REECAS Newsletter

Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies Center
Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington

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Russian Schools: The Search for New Models

by Steven Kerr

In the three years since its collapse, much has happened in the former Soviet Union to encourage more democratic approaches in schooling, to attract (rather than coerce) pupils to learn, to involve parents more actively in the life of schools, and most importantly, to encourage alternatives and diversity within the previously monolithic Soviet system of education.

The collapse of the Soviet Union came much faster and with less commotion than anyone would have suspected at the time. New texts and materials began to appear, some independently, some with the aid of groups like the Soros Foundation. Private schools opened, and some public schools refashioned themselves as "lycees" or "gymnasia." Educational policy, formerly monolithic and centrally controlled, increasingly devolved to the level of oblasts and individual cities. Minority groups pushed to have their own histories and cultures reflected in the curriculum. And yet with all this new variety, many things seemed to remain the same: relatively few teachers actually changed the ways that they taught.

In an increasingly moribund economy, school directors fretted over mundane matters of how to obtain supplies (never an easy matter for Russian schools). Parents continued to complain about the way in which the system maltreated their children, but seemed incapable of launching serious protests. The new materials, exciting though they were, seemed to come out of the same academic "think tanks," research institutes, and universities that had always produced curricular guides under the Soviet model.

Even some of the reformers themselves spoke of the need to restrain more radical approaches to restructuring school life, given the chaos in other parts of the Russians' world. As one said, "We must create pedagogical islands, safely guarded from the troubles of the outside world; they must be a place of refuge for our children in these times when so much else in their lives is coming apart."

What is the extent of real change in Russian schools? Are the tendencies hopeful, or should we be concerned by the lack of fundamental change? These are tough questions. Let me offer a few reflections based on two trips to Russia in the autumn of 1993. My travels took me to Moscow and its outskirts, and also to the cities of Tomsk, Krasnoiarsk, Nizhnii Novgorod, and Ekaterinburg. I visited private schools, experimental state schools, and state schools just starting to make serious efforts at change.

(Continued on page 3)

Inside This Issue

REECAS Curriculum Development Awards

The REECAS Center announces the availability of three Curriculum Development Awards, for K-12 teachers, of $500.00 each, funded by the Center's Department of Education Title VI grant. The awards are for the development of instructional units on any topic relevant to Russia, Eastern Europe, or Central Asia. Instructional units can be targeted for any K-12 grade level. Finished units will contain complete lesson plans and a list of materials, which will be added to to the REECAS outreach collection. Applications will be judged on coherency, imagination, and appropriateness for the targeted grade level. Award recipients will be encouraged to present a synopsis of the unit at the annual REECAS conference on May 6, 1995. A primary goal of the awards is to foster interaction between K-12 teachers, the REECAS Center, and UW students and faculty, in order to develop a local instructional community concerned with the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

To apply, submit one copy of each of the following documents:

- a two-four page statement of purpose describing the proposed unit: what topic(s), materials, and activities will be involved; how the unit will enhance and

(Continued on page 6)

WORKSHOP ON CENTRAL ASIA FOR TEACHERS COMING IN FEB. SEE PAGE 10

Polish Film Festival in Seattle? No Joke!

by Dobek Pater

This autumn saw the Third Annual Polish Film Festival at the Seattle Art Museum. Begun in 1992 and organized by Dr. Michal Friedrich of the Seattle-Gdynia Sister City Organization, the festival has steadily expanded and gained new audiences from year to year.

The repertoire usually contains recent Polish film productions (including films from the mid and late 1980s) on an array of topics, ranging from the decadence of the rich and the contrast between town and country in interwar Poland, to the period of martial law in the early 1980s and the current global problems afflicting Poland (such as AIDS). This year's festival also featured two Polish classics, "Colonel Wolodyjowski" and "The Deluge," that are based on part of a trilogy written by the Novel prize winner Henryk Sienkiewicz at the end of the 19th century.

Both movies address a turbulent period of Polish history, when the country was perpetually flooded by invading foreign armies that aimed at taking advantage of internal political chaos in the country. (A phenomenon that seems to reappear in a continuous streak throughout Polish history.) "The Deluge" treats the Swedish invasion in mid-seventeenth century, while "Colonel Wolodyjowski" focuses on the Turkish and Tartar invasion of the late seventeenth century. Both movies contain the quintessential soldier-adventurer, who bravely staves off the enemy, defending Polish sovereignty and Christianity. Though both are loyal to the king and devoted patriots, the main characters differ drastically in their private life. Colonel Wolodyjowski is a quiet sword-master of rather small stature and blissful nature. He is constantly in love with women who elude him, but finds consolation in friends and service to the crown. Colonel Kmicic of "The Deluge", on the other hand, is a rogue soldier (practically a partisan), who relishes confronting overwhelming enemy forces and using less-than-chivalrous tactics to overcome them. He is brave, cunning, and dashing in his rough manners, befitting more the battlefield than the court room. He is willing to take any risk to save the country and win the hand of the woman he managed to estrange at the beginning of the film. In the end, Kmicic succeeds in regaining the king's grace as well as his lovely bride, while Wolodyjowski blows himself up in a fortress, preferring death to surrender. Beyond the cruelty of battle, the colorful life of court, countryside, folklore,

and customs is also displayed, giving the public a fairly accurate and entertaining picture of life in Eastern Europe three hundred years ago.

