Morale was sky high; one sure index was the annual banquet at which the food consisted of sumptuous Chinese dishes (my Russian patriotism never extended to food, except for caviar), featured skits in which faculty made fun of themselves and each other, all loudly sang the song "The Old Gray Mare" in as many languages as were known to any faculty member; I retain a uneffaceable memory of Nikolai Nikolaevich Poppe trying to produce a version in Yakut (I think), which had no word for horse, murmuring to himself, "let me see, the old white reindeer, she is not what she was." Another sign of group spirit was the annual picnic at the home of a Russian language instructor on the shore of Lake Washington, where a whole lamb was roasted and children of all sizes and colors

ran about on land and played enthusiastically in the water. At Christmas time cards were posted outside George Taylor's office saying "Merry Christmas" (ACLU would put a stop to it nowadays) which phrase Jews, atheists, Buddhists, a few Christians enthusiastically translated into all the languages they knew. The number of languages represented grew to 30, 40, 50 or more, but one defied decipherment by our best linguists: it proved finally to be Gregg shorthand.

I myself had had no contact with Asia and the barest of course introduction to it as an undergraduate; but by, rubbing elbows with colleagues I became fascinated by China in particular, went to Taiwan as visiting professor in 1959 on a Rockefeller-supported exchange program and made the mistake of beginning to study Chinese. I spent much of the next decade or two working on the language, history, literature, thought; the upshot was my two-volume work *The West in Russia and China*. Some of my other colleagues had comparable experiences though the attacks of Sinophilia they suffered were less virulent.

Research seminars were the backbone of intellectual life of the place. They met weekly. The papers written by the faculty were distributed and read in advance so that sessions were devoted to discussions —sometimes heated, often illuminating, always lively and interesting. Three were especially active: Modern Chinese History Project, Inner Asia Project, Russia in Asia Project. Ex-Communists, non-ideological types, liberals, conservatives, two or three quiet Communists. We discussed, we argued, we criticized, learned a lot in the process. I have never seen — not at Harvard or any other of the 50 colleges I have lectured at, or since then at the UW — such an intense and exciting intellectual atmosphere. We debated whether the Chinese scholarship were a class, and if so whether it was based on wealth or knowledge, whether Russia had been feudal in the past or the USSR was totalitarian in the present, and though beer cans were not thrown it was probably a good thing none were ready to hand.

Teaching went through a predictable

cycle. Spector's courses in history were assigned to me; Erlich's literature courses supplanted several of Spector's; Reid Micklesen took over Erlich's linguistic and philological courses so he could offer more literature. Russian stretched from merely beginning and advanced courses to four solid years' instruction plus graduate courses, also taught were Polish, Czech, Serbo-Croatian, Old Church Slavic regularly, Bulgarian, Romanian and Hungarian at various times. I taught a course in Soviet history from the start plus a single-quarter survey, which became 2 quarter and then 3 quarter; Marc Szeftel joined me to do medieval Russia in 1960, Herbert Ellison joined us to concentrate on Soviet history in 1967. Fr. Georges Florovsky was visiting professor summer 1961 and 1966; we nearly succeeded in making a permanent appointment of him, which is another story, though the effort advanced to the point where cards covering his library were being checked in ours in preparation for bringing it to Seattle with him.

The heyday of the Far Eastern & Russian Institute might be counted as 1961–62: accelerated first year Russian and Chinese language courses were given in summer for the first time to 45 students in Russian, 14 in Chinese; Russian House (where Russian only was to be spoken) was begun, having been planned and financed by students; George Taylor was chairman of ACLS-SSRC Joint Committee on Contemporary China, I was chairman of Joint Committee on Slavic Studies and editor of *Slavic Review*, Rhoads Murphey editor of *Journal of Asian Studies*, Omeljan Pritsak editor of *Ural-Altische Jahrbücher*, Peter Sugar and I launched our 11-volume *History of East Central Europe*, which went fast at first, slowed down and is still incomplete; we began planning for the ACLS-SSRC-sponsored Lake Tahoe conference which I chaired and edited the volume *Soviet and Chinese Communism: Similarities and Differences* which emerged from it, which badly needs updating. In 1966 a grant from one of the Mellon foundations launched the Gowen Fellowship program for third-world students seeking PhD in a discipline with specialization in Russian or East Asian areas, and this

program was a roaring success, which did not prevent the donors from losing interest after a few years and killing it. (They were affected by the idea if not the phrase, "It's a bottomless pit," which was used by a number of foundations in that period to reduce or discontinue support of international studies.) Gowen Fellows who returned home with PhD's included people now teaching — as it happens Russian history in all cases — in Universities of Malaya, Sri Lanka, Peradeniya, Nigeria and Haifa, and doing other things in Japan, Korea, India and Indonesia.

In 1970, Thomson Hall occupied twice, manuscripts destroyed or scattered about, Hellmut Wilhelm's library narrowly saved from burning by someone who talked fast to students bent on vandalism, offices of two administrators broken into by students looking for "the CIA files," which never existed outside radical imagination. (One noteworthy fact about FERI that it refused to take money from any branch of US government until Congress passed the National Defense Education Act.) It was difficult

to escape the conclusion that paranoid vandals outnumbered the noble idealists in that kind of assault, which many US institutions experienced during the period. Fortunately, the UW did not suffer as much from the so-called student revolution as some other places.

1968 FERI split into three parts, one called FERI as before plus Slavic Language and Literature and Asian Language and Literature departments. The three units continue but the FERI, after several name changes, is today called the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies. REEU is one of the constituent programs of the Jackson School, and is identical in composition to the NDEA Center.

In 1950s and to a lesser extent in the 60s, things were easier; to fill a job, I might call the dean and ask if Professor X could be invited to campus as a possible candidate, he often said yes, and sometimes an appointment resulted. If someone went on leave, we could expect to replace him or her; there was usually research support available in summer, and distinguished visitors could be

brought to teach in addition to regular faculty: Fr. Georges Florovsky (twice), Gleb Struve, Hugh Seton-Watson, Ralph Matlaw, Deming Brown, Alfred Meyer, several others, aside from a stream of short-term VIP's. In 50s, there were fewer committee meetings, set-piece conferences, on campus or elsewhere in the country or abroad that one had to attend, intellectual excitement was on our doorstep, in Thomson Hall; by 60s, we already had to travel more.

I remember once, probably in late 60s, expressing to a Sinologist colleague my regret at the changes, the loss of élan in the two great seminars and other things: he replied in a Chinese vein, "there is no use to lament the spring, once autumn has come." Spring is a wonderful season, but autumn is to be sure often beautiful, rich and energizing. ♦

Donald Treadgold was Professor of Russian History at UW 1949–1993. He gave lectures at over 50 institutions, produced hundreds of publications and served as Managing Editor of the *Slavic Review* for 11 years. Treadgold passed away in 1994.

ELLISON CENTER NEWS

STEPHEN E. HANSON has recently published a chapter on "The Brezhnev Era" for *The Cambridge History of Russia, Vol. III—The Twentieth Century*, edited by Ronald Grigor Suny, (Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 292–315. Also, his essay "Weber, Jowitt, and the Problem of Social Science Prediction" has appeared in Vladimir Tismaneanu, Marc Howard and Rudra Sil, eds., *A World Without Leninism: Essays in Honor of Ken Jowitt*, University of Washington Press, 2006, pp. 209–224.

In January, **MARK JENKINS** received a Donald E. Petersen Endowed Professorship which is a three-year award. He traveled to the Ilkhom Theatre in Tashkent in March and April, funded in large part by the Professorship.

ANTHONY D. MILEWSKI (REECAS MA, JD 2006) recently began a new job at Skadden Arps LLP in Moscow, Russia.

JUSTIN ODUM (REECAS MA 2003) took a job with the Open Society Institute in New York.

REECAS MA candidate (expected Spring 2007) **BRENDA SCHUSTER's** article "The Mahalla: Women, the State and the Semi-private Sphere in Post-Independence Uzbekistan" will be included in the winter 2007 issue of the *International Affairs Journal*, published by the University of California at Davis (<http://davisiaj.com/>).

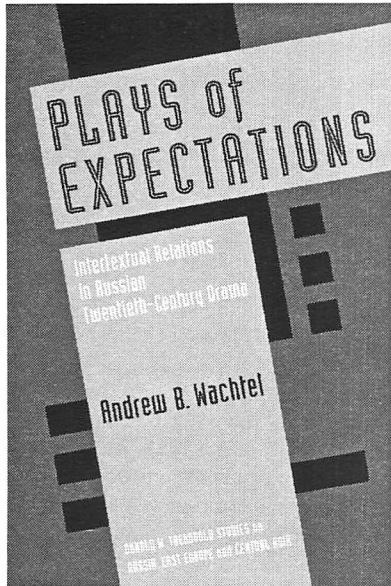
Affiliate Faculty member **DOUGLAS SMITH's** book "Working the Rough Stone: Freemasonry and Society in Eighteenth-Century Russia" was published in a Russian translation by *Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie* in Moscow in December 2006.

Smith also appeared as a commentator in the documentary film "Empress of Ambition" on the life of Catherine the Great, which aired on the National Geographic Channel in November 2006.

GLENNYS YOUNG's article, "Fetishizing the Soviet Collapse: Historical Rupture and the Historiography of (Early) Soviet Socialism" appeared in the January 2007 issue of *Russian Review*. ♦

DONALD W. TREADGOLD STUDIES

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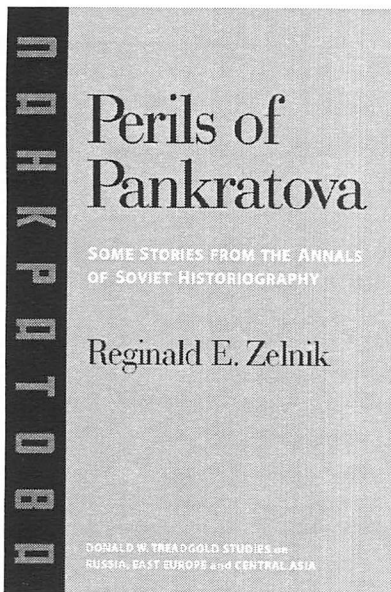
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REGINALD E. ZELNIK – PUBLISHED 2005

PERILS OF PANKRATOVA: SOME STORIES FROM THE ANNALS OF SOVIET HISTORIOGRAPHY

Professor Reginald E. Zelnik, who died in a tragic accident in May 2004, was one of the most respected and beloved historians of Russia. His last manuscript is a biography of Anna Pankratova, a woman from Odessa who became a leading labor historian and academic administrator in the Soviet Union from the 1920s to her death in 1957. Her experience during World War II in Kazakhstan, in Soviet Central Asia, led her to champion the national cause of the Kazakhs.

Accompanying Zelnik’s monograph are essays by Laura Engelstein, David A. Hollinger, Benjamin Nathans, Yuri Slezkine and Glennys Young. The volume also encompasses excerpts from two Soviet texts mentioned in Zelnik’s monograph, a list of his PhD students at Berkeley and his curriculum vitae.

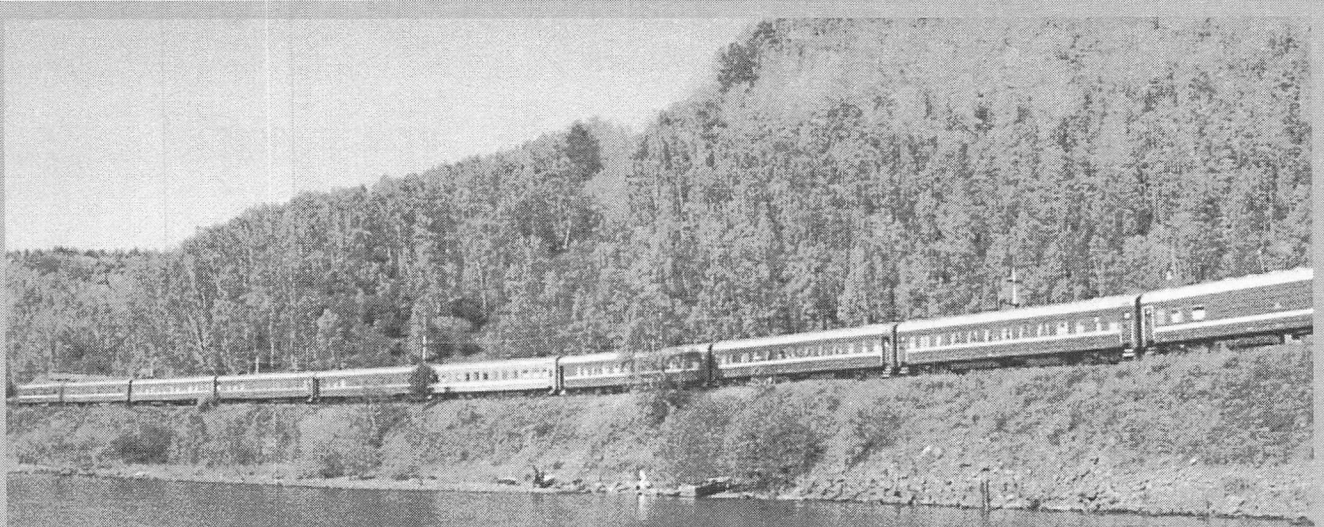
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Submissions are welcomed. For information, contact Glennys Young, Editor, at glennys@u.washington.edu.



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The Trans-Siberian by Private Train with Naadam Festival

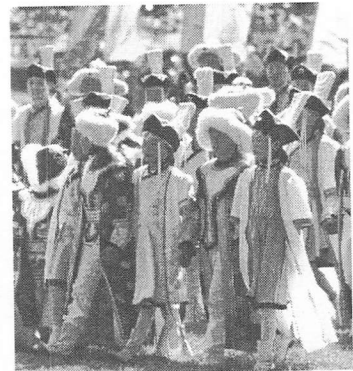
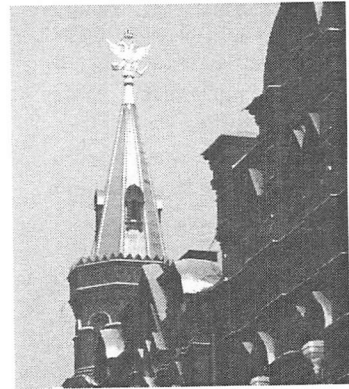
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Nuclear Non-Proliferation: Challenge of the XXI Century

BY GENNADY PSHAKIN

The non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (specifically nuclear weapons) is a much discussed topic in today's political environment. The threat of terrorists' proliferation of nuclear weapons for use against states will lead to more instability worldwide. Nevertheless, presently the international community is facing a serious challenge — how to find a proper balance between a number of serious problems such as the greenhouse effect, proliferation of nuclear weapons, energy demands, clean water supply, the threat of terrorism, etc. While not all of these problems are directly connected, each will impact one's success in attempting to resolve any particular one of them.

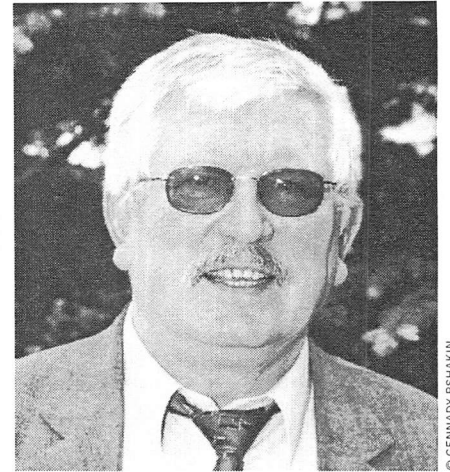
I served as a safeguards inspector for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) from 1985 to 1993. After returning to a different country (I left the USSR and returned to the Russian Federation), I realized that our nuclear industry was in deep crisis. It affected the civil part of the nuclear industry as well as our nuclear military complex. The period of 1991–1995 was a terrible time for people working in this field. It resulted, however, in increased awareness in the international community regarding the security of nuclear weapons and nuclear materials in general on Russian territory and on the territories

of the Newly Independent States. In the USSR, the nuclear facilities were spread throughout the country, located in different Soviet republics which then became independent states. Fortunately, the main nuclear weapons production facilities were located on Russian territory.