Obviously, the two films portray the type of Pole who was not only an ideal, but also in high demand, when one reflects on the time at which the original texts were written. Until the end of World War I, Poland did not exist as an independent state, having remained divided between its three mighty neighbors for 123 years. At the close of the 19th century, the strong figure of a romantic and destitute patriot would have acted as a powerful incentive for young Poles to yet again take up arms against the oppressor and regain their freedom.

A film from a different walk of life, but also connected to another great tragedy - World War II and the subsequent onset of Communism in Eastern Europe - was "Suspended." It is the story of a former Home Army soldier, taking place at the time of the Stalinist terror in the 1950s. After escaping the communist authorities, he hides for four years in the cellar of his girlfriend's house. Every day is a struggle to retain his sanity and vestiges of humanity. His precarious situation is compounded by the birth of a daughter, who cannot meet her father. When the ex-soldier finally decides to end his self-induced imprisonment, he learns from the police that Stalin has died and political prisoners are being released through amnesty. What is even more amazing, is that the film is based on the true story of a person who spent five years hiding in a cellar.

This tale epitomizes the experiences of an entire generation of people in post-war Poland. When it was first filmed in 1983, the director (Wlademar Krzystek) was prevented by censorship from screening it in the cinemas. It finally saw the light of day three years later.

It is perfectly safe to conclude that not all Polish films are morbid and convoluted psychological reflections on the director's youth or maybe some other obscure aspects of Polish daily reality. The festival always proves to be an entertaining and educational affair. Scores of people already await with anticipation the Fourth Annual Polish Film Festival, to which all readers are cordially invited.

The writer was born in southwest Poland in 1969. At the age of thirteen he emigrated with his family to the United States, due to his father's political, anti-communist activism. After spending two years in America and a further two years in South Africa, he returned to the Northwest in order to launch his career as an "eternal student." The writer is presently in his second year of graduate studies at the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies (East European Region) at the University of Washington.

Russian Schools: The Search for New Models

(Continued from page 1)

Tomsk, a formerly closed scientific center in eastern Siberia, is the home of the private "Eureka - Development" school. The director, Tatiana Kovaleva, has created an unusual "confederation," combining a core school with a smaller "School of Tolstoy" that covers grades 1-3 and uses the teachings of Russian author Lev Tolstoy as its credo, as well as two kindergartens, one working on Montessori principles, the other using a Waldorf approach. Several things were interesting to me as I visited here: the relaxed feeling among the pupils, more typical of an American school or one in Western Europe than Russia; the creativity of the teachers who worked here, their interest in finding ways to make even tough subjects (math, logic) fascinating for their charges; and the dedication of the teaching staff in the face of the usual shortages and lack of money (I saw the Montessori teachers devoting their Saturday afternoon to making copies of the classic Montessori teaching materials out of wood and metal, using a Western catalog as a model).

In Krasnoiarsk, I visited the "Universe" School (School No. 106), headed by Isak Frumin. The school is a large state financed school, but it also has the aura of a semi-private school. Rather than seeing themselves as an elite, however, the students here somewhat jokingly refer to themselves as oddballs among their peers. One said to me, "A comment I often hear from my friends who are going to other schools is 'Why are your parents sending you to that crazy school?'" Nonetheless, there's real excitement here: several alternative curricula offer pupils the chance to approach their work in different ways -- for example, through Bibler's "Dialogue of Cultures" model, or through Davydov's "Developmental Teaching," based on the ideas of the famous Russian psychologist from the 1930s, L. S. Vygotsky.

One lesson I observed in this school particularly caught my attention, and its substance warrants our attention. I was in a biology class for sixth grade students taught by Mikhail Gribachev, a young teacher just a year or so out of the pedagogical institute. He was conducting a lesson on cell division, and each pair of pupils shared a microscope and a slice that he had given them. "Observe what is there," he said, "and then draw a picture of it. After you do that, I want you to describe it in writing." The kids worked intently, some quietly discussing what they saw. Later, Gribachev added, "Say why you think the black part is growing, and what you think is happening in the cells along the edge." As he moved around the room, he stopped and worked with one pair of boys who had special questions. The teacher became excited, seeming to sense that they were on the verge of an important insight. "Look there," he said, "and notice that ..." And then he caught himself, as if realizing that he was about to subvert his own plan; "just describe carefully what you see there," he concluded. It was one of the most powerful lessons I have ever observed anywhere, in Russia or in other developed countries. This was a teacher genuinely interested in fostering scientific insight in his pupils, and one who was able to do so. He realized that real scientists do not have mentors standing over their shoulders telling them what to look for and how to describe it.

"This was a teacher genuinely interested in fostering scientific insight in his pupils, and one who was able to do so..."