The new political, economic and social environment required serious changes in the organization of the security of nuclear materials and weapons. A new legislative framework, financial support for the nuclear industry which could not be privatized and maintenance of the industry for safety and security reasons — all presented great challenges for the government as well as for specialists responsible for those tasks.

To help Russia resolve its problems with the security of nuclear materials and weapons, the United States initiated a special program for enhancing the security of nuclear materials and weapons. One of the most successful results of this program was the education and training portion. As part of this task, the following projects were organized and completed:

- Two training centers were established: one for nuclear materials control and accounting and the other for physical protection. The centers were located in

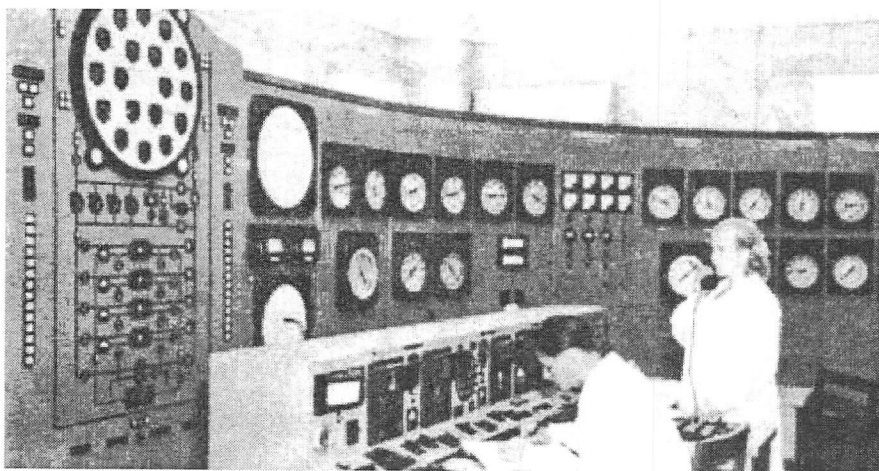


Gennady Pshakin

Obninsk, a town 65 miles southwest of Moscow.

- An educational course for training the new generation of specialists in nuclear materials security was developed at the Moscow Physics and Engineering Institute (MEPhI State University). The institute now graduates nuclear engineers for nuclear research centers and facilities.
- The experience acquired during the 10 years of MEPhI educational program is extending to other institutions and universities in Russia which are training the new generation of specialists for the nuclear industry. Institutions include Tomsk Polytechnic University (located in the west part of Siberia) and Obninsk State University for Nuclear Engineering (IATE).

From the very beginning, American experts working with their Russian colleagues realized that most Russians did not have much knowledge regarding the subject of non-proliferation, because safeguards were never implemented at Soviet/Russian facilities and political discussions on an international level were not accessible. One of our American counterparts responded by initiating educational programs on non-proliferation issues for the Russian specialists. As a result, a significant volume of non-proliferation education was introduced



The control room of the world's first nuclear power plant at Obninsk.

into the MEPHI educational program and a special module in the program for specialists training at the Russian Methodological and Training Center for Nuclear Materials Control and Accounting (RMTC) was developed and introduced.

After utilizing the module on non-proliferation issues and discussing its effectiveness with colleagues from MEPHI, we came to a consensus that it was necessary to develop a wider training course on non-proliferation issues for the next generation of engineers who would be directly or indirectly involved in nuclear industry. We needed to stress the importance of this problem for the future of the human race, that it is their responsibility to face the future and to solve this problem. As a result of the discussions, a book on nuclear non-proliferation was written by a group of professors from IATE and MEPHI. We then began lecturing on this topic for students specializing in different aspects of engineering for the nuclear industry and connected industries.

Some time later, our American colleagues from the Pacific Northwest National

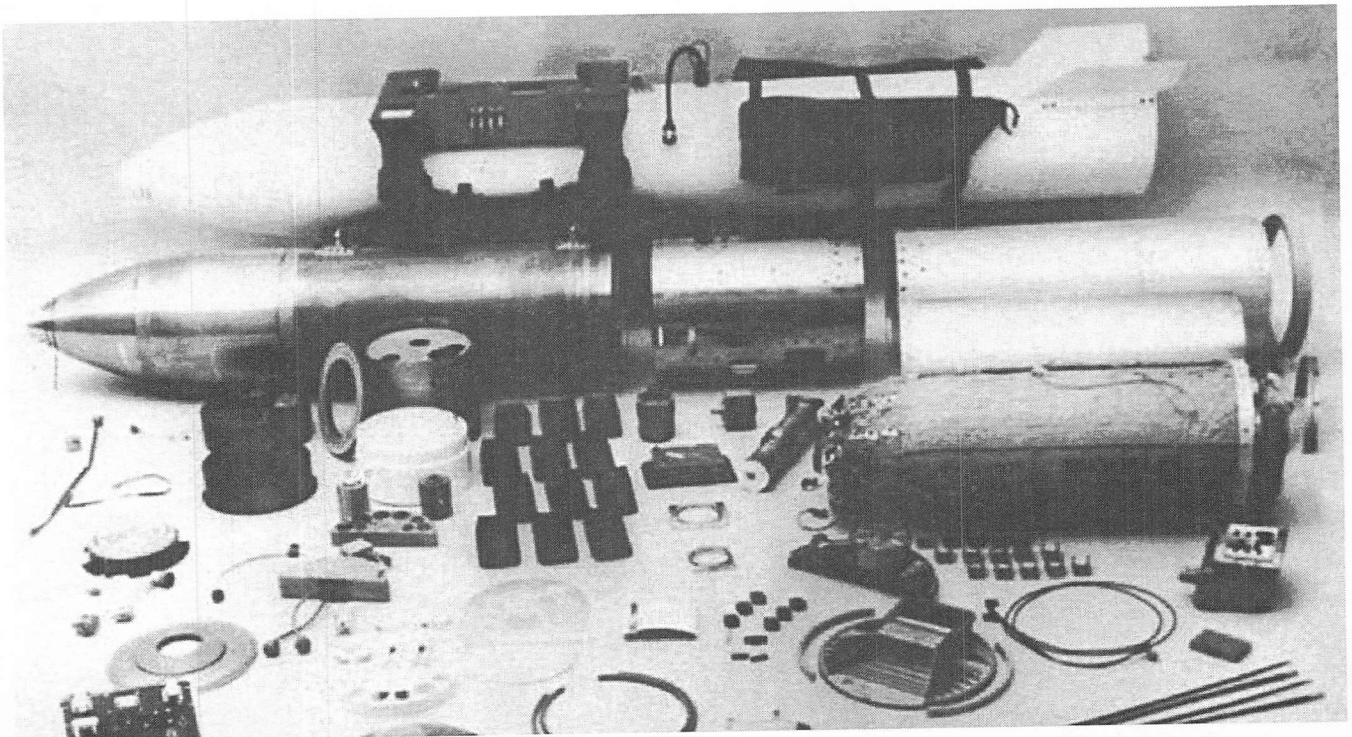
Laboratory (Debbie Dickman, Mark Leek and Carol Kessler), together with UW professor Chris Jones, decided that it would be valuable for American students to learn the Russian perspective on non-proliferation. Thanks to funding from the Ellison Center and PNNL, two Russian professors were invited to present lectures to graduate students in the Jackson School at UW.

The first visit took place winter quarter 2005 and was the first course of its kind in the US. Victor Sosnin (a professor from IATE) and I presented the non-proliferation course based on our Russian book *Nuclear Non-Proliferation*. The idea of this book is to give students a wide picture of the non-proliferation problem starting with the history of nuclear weapons and the proliferation of them before the Non-Proliferation Treaty was signed and the international safeguards system stopped (or at least seriously hindered) proliferation of weapons. It then covers topics including concerns about proliferation, a description of nuclear technologies, international regimes and mechanisms supporting non-proliferation worldwide,

nuclear terrorism threats and the future of nuclear energy development and the challenges in non-proliferation connected to that future.

During winter quarter 2007, Professor Sosnin and I presented the same course for a second time and we hope that the cooperation between our universities will be extended. The next step could be a visit by American professors to the Russian university in Obninsk and even an exchange of students between the US and Russia. Such an exchange would provide a solid background for the next generation of specialists. Specialists who should take the responsibility of nuclear energy development from our hands so as to better understand the problems of nuclear proliferation and form a common understanding of how to deal with them. ♦

Gennady Pshakin is a Visiting Professor from the Obninsk State University for Nuclear Power Engineering in Russia. This winter, he collaborated with REECAS Associate Professor Chris Jones and fellow Russian professor Victor Sosnin on the course "Non-Proliferation and Atomic Energy as Global Issues: A Russian Perspective."



Components of a US B83 thermonuclear weapon.



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Czech Center for Education and Culture



Czech language students perform for the CCEC Inaugural Reception.

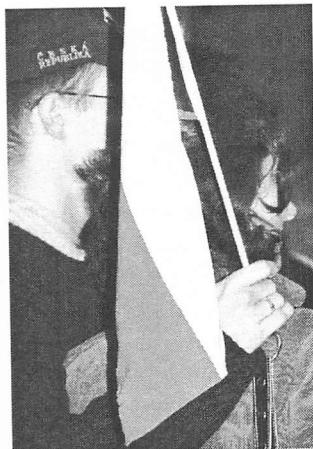
To commemorate and to announce the establishment of the Center for Czech Education and Culture (CCEC), the CCEC hosted its Inaugural Reception and Fundraiser on Thursday, November 9, at The Fairview Club in Seattle, Washington. Special guests included Ambassador Petr Kolár; Daniel Novy, First Secretary at the Czech Embassy; Frank Nosek, Honorary Czech Consul for Alaska; Rudolph Zigmund, Honorary Slovak Consul for Washington; Professor Stephen E. Hanson, Director of the Ellison Center at UW; and Steve Leahy, President and CEO of the Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce.

The evening was kicked off by a performance of Czech folk songs by Czech lecturer Jaroslava Soldánová and her students, who were enthusiastically accompanied by many guests in attendance. The some 240 guests were then welcomed by Wayne Jehlík (president of the CCEC and REECAS alum) and Ambassador Petr Kolár, who spoke about the Czech-American community and the importance of work done by Czech-American organizations.

The reception featured Czech-inspired cuisine and desserts and all guests were treated to special performances by Jan Bislin (violin and piano) and Petra Sovcov and Mele Santos (opera). The event brought together a large cross-section of the community, with guests from the Seattle area to Vancouver, BC to Vancouver, Washington and ranging from students to members of the local Czech and Slovak community to

representatives from Boeing, the Trade Development Alliance and the City of Bellevue.

Special thanks to the CCEC board of directors, Professor James Felak, all of the Czech students who volunteered to help with the event and especially Wayne and Stacey Jehlík, all of whom contributed greatly to making the evening a great success. ♦



Members of the local Czech community.



Ambassador Kolar chats with CCEC President Jehlik.

Two Polands and the Puzzle of Polish Populism

BY ARISTA MARIA CIRTAUTAS

Recent parliamentary and presidential elections in Poland (September-October 2005) brought to the political foreground a phenomenon with which sociologists have long been concerned, namely the existence, in socioeconomic terms, of two Polands — one prosperous, urban and urbane, the other impoverished, rural and rooted in traditional values. With the electoral victory of center-right political parties increasingly prone to populist rhetoric and behavior, Poland appears to be experiencing a radical politicization of such center-periphery cleavages, broadly understood to include not just regional peripheries but socioeconomic and cultural peripheries, as well. In general, throughout East Central Europe, the politicization of socioeconomic discontent has increasingly taken a populist, anti-establishment direction (which often means taking anti-liberal, anti-EU, anti-corruption stances in opposition to the perceived preferences and interests of established elites).¹ In Poland, however, the intensity of this turn to populism, combined as it is with a passionate attachment to Catholic values and a close association with the nativist movement surrounding Radio Maryja, has generated more critical scrutiny than elsewhere in the region as both domestic opponents and foreign observers voice their concerns for Polish democracy, and analysts consider the underlying causes and long term consequences of this development.

In this context, the question of Polish exceptionalism can be asked (yet again). Is contemporary Polish populism to be explained largely in terms of factors that are shared across the region (and arguably across Europe, given the prevalence of radical right, populist parties in many West European countries), or are there factors involved in this case that are largely unique to Poland? Taking as its point of departure the specificities of the Polish case, a roundtable discussion at the November 2006 AAASS convention focused on the potential causal linkage between Solidarity



The Kaczynski brothers greet Benedict XVI.

and the current outcome that pits former Solidarity activists so blatantly against one another.² By shifting the explanatory focus away from generally shared structural variables (e.g. socioeconomic cleavages, level of development, political culture, or the “structural deficiencies of modern democracy”), the panel was decidedly more agency-oriented, an orientation that suggests that different outcomes might have been possible in the Polish case had different actions been taken along the way. This, then, represents the puzzle of Polish populism — how could it have emerged from the legacy of Solidarity and how could it have been averted?

Two Post-Solidarity Polands

In his April 2006 address to the Polish parliament, Prime Minister Jaroslaw Kaczynski, a former Solidarity dissident and advisor to Lech Walesa, illustrated the difference between his government and its opponents by juxtaposing two key questions: “to whom will Poland belong?” versus “what kind of Poland will exist in the future?”³ For the twin Kaczynski brothers now governing Poland as President and Prime Minister, as well as for their followers, the answer

to the first question clearly takes precedent. In their eyes, Poland should belong to the “ordinary people” not the corrupt “unofficial web of connections that goes back to communist times;” an “immoral network” that all previous governments bar one (that of Jan Olszewski) had condoned, “in part or in full.” To ensure this outcome, the kind of Poland that needs to be brought into existence is an entirely new one, a pure Fourth Republic that will root out corruption, hold the old communists and current ex-communists accountable for their crimes and (re)infuse the polity with Catholic values. In Kaczynski’s words, “While dictatorship and authoritarianism in Poland are out of the question and only the naïve believe that they are not, Poland does need order, and it shall achieve it.”

Among these “naïve” critics, one of the most prominent is Adam Michnik, a former Solidarity leader and editor-in-chief of *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Poland’s largest and first independent daily newspaper, who sees the threat of theocracy lurking behind the Catholic fundamentalism-infused “new populism” of a governing coalition that

includes, in addition to the Kaczynski's party, Law and Justice, two avowedly populist parties, Self-Defense and the League of Polish Families. For Michnik, the discourse of this coalition "combines orthodox Catholic rhetoric with nationalism" and a profound anti-liberalism: 'relativistic liberalism' has become "the main enemy of the public good and the Christian value system. They have declared a war against it that they present as a struggle between good and evil, light and darkness, idealism and materialism, purity and corruption. For them, 'the liberal' is God's enemy."⁴ While members of this government have not steered clear of open anti-Semitism, the far more prevalent anti-liberal discourse represents, in Michnik's opinion, a parallel form of irrational prejudice: "Today, this discourse has replaced the Jew with the relativist liberal, someone who refuses to believe the holders of absolute truth and demands respect for the rights of all citizens, including homosexuals."⁵

In the eyes of Poland's 'liberals' or 'democratic-skeptics,' as Michnik calls himself, the question of what kind of Poland should take shape is paramount, not the question of belonging. If an open, multi-cultural society based on human rights and the rights of citizens ultimately emerges, this society will automatically encompass or belong to all Poles, including even such controversial figures as General Jaruzelski (responsible for declaring martial law and imprisoning many former Solidarity members including Michnik himself). Michnik is convinced that Jaruzelski "is a Polish patriot and a partisan of democracy...I'm sure he always wanted to build a non-ethnic, secular Poland." Accordingly, "we must reject one camp's domination over another, with endless settlements of scores. Our country must make room for everybody. That's the only way to build a sovereign, democratic state."⁶ For the "new populists," however, this particular inclusionary logic, which prevailed at the Roundtable negotiations that ended Communist rule in Poland, is precisely what allowed the former power holders, with the complicity of former Solidarity leaders like Michnik, to corrupt and to derail postcommunist Polish democracy.