Ekaterinburg was a different kind of experience. There, in a grimy industrial city, one part of the city (the Ordzhonikidze region), had decided to substantively change the ways in which teachers and schools would do their work. Several schools were discussing new ways in which they might recast their curricula to make them more meaningful. Nonetheless, the move toward change was not unanimous: some schools still thought they were doing as wonderful a job as they had been doing for years, as indeed they probably are. School No. 22 was particularly impressive; it was what I have come to think of as a "family school," an institution that is run by the children and grandchildren (almost all of them women) of those who taught and worked there in past years. It is a school with traditions, with classical ways of doing things, and with considerable pride in its past. I was shown an album that dated from the school's first days in the 1930s. The album showed those who had built the building, as well as the first teachers and classes. The book, with its old photos and programs from graduation ceremonies, would have been merely a keepsake at a school in this country, but in Ekaterinburg it bore special witness to the county's troubled past. Long hidden in the city archives, its pages were riddled with holes -- places where the faces of "enemies of the people" had been crudely cut out during the terror of the late 1930s.

In the face of such history, teachers may rightly ask twice before jumping into educational reform efforts. Even the most reform-minded of the Ekaterinburg teachers seemed hesitant. "I listen to all these ideas as a committed but traditional teacher," said one after a meeting to discuss the reform proposals, "and I ask myself, 'Will I really be able and willing to join in the work of these new groups? Will I be able to use these opportunities to think about my work?'" She wasn't sure, and neither were many of her colleagues.

I came back from my trips with some optimism and some doubts. As I

(Continued on page 4)

Russian Schools: The Search for New Models (cont. from page 3)

think about efforts to reform and diversify education in the United States, I am most impressed by the changes that individual schools or school districts manage to make in how they conduct their affairs. What makes such efforts click, I am convinced, is the existence of networks and of associations, both formal and informal that allow teachers and other educators to make contact with their peers, to find out what is happening elsewhere, and to use those new models as bases for their own attempts to rethink their work. Some of this professional infrastructure is technical -- newsletters, faxes, electronic mail, good telephone and postal services, easy access to up-to date printing equipment and computers for desktop publishing. However, its most important parts are social -- the groups themselves, the people that want and need to get together because they share common interests and common problems; the professional associations on local, state or national levels that encourage and facilitate the exchange of information through seemingly endless journals, magazines, newsletters, conferences, and special meetings; and the foundations and their grant competitions, as well as the federal and state competitions for "seed money" for various new projects.

In the Russian case, this infrastructure is almost wholly lacking. Where it exists at all, its value has been devalued and perverted by decades of service to the Soviet state. The people connected with it, in institutes, publications, unions, and so on, are suspect, and in many cases are currently using their positions to provide for their own well-being. What are Russians to do?

There are some small signs of change. A few new publications have appeared, for private schools, for teachers and for school directors . A few new associations have appeared. There are some signs of change in the once vilified Russian Academy of Education, and the Ministry of Education continues to provide an impetus for reform. Nonetheless, the need for a deeper and more developed infrastructure is clear. If diversity is to flourish, there must be more ways for teachers to get in contact with each other, more avenues for the exchange of professional information, and more chances for an ordinary teacher to run across a new or stimulating thought in the course of daily work.

This is perhaps the largest challenge for Americans willing and able to support joint efforts in Russia today, for it is an arena in which we ourselves have considerable experience. Encouraging this sort of development will not come easily, for most of what we think we know how to do is technical -- send more computers! Help them set up desktop publishing stations! But the key is not in the technical aspects of these groups, it is in the social fabric that we have built up over the years, and which is to us almost invisible. It is therefore an urgent learning task for ourselves as we seek to work with those in Russia, for we must come to see and understand our own activities better as a prerequisite for our activities abroad. If we can do this, both sides will benefit, and we may see some interesting developments in education as a result.

The author has been a Professor of Education at UW since 1985, and has worked with reformers in Russian education since 1988. He was involved with the IREX project on Russian Teachers in 1993, and has been working as a consultant for the World Bank Russian Education Project since 1993. He is currently working on a book on the life and work of V.F. Matveev, editor of Uchitel'skaia gazeta during perestroika.

Some e-mail addresses for Russian educators who would be interested in hearing from American educators -

Alexander Adamsky :
<presentation@glas.apc.org>
Isak D. Frumin :
<frumin@sc106.krasnoyarsk.su>
Alexander Uvarov :
<auvarov@glas.apc.org>
(Computers and new technologies)
Aleksei Semevov :
<int@globlab.msk.su>
(Computers and new technologies)

Professor Michael Quinn

Professor Michael Quinn, head of the University of Washington Drama Department's doctorate program, died on August 27 at the age of 36 from complications of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. Mr. Quinn's profound interest in the works of Czech president and playwright Vaclav Havel had led him to make many research trips to Prague and Central Europe. He was writing a book entitled "Vaclav Havel and the Drama of Identity," and is also the author of the forthcoming book, *The Semiotic Stage: Prague School Theater Theory*. In the summer of 1993, Professor Quinn taught a joint drama and Russian/ East European Studies course in Slavic and East European Theater and Drama. Mr. Quinn had been at the University of Washington since 1989, and, in addition to teaching, served as editor of Theatre Survey, was on the editorial board of Modern Language Quarterly, directed UW student productions, and was a literary adviser to the Group Theatre. In his relatively short tenure at UW, Professor Quinn added new dimension to the REECAS program, in addition to his many contributions to the drama department and the university as a whole.