The Legacy of Solidarity

While many observers and analysts have noted that populist-nationalist impulses were in fact present in Solidarity from its earliest trade union/social movement days, the tendency at the time (especially among foreign analysts) was to downgrade these impulses in favor of emphasizing the democratic attributes of the movement. The current political situation, however, clearly suggests that the populist-nationalist components of Solidarity did have a serious following, both at the level of conservative intellectuals (like former Prime Minister Jan Olszewski and the Kaczynski brothers) and at the rank and file level. But, how exactly, should we capture the relationship between Solidarity and Poland's "new populism"? Andrzej Tymowski suggests two possibilities: a cause and effect relationship whereby Solidarity is analyzed in terms of the causal impact it has had on the subsequent evolution of Polish populism (for example, by creating social expectations of entitlement and solidarism and by legitimating populist forms of extra-parliamentary protest like the road blockades used by Self Defense in the 1990's), or as two parallel phenomena both drawing their roots and inspiration from the same source, namely the "moral economy of the crowd." In this latter interpretation, both Solidarity and Polish populism are related but ultimately distinct responses to the violation of the social contract by transgressing elites and, rather than focusing on a causal linkage between Solidarity and populism, it is the unique persistence of moral economy sentiments in Polish society that needs to be explained as the point of origination for both phenomena.

During the transition period, other connections can be drawn between past dynamics and contemporary outcomes. David Ost, in particular, emphasizes the dramatic nature of the shift in elite-mass interactions that characterized the late 1980's and early 1990's. Whereas Solidarity, the social movement, had been predicated on a more substantive search for inclusion with limited marginalization or instrumentalization of the masses by elites, Solidarity based governments

after the collapse of communist rule shifted to a distanced relationship between ruling elites and publics. The focus was now on providing tangible economic benefits to the public without engaging them substantively in the political process. Unfortunately, tangible economic benefits not being evenly spread throughout society, various publics could feel doubly dispossessed — participating neither in the economic structures nor in the political life of the newly emerging polity. Why did liberally-oriented Solidarity elites initiate this shift from including the masses to, in effect, substantively if not formally, disenfranchising them? The answer appears to lie in sincerely felt fears of encouraging class and/or popular unrest at a critical juncture in the reform process. Not surprisingly, the resulting void in popular representation has, over time, been filled by contemporary populist parties offering the symbolic inclusion



Adam Michnik in Wroclaw, March 2006.

of those left behind, if nothing else. To the extent that Solidarity era figures are associated with these promises of inclusion, there is greater legitimacy attached to them given the movement's genuine participatory past. Ironically, the Kaczynski brothers may turn out to be the more legitimate heirs of Solidarity's participatory ethos (if not of its democratic ideals and aspirations) than their more liberal colleagues from Solidarity days.

Here both Tymowski and Ost underscore the degree to which Solidarity's liberal elites made crucial mistakes in not engaging public opinion during the

continued on page 14

continued from page 13

transition period. The (re)turn to a tutelary relationship between intellectuals and masses represented in Tymowski's words something of a "communicative shock." As Stephen Stoltenberg (panel attendee, UW alumnus, current State Department official) put it: "why did Solidarity's liberal elites fail to recognize the need to aggregate social interests?; why were they so deaf?" In part, the answer, according to Stoltenberg, goes back to the cultural identity of the Polish intelligentsia, an identity that was reinforced during the "communist era stratification along estate lines." Consequently, "we need a cultural analysis of communist era estates and how these identities structured post-1989 outcomes." David Ost, as well, notes that "grave political errors" were made in not communicating the details of the Balcerowicz Plan, especially those details that represented modifications and concessions made to ameliorate the negative social effects of the plan. Additionally, "viable avenues of civic representation" linked to Solidarity were destroyed as the movement's trade union organization sought to monopolize public space. Even Peter Rutland, a scholar more sympathetic to the reform choices made by the initial postcommunist leadership, agrees that they "should have had a strategy for addressing the needs and interests of social groups left behind in the transformation." One might also add that it was a grave mistake to welcome the former communists into the political process without at the same time offering an institutional framework for citizens negatively impacted by the previous regime to bear witness to their experiences. In the absence of such a framework, Michnik's famous formula of 'amnesty without amnesia' rings hollow and seems unfairly tilted toward amnesty, especially for those former communists that shared the liberal, secular vision of Poland favored by many Solidarity intellectuals.

With hindsight, it appears as if Solidarity's liberally-oriented elites made two key mistakes that have greatly facilitated the rise of Poland's new populists. Firstly, they trusted the former communists to behave well in the new polity; to make a

positive contribution to the liberal secular order while keeping their political opportunism and greed within manageable bounds. Systemic corruption and administrative abuses under the ex-communists testifies to the misplaced nature of this trust. Secondly, they mistrusted the political maturity of the Polish public, believing, at best, that Polish society needed to be led and not persuaded and, at worst, that inherent social impulses toward nationalism fused with Catholicism needed to be constrained. At first glance, it would appear that current events have proven Solidarity's liberal elites right on this count. From the AAASS roundtable discussion another conclusion is, however, possible: namely, that this elite mistrust created a self-fulfilling dynamic whereby the decisions taken in the early days of postcommunism to ward off the populist threat have in fact produced the very outcome most feared.

But is it fair to place so much emphasis on elite decisions? The majority of analysts that place far greater causal weight on the structural conditions that facilitate the emergence of populism would argue probably not. On the other hand, if Krzysztof Jasiewicz is right that there is "room for populism in any society," then the question of "how and when elites choose to politicize populism" does assume greater analytical significance. In the case of Poland, as we have seen, that choice was made, in part by former Solidarity activists, in the context of a representational vacuum created by yet another group of Solidarity elites. As to the long term significance of the "new populism" in Poland, opinions at the panel discussion were mixed. While some attendees, in particular, were very concerned about the collapse of political support for a socially progressive agenda addressing, for example, minority rights, women's rights and gay rights, others were more sanguine believing that "we should have more faith in the wisdom of the Polish people" as Jasiewicz put it. Indeed, local elections held in November 2006 saw a decisive shift of voter support away from the governing coalition. Self Defense and the League of Polish Families, for example,

lost ground to the more conventional centrist Polish Peasants' Party, leading observers like Jasiewicz to conclude that there is no 'locked in' electorate for the radical populist parties. Reconciling these two assessments, one might conclude that whereas populism as a political style or creed is likely to have a short tenure in power (likely to be voted out in the next parliamentary elections, if previous electoral history is any guide), the deeper concern lies with the extent to which institutions like the Polish Catholic Church are fostering profoundly conservative, often intolerant socio-cultural values that threaten to place Polish society at odds with the (West) European mainstream. However, since this is a concern that can be directed at a number of different countries (including our own), one can hope that future panel discussions will address the Polish case not in terms of its (negative) exceptionalism but in terms of its comparable as well as unique attributes. ♦

Arista Maria Cirtautas is an affiliate faculty member of REECAS. She taught two courses for REECAS this fall and winter: "Post-Communist East European Politics" and "The EU and its New Neighbors."

- 1 See Cas Mudde, "EU Accession and a New Populist Center-Periphery Cleavage in Central and Eastern Europe," Center for European Studies, Central and Eastern Europe, Working Paper no. 62, Department of Political Science, University of Antwerp, 2004.
- 2 Panel participants included: Andrzej Tymowski, David Ost, Krzysztof Jasiewicz and Peter Rutland. While I have tried to be as accurate as possible in capturing the discussion, inevitably this account represents my interpretation and is, therefore, subject to contestation and correction by both panelists and attendees.
- 3 Jaroslaw Kaczynski, "Address to the Polish Parliament (Sejm), Delivered on the occasion of the first hundred days of the new presidency and government," April 2006, available at: www.ruf.rice.edu/~sarmatio/406/262kacz.html.
- 4 Adam Michnik, "Was Pontius Pilate a liberal democrat? Democracy between Relativism and the Absolute (Reading Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger - Part 1)," Talk delivered at the New School for Social Research, New York, November 13, 2006.
- 5 *ibid.*
- 6 Interview with Adam Michnik by Philippe Demenet in the *Unesco Courier*, September 2001, available at: www.unesco.org/courier2001_09/uk/dires.htm.

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The contact person for local arrangements at University of Washington is Allison Dvaladze, Outreach Coordinator for the Ellison Center for Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies, 203B Thompson Hall,

Box 353650, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195, USA, dvaladze@u.washington.edu. For information related to the content of the program, please contact CESS, as indicated below.

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Energy Security of Armenia and Regional Geopolitics

BY KARINE TASLAKYAN

Armenia, a landlocked mountainous country with a rich history in ancient and modern world culture, is currently experiencing a period of massive political and economic transition.

In large part, Armenia's challenges in withdrawing from the Soviet Union have resulted from its destructive energy crisis (1991–1995) and its impact on the environment, economy and quality of life. The effects of a major earthquake in 1988 and armed conflict with Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh, with its resulting massive influx of refugees and continuous economic blockade, have made the transition to a democratic system of government and market economy even more difficult.

With virtually no indigenous conventional energy sources, Armenia depends highly on imported fuel — almost exclusively from Russia (all of its gas, nuclear fuel and a large share of oil products). Its gas, imported from Georgia through a single pipeline, has often been a subject of sabotage due to the many conflicts in the region since the Soviet Union's disintegration. Furthermore, most of the domestic energy sector is under Russian control, following the 2003 transfer of management of Armenia's critical nuclear power plant and six hydroelectric plants to Unified Energy Systems as part of a broad equity-for-debt deal.

Armenia's energy sector also faces serious challenges, including the poor state of its infrastructure and networks suffering from inefficiencies; high dependence on one source; underinvestment; non-payment of debts; and dependence on a nuclear power plant that should be closed. Tackling these deficiencies is of key importance for economic growth, poverty reduction, sustainable development and national security.

Armenia currently has insufficient independent energy sources to meet the electricity needs of its 3.2 million people. Electricity is provided by three sources.

The first of these sources is a nuclear power plant which provides 30–40% of the country's electricity. The operational life of the Armenian Nuclear Power Plant (ANPP), located in a seismically active zone, is coming to an end. The international community has urged Armenia to shut it down, as the old reactor does not meet international safety standards. However, its closure could potentially result in another energy crisis, since ANPP currently provides up to 40% of the country's energy needs and there are no readily available substitutes with equal capacity. The second source is hydroelectric plants. Hydroelectric plants provide 20–35% of the country's electricity, varying with the level of precipitation. The final share is provided by thermal power plants. Thermal plants generate, on average, 30–35% of the country's electricity. In total, approximately 70% of the electricity demand in Armenia is satisfied through nuclear and thermal generation, both of which rely on imported energy. Thermal plants run on imported oil and gas and nuclear fuel also comes from Russia.¹

While Armenia is presently dependent on imported energy, large amounts of available, independent energy remain untapped. This is mostly the result of a lack of public policy aimed at promoting the alternative development of existing renewable resources and a lack of investment capital. The increased use of renewable energy and enhanced energy efficiency would have many benefits, including: reduced greenhouse gas emissions and other pollution, decreased reliance on fossil fuels (which could help protect energy prices from potentially volatile fossil fuel markets), fostered economic development around renewable energy industries and increased security as a result of relying on cleaner and more easily distributed sources of energy. The pursuit of renewable energy is a prerequisite for building local, regional and global economies, and

adding to Armenia's peace and energy security.² Energy security can be defined in a broad sense as the lack of vulnerability of national economies to volatility in volume and price of imported energy. The security of energy supply has economic, social and political dimensions at the same time.

The geopolitical environment of Armenia is complicated. Non-operational rail and road communications hamper energy carriers' supply to Armenia as a result of a blockade by Azerbaijan and Turkey due to political conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. In the early 1990s, disputes over Nagorno-Karabakh grew into full-scale military conflict.³ Although the cease-fire has held since 1994, significant numbers of incidents along the "line of contact" take place each year. As a consequence of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Azerbaijan is reluctant to engage in any cooperation with Armenia, either on a bilateral basis or within the framework of international organizations. During Soviet times, 85% of Armenia's exported goods were transported through Azerbaijan; now these are blockaded.⁴ Therefore, sustainable energy-use planning takes second place to ensuring basic energy availability.⁵ The conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh and conflicts in its northern neighbours Georgia and Chechnya have helped to isolate Armenia geographically, further interfering with energy source supply.⁶

As a result of the abovementioned threats to the security of supply (a complicated geopolitical situation and dependence on fuel imports) and the closure of the Armenian Nuclear Power Plant in 1989 after an earthquake, 1991–1995 were years of energy crisis for Armenia. This crisis caused economic recession, environmental disruption, decline in quality of life and massive emigration. The "brain drain" from losing 20% of Armenia's population has impeded further economic development.

The region as a whole is affected by divergent foreign influence. Differing



Armenia and its neighbors.

interests have begun to emerge, most notably Armenia's aspiration to limit its dependence on Russian energy supplies by building a \$120 million, 141 kilometer gas pipeline from Iran. Iran reportedly has agreed to supply 36 billion cubic meters of natural gas to Armenia from 2007–2027, a plan that could undercut Russian energy companies' position in the Caucasus.⁷ On the other hand, Iran's current strained relations with the West, and with the United States in particular, over its nuclear program, imposes further limitations and threats to the energy security of Armenia.⁸

Energy security requires the region's balanced socio-economic development and stability. The Caucasus Region sits between the Black Sea on the West and the Caspian Sea on the East. Therefore, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia sit at a strategic crossroads. The region is important to world energy markets as a transit area for oil and natural gas exports from the Caspian Sea to Europe. The countries of the European Union already import half of their primary energy requirements. This figure is projected to reach 75% by the year 2020.⁹ Energy priorities of the Caucasus countries, therefore, are two-fold: to diversify their energy supplies and to benefit from transit revenues as their neighbors develop export facilities which traverse their territory.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the increase in oil production from the Caspian Sea region, the Caucasus

region has gained in importance from an energy perspective. Previously, the only way for Caspian Sea region oil exports to reach European consumers was via the Russian pipeline system. Three of the largest projects cross through Georgia (Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, South Caucasus Pipeline and Baku-Supsa, aka the "Western Early Oil Route").¹⁰ A pipeline route through Armenia

could be favorable for Azerbaijan because this would enable it to provide for the energy needs of its Nakhichevan enclave, which is presently dependent upon Iran. Besides, running the pipeline through Armenia would significantly decrease the cost of the construction. However, as of yet none of the export options for Caspian exporters pass through Armenia, because the unsolved Karabakh conflict blocks Azerbaijani-Armenian cooperation.

Despite the strategic economic and political asset of regional oil and gas resources, one party alone cannot successfully exploit this wealth. Even when the Newly Independent States have a strong bargaining position with Western companies, they often do not have the experience to recognize it or to handle the situation wisely. Cooperative energy security would solve these challenges. Developing the resources of the newly independent Caucasus states and bringing them smoothly to market could stabilize global energy balances, make prices more predictable, guarantee Western supplies and assure the region's balanced socio-economic development. The energy resources of the South Caucasus therefore present enormous potential for the West.

There are three conditions that must be met for oil and gas deposits to be exploited successfully and brought to market. The first two necessary conditions are political stability and secure and cost-effective transport. The last is

a positive financial and investment climate. Political stability itself requires the creation of legitimate governments in the region and the mutual clarification of their national interests. The second requirement, secure and cost-effective lines of transport, assumes technical functioning in a regular manner, not subject to extraordinary costs such as the repair of chronic sabotage. Only on the basis of these conditions together is the third requirement possible: a positive investment climate that conforms to international norms and is not subject to arbitrary change.¹¹

Armenia must engage in constructive negotiations toward resolving conflicts and fostering peace in the region. Its participation in strategic regional cooperative projects and dialogue with neighboring states could diminish its unfavorable geopolitical situation, eliminate the economic blockade and lead to cooperative energy security. This, in turn, would ensure support from international organizations and attract foreign investments for further development. ♦

Karine Taslakyan, an Edmund Muskie Fellow, earned a Master of Public Administration from the Evans School of Public Affairs at the University of Washington in 2006.