Poles Ahead of Irish in U.S. Visa Lottery

The Immigration Act of 1990 established a temporary program for Fiscal Years 1992-4 under which 40,000 potential visas would made available to natives of a specific list of countries. It was meant to compensate for the relatively large number of immigrants from Asia, Africa, and South America to the neglect of Europe in particular. The theory was that the vast major of immigrants came from a small number of countries, such as Mexico, China, and India. This program was to encourage immigration from countries from which there has been relatively low numbers of immigrants in recent years. The initial list of 35 countries included most of Europe plus several other countries such as Argentina, Indonesia, and Japan. Part of the wording of the act states that 40% of 40,000 available visas had to go to "natives of the country with the highest usage of the NP-5 [non-preference visa category] visa number." Though the actual country was not stated, this was known to be Ireland. Thus, informally, the program became known as the "Irish Lottery."

Through this program, natives from the 35 countries could send in a simple application. Winners were selected at random in the style of a lottery. Those selected would then be eligible to obtain a visa and ultimately a green card, barring any standard disqualifications.
Applicants could send in as many applications as they wanted. In the first year of the program, over seventeen million applications were received. Out of these, 50,000 were selected and notified. The first 40,000 to submit the proper paperwork to the relevant embassy or consulate would be eligible for the visas.

When the program was finally implemented, it seemed obvious that the Irish would receive the largest number of visas under this program, and, in the first year, 20,000 of the 50,000 selected were Irish. The country with the next highest number of winners was Poland, with 12,056. In comparison, the figures for the other eligible Eastern European countries were: Czechoslovakia 261, Estonia 15, Latvia 20, Lithuania 58, Hungary 240. In 1992 and 1993, Poles actually outnumbered the Irish despite the heavy weighing of the lottery in favor of applicants from Ireland. In each of these years, Poles accounted for just over 20,000 of selected applicants, while the Irish obtained slightly more than their minimum of 16,000. Apparently, the Poles were the most organized and best informed about this program and entries from Poles vastly outnumbered those from any other country.

Starting in 1994, the program became permanent, and is now called the Diversity Immigrant Program. Under this new program, there is no clause which favors the Irish. The number of visas per region is now according to a formula which allows for changing allocations depending on changes in immigration patterns. The number of available visas is now capped at 7% of the total per country. Therefore, the Poles, and the Irish, will no longer receive a windfall of visas. The program is now run for the Department of State by a private contractor in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

Henry Szymonik, a REECAS M.A. candidate and a first generation Polish-American, worked for two and a half years at the Transitional Immigrant Visa Processing Center, in Washington, D.C..

Lithuanian Ambassador Visits UW

On Monday, October 24, 1994, Dr. Alfonsas Eidintas, the Lithuanian ambassador to the United States, came to the University of Washington as a guest of the Jackson School of International Studies. A Lithuanian historian, Dr. Eidintas is an expert on both the history of Lithuanian emigration to the United States and the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact that resulted in Lithuania's forced incorporation into the USSR. Hence, Dr. Eidintas was a strong supporter of the Lithuanian independence movement prior to Lithuania's declaration of independence in March 1990. In fact, Eidintas was one of the authors of the declaration of purpose that the Lithuanian delegation brought to Moscow in March 1990 prior to official Lithuanian independence. Dr. Eidintas first met with interested students for a question and answer session in Parrington Hall and later gave a speech entitled "The Problems of Reintegrating Lithuania into Western Europe."

At the question and answer session, Dr. Eidintas answered questions primarily about the following issues: American investment in Lithuania, the recent Polish-Lithuanian Friendship Treaty, and Russian military transport through Lithuania to Kaliningrad. Eidintas said that he was both surprised and disappointed at the limited amount of American investment in Lithuania. He stated that, unfortunately, American businesses seem to be more interested in other parts of Eastern Europe. Eidintas believes that the recent Friendship Treaty between Poland and Lithuania marks an important milestone between these two countries. Finally, Eidintas sees the issue of Russian military transport to and from Kaliningrad through Lithuania as the biggest

(Continued on page 6)

Marshall Goldman on Russian Economic Reform

Almost three years have passed since the break-up of the Soviet Union, and debate continues on the success of economic reforms and the shape that those reforms should take. In the September/October issue of "Foreign Affairs" magazine, Anders Aslund writes on "Russia's Success Story." An optimist who considers the worst to be over, Aslund describes how, despite organized crime and inflation, Russia has created a market economy.

On October 17, Marshall Goldman, Professor of Economics at Wellesley College and associate director of the Russian Research Center at Harvard University, spoke at UW on his "Observations on Russian Economic Reform and Transition." A pessimist in comparison to Aslund, Professor Goldman described the implementation of "shock therapy" in Russia, under the direction of Yegor Gaidar, Minister of Finance and eventually Acting Prime Minister of the Russian Federation. "Shock therapy," first used successfully in Poland, includes mass price liberalization, combined with monetary and fiscal stabilization.