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- 2 Nikolai Grigorian, vice chairman of the regulatory commission for public services in Armenia.
- 3 UNEP www.unep.no/enrin/htmls/armenia.
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- 10 Energy Information Administration, Official Energy Statistics from the US Government www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/caucasus.html.
- 11 Robert M. Cutler, "Towards Cooperative Energy Security in the South Caucasus" www.robertcutler.org/ar96crs2.htm.

Civic Participation as Seen in Shymkent, Kazakhstan

BY LAURA LOCKARD

In the 15 months that I lived and worked in Kazakhstan, I was honored to have what was the most rewarding job of my career and equally the most exhausting. The reward came from an extraordinary opportunity to participate in civil society at its earliest stages and the exhaustion resulted from a significant amount of travel on Soviet trains and Yakovlev 40 airplanes.

While I was in Kazakhstan in 2005–2006, there were restrictions on civic participation far beyond the transportation challenges. But in spite of these obstacles, I found many citizens extremely willing to play an active role in their communities, taking daily risks to advance their communities and to help their country reach the next stage of development. The following account will hopefully provide a glimpse into my experience in Kazakhstan.

While working with an international non-governmental organization (NGO) on electoral transparency and civic advocacy programs, I collaborated with many citizen leaders toward the goal of developing greater civic participation. This situation presented an opportunity for me to reach Kazakh citizens directly. By developing individual civic leaders and preparing them with useful organizing tools, we hoped to better prepare them to address local problems and then

to move toward addressing similar regional and national issues. This was particularly the case in conducting civic advocacy programs in the southern city of Shymkent.

Shymkent is situated in the Yuzhno (South) Kazakhstanskaya oblast which has a population of approximately 1,900,000¹ people. Shymkent lies at the foothills of the Ugam mountain range and it is about an hour drive north of Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The city enjoys a diverse population of Uzbeks, Oralmans, ethnic Kazakhs, Russians and many others. While Shymkent does struggle with a heavy burden of societal concerns such as human trafficking and drug-related issues due to its proximity to the border, its diversity exudes a heart and soul unlike many other Kazakh areas. With a bustling market and an extremely popular central park, the city feels alive and optimistic. Shymkent is also a proud city that has many strong, democracy-oriented community leaders. But, like most communities in Kazakhstan, it is immersed in a culture of fear and skepticism about outside intervention, which is why direct outreach was critical.

One person I met was a kind, thoughtful, civic-minded leader, Zharkinbek Seitimbek. Zharkinbek steadily held the torch of hope for democratic reform, slow

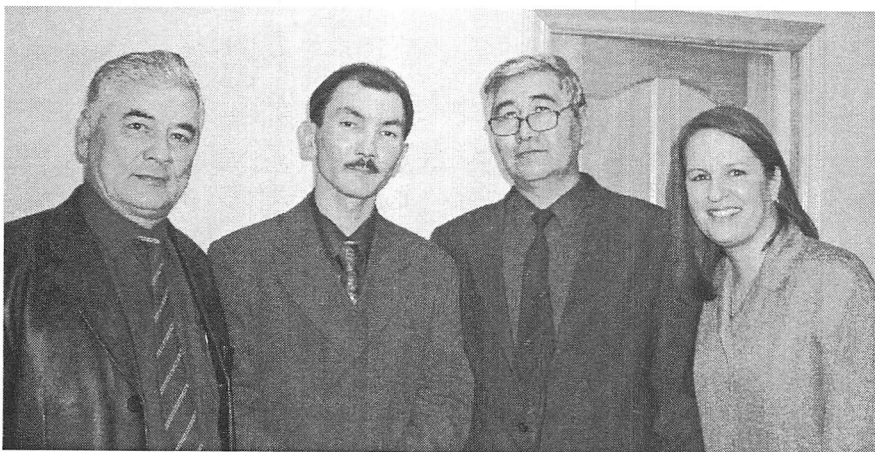
as it might be in coming. Zharkinbek began working on democracy development by volunteering to recruit and to organize observers for the first presidential election in 1999 and continues to do election transparency work and much more.

While civic participation is common and practically instinctual for most US citizens, there is still a very real gap in what the average Kazakhstani knows about democracy. Even fewer people understand what it means to participate in the democratic process in any way other than voting. Zharkinbek embraced elections participation experience and, along with a few others, helped to develop a broader civic participation effort in Shymkent.

Working with Zharkinbek, who helped recruit participants and local trainers, we would crowd in a little room in some forgotten building. There, we trained citizens in the basics of civic advocacy campaign development, lobbying local government, holding public hearings, building coalitions, training the media and fundraising. Tools were developed in Russian and Kazakh better to serve these prospective leaders as they learned to build outreach strategies and to develop relationships necessary for community level change and eventually broader legislative improvements.

I was always so heartened to meet the people willing to come to these trainings. They would come prepared to learn and even more importantly, eager to share the information with others. As Americans, we take communications and the sharing of information for granted. But, in communities where the government owns most media outlets, and controls the message that reaches most citizens, word of mouth is still a powerful tool.

It was also refreshing to find a few people in Kazakhstan, like in the US, that have some extremely diverse interests. One such man found his way to one of these training sessions. He was there on behalf of an extra-terrestrial



Zharkinbek Seitimbek (in glasses) and other civic leaders in Shymkent, with the author.



© LAURA LOCKARD

Street view in Shymkent.

non-profit organization and told us that the leader was based in Krasnoyarsk, Russia. If he had not been so serious, I would have given him great credit for having such a solid understanding of American humor. However, he was a fascinating, Kazakhstan-based, conspiracy theorist. This encounter alone gave me hope for the future of civic and democratic reform in Kazakhstan! Ah, freedom of speech.

The extreme examples of Zharkinbek doing his best to strive for the highest levels of civic participation and the fellow concerned about extra-terrestrial rights, while different in purpose, were there for the same reason; to learn how to share information with others and to organize people in a more productive way to accomplish change. Most of the participants left the training sessions inspired and felt prepared to develop advocacy initiatives in their respective communities. As a result of these trainings, environmental initiatives have been most successful in Shymkent. Community clean ups, waste management and street lighting have been readily adopted community changes with little political interference.

Zharkinbek continues to work with domestic NGOs such as the Information Center for Democracy and the Republican Network of Independent Monitors in the pursuit of election transparency and community-based advocacy initiatives. These are successful to a lesser extent because of the political ramifications, but the process is just as important as a definitive success. The process allows for opportunities consistently to pass valuable information and advocacy tools along to others. This information sharing is the best legacy for which one could ask. In the future, more and more people will have the opportunity to learn key skills and to become ever more confident in participating in civil society outreach and reform projects.

Of anything “democratic” I might have taught Zharkinbek and those with whom I worked in Shymkent, most important was the fact that hope for true reform is closely tied to the ability to be creative and flexible in democracy development. The motto “we’ll figure it out” became a mantra each day for me and my colleagues as we navigated our way through a restrictive environment.

I look forward to returning to Shymkent someday and attending a meeting held by someone Zharkinbek trained. I just hope I can avoid taking a nail-biting Yakolev 40 airplane to get there. ♦

Laura Lockard served as Country Director for the National Democratic Institute's Kazakhstan office in Almaty from March 2005 to July 2006. Laura also served for the Organization for Security and Cooperation Europe participating in elections monitoring in Kosovo, Ukraine and Russia. This article reflects the opinion of the author only. Laura can be reached at lauralockard@msn.com.

1 http://aboutkazakhstan.com/South_Kazakhstan_oblast.shtml



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Saltanat Sultanbekova and other civic leaders on the dreaded Yakolev 40.

The Ellison Center Welcomes Visiting Scholars

BY ELIZABETH MARTIN



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ANNA GLUKHANYUK joins us as a George F. Russell Fellow through the National Council of Eurasian and East European Research (NCEEER). She is working on a comparative analysis of religious experience among youth. Of particular interest to Glukhanyuk is how religious experience affects daily life. She will also utilize her research in a dissertation

on the tradition of Orthodoxy in Russia. Upon returning to Russia, she plans to continue her research on religion and youth culture and the sociology of art.

Glukhanyuk comes to UW from the Department of Art and Cultural Studies at Ural State University in Ekaterinburg, Russia. There she is a student and lecturer on topics including History of Culture, History of Religion and Sociology of Art. She is also a lecturer at Ekaterinburg State Theatre Institute as well as Head of the Regional Centre for International Relations at Russian State Vocational Pedagogical University.