According to Goldman, Gaidar and his Western advisors ignored several major differences between Poland and Russia. First, Russia lacked the infrastructure to support market institutions, having survived more than seventy years of communism, compared to Poland's forty. Secondly, Gaidar and his colleagues failed to consider the Russian "mental attitude." Forced collectivization, followed by the discouragement of private activity, resulted in a public with little inclination towards, as well as no experience with, free market activity.

As a result of these miscalculations, "shock therapy" as implemented in Russia led to much greater price increases than had occurred in Poland, without the corresponding expansion of supply by monopoly enterprises. Inflation grew out of control, the budget deficit soared, and the central bank provided large amounts of credit to failing enterprises. In addition, enterprises stopped paying bills and wages. Mr. Goldman believes that recent inflation rates (officially about 5% per month) fail to take into account about 120 trillion rubles in unpaid bills, and 4 trillion rubles in unpaid wages. Other problems he points to are the massive capital flight and continuously rising unemployment. In his opinion, however, the worst problem is organized crime, which may control as much as 70 to 80 percent of all private business and banking activity.

Professor Goldman gave some possible alternatives to "shock therapy." He favored the gradualist approach - introduction of private enterprise, breaking up producer monopolies and collectives, and establishing the institutional framework of a market economy, before liberalizing prices and opening up the market. Goldman did comment, though, that there would have been problems no matter what reforms had been implemented.

In his recently published book, *Lost Opportunity: Why Economic Reforms in Russia Have Not Worked* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company), Goldman first summarizes the political history of Russia from the mid-eighties onward. He follows this with a more detailed discussion of the economic reforms, and his comments on what went wrong. He then compares economic reform processes in post-war Germany and Japan, as well as more recently in Hungary and China. He concludes with a chapter linking politics and culture to the problems of reform. Mr. Goldman's political and economic analysis is straightforward, and is accompanied by anecdotal digressions drawn from his extensive experience with the country and his knowledge of the Russian people. This combination provides a very accessible political and economic history of the Gorbachev and Yeltsin eras, as well as a departure point for discussion on the direction in which Russia is currently headed.

by Jane Desnoyers, an M.A. candidate in Russian, East European, and Central Asian Studies at UW.

Lithuanian Ambassador

(Continued from page 5)
national security concern facing the Lithuanian government at this time.

At his lecture later, Dr. Eidintas spoke more on these issues, as well as cooperation between the three Baltic countries and Lithuania's relationship with the West. He sees Lithuania as both an "integral part" of the Western world, and as a bridge between the West and the East. Lithuania's ultimate goal is membership in the European Union and in NATO.

by Letty Coffin, an M.A candidate in Russian, East European, and Central Asian Studies at UW.

Curriculum Awards *(Continued from page 1)*
relate to existing school curricula; and what library and other resources will be used in developing the unit. Applicants are encouraged to consult UW resources, such as the REECAS outreach materials, library collections, and faculty. Successful candidates will name specific types of resources they plan to use.

- a one-page resume describing your professional and academic experience.

- a list of three references, or three letters of recommendation.

The application deadline is December 15, 1994. Applicants will be notified of our decision by January 15, 1995. Instructional units will be completed by May 1, 1995. For more information, contact Alysha Webb, at the REECAS Center (see page 11).

Book Reviews

Gale Stokes, *The Walls Came Tumbling Down* (Oxford University Press, 1993).

"Two excesses: to exclude reason, to admit nothing but reason." Gale Stokes cites this statement from the *Pensees* of Blaise Pascal as an epigram for his interpretation of the triumphs and horrors of twentieth century European history. First the antirational (Nazism and fascism in 1945), and then the hyperrational (Communism in 1989), lost by default to the pluralist systems of political and economic organization characterized by parliamentary democracy and a free market economy. Stokes' new book, *The Walls Came Tumbling Down*, deals with the collapse of the hyperrational excess in those countries situated between the Soviet Union and the West. He examines the two decades leading up to the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe, describes the revolutionary events of 1989, and reports on the challenges the new regimes face as they try to reconstruct their political and economic systems and deal with a plethora of problems left over from the Communist period.

Beginning with 1968, the year that most East Europeans came to realize the futility of reforming the Communist system from within, Stokes surveys in comprehensive fashion the political, economic, social, cultural, and spiritual forces and trends that helped undermine the East European regimes. The author also appreciates the significance of the thoughts and actions of key individuals at key points in time on the course of events. Well aware of the complexity of the process he is describing, Stokes avoids simple generalizations and presents each country as a unique situation.

In an engaging and thoughtful narrative, the reader learns, for example, that the region in East Germany where West German television could not be picked up was known as "the valley of the clueless," that Romanian dictator Nicholae Ceausescu had plans to build a structure with a dome three times the size of St. Peter's, and that most of the journalists working in the Solidarity underground in Poland in the 1980s were women. The book provides an excellent discussion of the impact of Gorbachev on Eastern Europe in the 1980s, though it could have said more about the role played by the West in undermining Communism. Stokes, while appreciative of the magnitude of Communist economic failures as a key factor in the system's loss of legitimacy, makes the significant point that the regime's inability to satisfy the desire for human dignity on the part of the population was crucial.

"the region in East Germany where West German television could not be picked up was known as 'the valley of the clueless'..."

Stokes' book is appropriate for college and advanced high school courses on contemporary Eastern European history and politics. As a reference work, it provides educators with a chronological, country-by-country survey of the past 25 years, footnote citations of the major primary and secondary sources on Eastern Europe available in English, and a wealth of anecdotes and examples that can be used to spice up lectures.

With respect to Eastern Europe's future, Stokes is an optimist (ex-Yugoslavia excluded). He warns Westerners not to expect too much, too quickly from the new regimes in Eastern Europe—it took some Western countries centuries to work the bugs out of their political systems. He also points out that pluralist systems do not promise a definitive solution to society's problems, but rather a process through which such problems can be addressed. It may be a long and arduous journey, with some back-sliding, but in Stokes' view, the East European countries will ultimately develop their own variations of the pluralistic systems that have shown themselves superior to that miserable alternative that perished in the late twentieth century.

by James Felak, Assistant Professor of History at the University of Washington.

Robert V. Daniels, *The End of the Communist Revolution* (Routledge, 1993).

The End of the Communist Revolution, by Robert Daniels, Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Vermont, provides an excellent basic history of the Soviet Union while also providing a good launching point for discussions on many elements of 20th century history. His first five chapters chronologically review Soviet history backwards beginning with Gorbachev and stretching back to the Russian Revolution of 1917. By using this method he hopes to explain the central thesis of this book: "The collapse of Communism was not a sudden plunge into revolutionary disorder like 1917; it came through step-by-step cumulative change in the system, unwitting before 1985 and conscious after that date."

(Continued on page 8)

BOOK REVIEWS (continued from page 7)

(Continued from page 7)

Instead of constructing this step-by-step cumulative change, he deconstructs Soviet history in the first five chapters, beginning with Gorbachev's reforms, in order to explain the present in terms of the past. In other words, he follows the characteristics of the Soviet system from their consequences back to their development. While this approach allows Daniels to acknowledge his debt to hindsight, the backwards chronology does make it a little harder to understand what exactly the Soviets knew at the time in which they were making the decisions of which Daniels writes.

In the last three chapters, Daniels addresses the international aspect of Soviet history. Chapters 6 and 7 look at the Soviet foreign policy; Chapter 6 addresses the Soviet understanding of the world order while Chapter 7 addresses the Western world's understanding of the Cold War. Chapter 6, "The End of the Revolutionary Empire" begins with the East European break from the Soviet bloc and analyzes Gorbachev's reasons for allowing this to happen. From this analysis, Daniels traces backwards the formation of the Soviet bloc and the Soviet Union. Chapter 7, "The End of the Communist Menace," contends with the difficult legacies of the Cold War, and how and why the Cold War had come about. He notes that with hindsight it has become clear that the Western World overestimated the threat posed by the Soviet Union and he explains how ideological distrust and a lack of communication paved the way for the nuclear buildup and many of the hostilities of the modern world. On the flip side, Daniels also demonstrates how the expense of the nuclear arms race, and the global ideological battles played a critical role in the demise of the Soviet Union. With this final chapter, the history of the Soviet Union comes full circle.

While explaining the history of Communism in the 20th century, Daniels provides a useful introduction to the main political questions of the 20th century in a way which could be easily discussed in class. He addresses the concepts of totalitarianism, revolution, empire and nation-building, and the foundations of democracy. He also notes the major developments of the modern world, including rapid industrialization, the increasing interdependence of the world economy, the development of national consciousness, and the militarization of many societies. While he does not provide lengthy theoretical backgrounds to these issues, his comments are sufficient for discussion. In fact, he ends his book with a discussion of the possibilities of future political developments by addressing the problems inherent in the world's identification of the Soviet system as the primary alternative to Western democracies. Implicitly throughout the book, it is through this lens that he views the future of Russia and the challenges that Yeltsin and his followers face in developing a new political system. Noticing that Western democracies are increasingly encompassing socialist elements, Daniels determines that socialism may be the best way to reconcile "the principles of democracy and the realities of the modern economy." As commented upon throughout the book, it is precisely these principles that the Russians and other Soviet inheritors are struggling to reconcile today.

"Daniels provides a useful introduction to the main political questions of the 20th century..."

by Susan N. Smith, a first year M.A. candidate in Russian, East European, and Central Asian Studies at UW.

Lois Fisher, *Survival in Russia: Chaos and Hope in Everyday Life* (Westview Press, 1993).

The aptly titled *Survival in Russia: Chaos and Hope in Everyday Life*, by Lois Fisher, provides insight into the hope and heartache of Soviet citizens on the eve of the empire's dissolution. Having lived several decades in Moscow, Fisher shared many candid discussions over tea with Soviet friends. This book chronicles those most recent intimate exchanges and in so doing bares the heart of the Soviet people at a pivotal moment in their lives.