This is Glukhanyuk's first trip to the US. She has enjoyed learning about American culture through new experiences and new friends as well as becoming familiar with the American educational style by attending lectures in Comparative Religion.



© NEDZAD IBRAHIMOVIC

NEDZAD IBRAHIMOVIC is a Fulbright Fellow from Bosnia. While at UW, he is teaching two courses: "Literature, Film and Culture of Former Yugoslavia and Yugoslav Successor States" (winter) and "Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian Authors in Exile" (spring). After his time in Seattle, he will return to his position as Professor for the Theory of Literature and Bosnian

Literature and Language at Tuzla University.

Ibrahimovic has served in the past as a teacher both of Bosnian language and culture and of film. He also holds the position of Editor for the Journal of Art Theory *Razlika/Difference* (www.razlika-difference.com), which he founded in 2000.

Publishing the works of former students in this journal has been quite a thrill. Ibrahimovic himself is a well published critic of film, theatre and literature. He also has spent time as a director of documentaries. In 1996, he won a Dutch award for a film he made during time spent in the Netherlands and a film script he wrote will soon be made into a movie. In addition to Ibrahimovic's interest in film history and south Slav film, he has an active interest in Russian film and American independent film. He is a fan of the Coen Brother's films, in particular.

During his stay, he has developed a very positive impression of his students at UW. He has been pleased to see the close communication between American students and professors and the respect that they hold for each other.



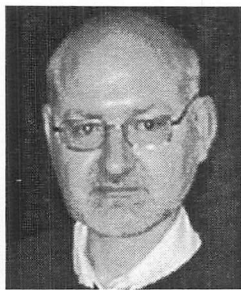
© NATALIA ILYASHENKO

NATALIA ILYASHENKO is a Russell Scholar from Veliky Novgorod, Russia where she is a student in the Department of Pedagogy at Novgorod State University. She came to UW to do research on the "academic audit as one of the effective means of quality improvement of the educational process at higher educational

institutions." She is interested in quality assurance and education evaluation methods employed by US institutions. Back in Russia, she will be defending her thesis and working on creating well developed methods of quality assurance for use in higher education.

Ilyashenko holds the position of Head of the Informational and Analytical Office at Novgorod State University, where she works on planning and managing changes in education and training administration. She also serves as Senior Lecturer in the Quality Management Department of the Northern Affiliation of Russian State University of Innovative Technologies and Entrepreneurship. She has 8 publications on quality assurance in higher education and has given 4 presentations at international seminars.

Ilyashenko has enjoyed the chance to do some sightseeing in Seattle as well as taking advantage of the academic opportunities at UW. She would like to do some additional travel while in the US and hopefully to get the chance to meet the author of a text she uses in Russia.



PIOTR LEWINSKI, another Fulbright Fellow, brings to UW an expertise in Polish culture and language. He taught “Poland at the Turn of the 20th and 21st Centuries” during the winter quarter and in the spring he is offering “Polish Literature in English.” Lewinski has a strong background in teaching Polish language and culture, including

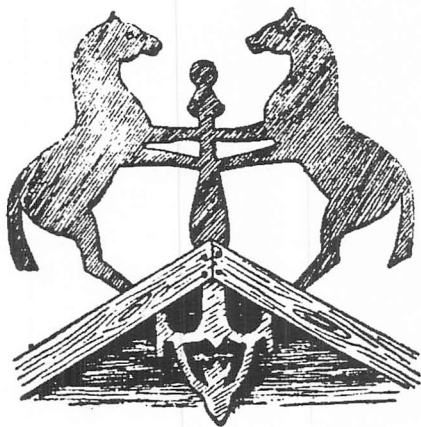
extensive experience teaching Polish as a second language. He is also highly interested in persuasion and rhetoric and their pragmatic use.

Lewinski has served as a teacher and lecturer for a number of institutions including the Department of Applied Linguistics at the University of Wroclaw, the School of Polish Language and Culture for Foreigners, DePaul University in Chicago and Università degli Studi di Napoli “L’Orientale” in Naples. In addition to Polish Language and Culture, he has given lectures

in Historical Grammar, Communication, Lexicology and Old Church Slavonic. In 1990, Lewinski helped start the School of Polish Language and Culture for Foreigners and watched its enrollment grow from 18 summer students to currently about 300 per semester and summer. During the four years he taught in Naples, he wrote a Polish textbook for Italian speakers, replacing the one in use that dated to the 1950s. Lewinski has also written a textbook for intermediate Polish students entitled *Oto polska mowa (Here is the Polish Tongue)* and *Retoryka reklamy (Rhetoric of Advertising)*.

Between the year Lewinski spent teaching in Chicago and his extensive experience with Americans learning Polish, he is fairly familiar with American culture. He is, however, interested in learning more about the culture of the northwest US as a region and gaining a better understanding of people in general. Before returning home, he hopes to make a trip to Arizona to see the Grand Canyon and witness a kind of natural beauty that does not exist in Europe. ♦

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SESSION 2 (10:45am–12:15pm)

- Civil Society and Politics in Central Asia
- Adaptation and Redefinition in National Cultures

LUNCH & PLENARY (12:15–1:45pm)

- From the Cold War to Post-Communism: Sixty Years of REECAS (1947-2007)

SESSION 3 (2:30–3:30pm)

- Issues of Gender in Literature and Media
- Russia in Transition

SESSION 4 (3:45–5:15pm)

- Russia's Cultural relationship with the West
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UPCOMING ELLISON CENTER EVENTS

APRIL 2: Jackson School Ambassador Lecture Series

H.E. Oleh Shamshur – Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Ukraine to the United States. Parrington Hall Commons, 5:30 pm.

APRIL 13: Jackson School Ambassador Lecture Series

H.E. Abdulaziz Kamilov Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the United States. Details TBA.

APRIL 14: 13th Annual REECAS NW Conference at UW-Seattle

“From the Cold War to Post-Communism: Sixty Years of REECAS (1947-2007).” 9 am–5:15 pm. For more information, visit <http://jsis.washington.edu/ellison/reecasnw.shtml> or to register for a lunch call 206-543-4852 or e-mail reecas@u.washington.edu. A reception will follow.

APRIL 15: Comparative Religion Conference

“Issues of Comparative Religious Studies in Central Asia.” Communications 202 (Simpson Center for the Humanities), 9 am–5 pm. Contact info: Roxanne Brame, rbrame@u.washington.edu, 206-616-5616.

APRIL 20: Ellison Center Lecture Series

“The Public Chamber and Civil Society in Russia.” Dr. Alfred Evans, Political Science, California State University Fresno. Thomson Hall, Room 317, 1 pm.

APRIL 24: Jackson School Ambassador Lecture Series

H.E. Janusz Reiter Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary

of the Republic of Poland to the United States of America. Location TBA, 2 pm.

APRIL 26: REECAS Career Series

“What a Masters in International Studies Can Do for You: Alumni Experiences in the Real World.” Laura Lockhart, MAIS, will discuss her experiences in Kazakhstan. Thomson Hall, Room 317, 12 pm.

APRIL 28: Washington Weekend-JSIS Lecture Series

“US-Russian Relations after the Bush-Putin Era.” Dr. Stephen E. Hanson, Boeing International Professor, Political Science. Thomson Hall, Room 101, 10 am.

MAY 7: The Donald Treadgold Memorial Lecture

“The Reinvention of Russian Imperialism: Russia’s Emerging Reputation as Economic Empire.” Dr. Mark R. Beissinger, Professor of Politics, Princeton University. Parrington Hall Forum, Room 308, 3:30 pm. A reception will follow.

MAY 8: 5th International Classroom Workshop

“Russia and the Middle East: A Look at the Arab-Israeli Conflict and Russia Under Putin.” Whitworth University, Spokane. 4–7 pm. See Ellison Center website for more information.

MAY 12: 19th Annual Poppe Symposium

“Inner/Central Asian Studies.” Denny Hall 215 and 215A, 8:30–6 pm. For more information, contact Professor Cirtautas, icirt@u.washington.edu.



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