Each chapter introduces us to an individual (whose photograph is included) faced with an uncertain future. We soon come to know sixteen-year-old Kiril, who wears a Batman t-shirt and Nikes, and is saving to buy a car. His candid announcement that he will someday leave Russia, because it is impossible to live honestly, belies his true age. On a trip to the countryside, we meet Anna, an eighty-two year old grandmother who has lived in the village all her life and recalls the "introduction of the *kolkhozes*, which destroyed our agriculture and drove the farmers from the land." She proudly displays her garden of strawberries, tomatoes, cucumbers, and cabbage, and longs for the day when a road will be built to Moscow, enabling her to transport the fruits of her labor. And then there is Anatoly, a staunch Communist Party member, who describes his disillusionment with the Party after the invasion of Afghanistan. As restrictions on the press are lightened, Anatoly realizes the enormity of lies propagated by his government. As a

(Continued on page 9)

BOOK REVIEWS (Continued from page 8)
result, in 1990 he gives up his Party membership and becomes editor-in-chief of a highly political independent newspaper.

Though at times the reality of Soviet life can be harsh and shocking for younger readers, *Survival in Russia* provides a forum for discussing the impact of *perestroika*, *glasnost'*, and the demise of of the Soviet Union on real people. High school social studies classes will find each chapter filled with issues that every country in transition confronts. The oral-history-type format allows each chapter to be read independent of the next,thus allowing flexibility in the classroom.

Though largely anecdotal, *Survival in Russia* brings to life the daily newspaper articles in which we read about, for example, the falling standard of living in Russia. Fisher and her friends' conversations enable us to better understand the obstacles and opportunities every person confronts as they wake up each day in the former Soviet Union.

by Deborah Espinosa, an M.A. candidate in Russian, East European & Central Asian Studies at UW.

The Donald W. Treadgold Papers

In Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies

The Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies is proud to announce this new series of occasional papers in the field of Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies. The series honors Professor Donald W. Treadgold, who retired in 1993 after more than forty years of service to the University of Washington and leadership in the development of Slavic studies in the United States. We expect that the range of materials that will appear in the *Papers* will serve to remind readers of the extraordinary range of Professor Treadgold's own interests. The breadth and depth of the University's various programs in Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies is to a considerable degree the result of his effort.

Publication of *The Donald W. Treadgold Papers in Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies* has been undertaken to provide a forum for the rapid dissemination of current research on the regions indicated by the title. The series will include papers from symposia held at the University of Washington and monographs that may be too long for most journals but too short to appear in book form. The editors welcome submissions of manuscripts. All submissions should be sent in triplicate to the address below for peer review. Upon acceptance, resubmission on disk is requested. Those interested in assisting with the peer review process should contact Colleen F. Halley at (206) 440-7554 or at the address below.

The Donald W. Treadgold Papers
203 Thomson Hall, DR-05
Daniel Waugh, Program Chair
Jackson School of Int'l Studies
University of Washington
Seattle, WA 98195
Tel: (206) 543-4852
E-mail: dwaugh@u.washington.edu

The Treadgold Papers are currently looking for paper submissions on the following specific topics:

- The Conflict in the Caucasus
- Economic Development and Foreign Investment
- Organized Crime and Political Instability in the NIS
- Civil Society and Citizen Activism Since 1989
- Civil-Military Relations in Transition
- The Former Soviet States and Eastern Europe: Redefining International Relations
- Resource Management During Political and Economic Transition
- Political Party Formation in the Post-Soviet States.

New Materials at REECAS Outreach

Most of the books reviewed in this newsletter are available in the REECAS Center Outreach Collection. In addition, other new material continues to arrive.

New materials include: **A Brief History of Armenia**, new books from the "Then and Now" series on the Newly Independent States, and excellent new material from the Hungarian and Latvian embassies. This material covers economic, historical, demographic and political matters. **Christmas in Russia** has information on Russian Christmas traditions as well as classroom activities.

Additionally, the REECAS center has an expanded and updated collection of catalogs from various publishers carrying books, videos and software on Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia.

Any questions or suggestions? Please contact Alysha Webb,by e-mail, at: alywebb@u.washington.edu (More contact information on page 11.)

REECAS News &

NEW FACES

Marion Cook has replaced Karen Walton as part-time secretary in the REECAS office.

* * *

Dr. Kurt Engelmann has joined the REECAS Center as Assistant Director and Outreach Coordinator. Dr. Engelmann has an M.A. in international studies and a Ph.D. in geography from the University of Washington. His area of specialty is Central Asia, in particular resource and ecological issues. In addition to coordinating outreach programs for the REECAS Center, he is teaching a new course fall quarter on Internet research for Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies.

* * *

Michael Biggins is the new Assistant Librarian and acting Head of the Slavic and East European Collection for the University of Washington Libraries. He received a Ph.D. in Slavic languages and literatures from the University of Kansas, and an MLS from the University of Illinois/Champaign-Urbana. His language ability covers all Slavic and Germanic languages, as well as most Romance and some other European languages. He has published articles on library issues relating to the Slavic and East European area, and on contemporary Slovenian literature. Mr. Biggins is also an avid translator from Slovenian and Russian: both prose fiction and poetry. He was in the Balkans earlier this year on an IREX Project in Library and Information Sciences.

* * *

Central Asian Mosaic

Workshop on Bringing International Studies into the K-9 Curriculum

Saturday, February 11, 1995

The REECAS Center is joining the Middle East Studies Center in sponsoring a workshop on Central Asia for teachers in grades K-9. The program will include the following activities:

- keynote presentation by Dr. Ronald Wixman, Professor of Geography at the University of Oregon. Dr. Wixman is an expert on issues of ethnicity and identity in Central Asia, and he has worked with schools nationwide on enhancing social studies curricula in the classroom.
- live performances by dancers from Central Asia, and break-out sessions with University students from Central Asia.
- presentation on multimedia software for reference and classroom use.
- discussions with Richard Moulden, teacher, Chinook Middle School on literature and art activities on Central Asia.
- a film on life and legends in Central Asia.

The program will last from 9:00 am until 4:00 PM. The registration fee is$35.00, payable to WSCSS, and includes all materials and a lunch of authentic Central Asian dishes. To register, return this form with a check to the REECAS office (see page 11 for address).

MOSAIC REGISTRATION FORM

Name:_____

Daytime phone:_____ Home phone: _____

Address: _____

_____

School and District:_____

Job Title (Grade/Subject Taught):_____

Calendar of Events

November

Tuesday, November 29, 1994: Russian Folk Videos (in Russian of travels on Volga River), 7:30 p.m., Russian House, 2104 N.E. 45th St. (UW Department of Slavic Languages and Literature, 543-6848)

December

On December 2, the REECAS Center and North Seattle Community College will co-host a half-day workshop on teaching contemporary Russian politics at the North Seattle Community College campus. The workshop will feature Stephen Hanson, Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Washington, who will lecture on current events in Russia and their interpretation. Participants will discuss pedagogical issues associated with teaching Russian politics, and they will contribute to the development of a college-level, in-class activity involving article analysis and small-group discussion.

1995

February

On February 11, the Middle East and REECAS Centers will co-host a "Mosaic" workshop on Central Asia for teachers in grades K-9. The workshop will feature live performances and readings by Central Asian nationals as well as a discussion of educational resources for elementary and middle-school grade levels (For more information, see page 10).

Wednesday, February 15 : Shostakovich String Quartet, "UW World Series" 4th of 6 "International Chamber Music," 8 p.m., UW Meany Hall, $24. (UW Arts Ticket Office, 543-4880)

March

Thursday, March 9, 1995: The Terezin Project with The Hawthorne String Quartet, "UW World Series" 5th of 6 "International Chamber Music," 8 p.m., UW Meany Hall, $24. (UW Arts Ticket Office, 543-4880)

May

On May 5, the REECAS center will host a half-day symposium on environmental problems in the Baltic Sea region. Specialists from several European and American institutions will present papers on various ecological issues, such as transborder air pollution, nuclear and industrial effluents, and the effect of logging on water quality.

On May 6, the REECAS center will sponsor the first annual, all-day Regional REECAS Conference, which is intended to bring together REECAS-area scholars from around the Pacific Northwest. The conference will contain sessions on a wide variety of topics, with a special session devoted to pedagogical issues. We are currently accepting papers or proposals for session themes.

YUGOSLAVIAN COSTUME:

A Tribute to Blanche Payne

An exhibit of Yugoslavian costumes is currently being held in the University Libraries in conjunction with the Henry Art Gallery. This exhibit is a tribute to Blanche Payne, who was assistant Professor of Home Economics at the UW from 1927-1966. On June 15, 1966, she was appointed Professor Emeritus.

Professor Payne, a renowned costume scholar and author of *History of Costume*, traveled extensively in the 1930's throughout Eastern Europe. The exhibit emphasizes 19th and early 20th century costumes of the former Yugoslavia, including material samples, watercolors, maps, patterns, and photographs.

The beautifully ornamented costumes, showing the diversity of land and cultures that made up Yugoslavia, can be seen in the Allen Library Exhibition Balcony as well as in the Special Collections and Preservation Lobby, in the basement of the South Wing of the Allen Library, until December 31st.

REECAS Contact Information

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Jane Desnoyers, Newsletter
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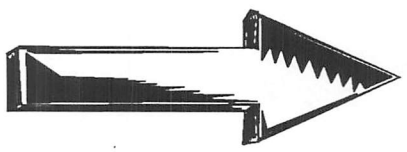

REECAS joins the World Wide Web

The Russian, East European, and Central Asian Studies Center at the University of Washington's Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies now has a home page on the World Wide Web. The menu consists of:

1. More Information on the REECAS program.
2. Upcoming events in the Pacific Northwest.
3. Fellowships, Grants, other funding opportunities for students
4. REECAS Center Office Resources
5. K-12 Resources and Projects
6. Internet Resources
7. REECAS Newsletter
8. REECAS working paper series
9. Faculty CVs
10. REECAS graduates' CVs/resumes
11. Treadgold Papers ordering information
12. Curriculum for REECAS Internet Class

This is a site under construction. It will be updated and changing periodically. If you see something that needs to be changed, or something that should be added or deleted, please send a note to koochay@u.washington.edu.

To visit the REECAS site, using Lynx:

⇒ at the UNIX prompt %, type: **lynx**

⇒ at the Lynx Home Page, type: **g**

⇒ at the URL prompt (at the bottom of the screen) type the URL below:

ftp://ftp.u.washington.edu/public/reecas/reecashm.html

This URL will be changing soon, but there will be a marker placed at the old site to take you to its new location.

REECAS Newsletter

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