REECAS NEWSLETTER

Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies Center

JACKSON SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON FALL 1999

Letter from the Director

I'd like to open the first REECAS Newsletter of the millennial year with a warm welcome to Jacob Kaltenbach, who joined us December 1 as Assistant Director and Outreach Coordinator. Kurt Engelmann, who has held this position since 1994, is concentrating this year on academic matters, teaching three courses for the program and pursuing his research and writing, including the editing of a volume containing the contributions to last November's very successful conference on "Agricultural Development in Central Asia: Between Russia and the Middle East," jointly sponsored by the REECAS and Middle East Centers. The volume will be published early in the new year by the University of Washington Press, which brought out a similar volume following the conference on the Arctic Environment held in 1997; our plan is to make this practice a habit. In this third year of the current National Resource Center grant, we will be jointly organizing another

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Central Asia After Eight Years of Independence

BY DANIEL C. WAUGH

The Timurid Museum, Tashkent

In 1991, I learned of the Moscow coup against Gorbachev on a morning walk in the streets of Osh (Kyrgyzstan) and arrived in Tashkent August 31, the eve of the formal declaration of Uzbekistan's independence. I flew home from Tashkent on August 31, 1999, leaving a capital where, apparently well before the beginning of the summer, preparations had been underway to celebrate the eighth anniversary. During those eight years, I have been fortunate to visit Central Asia several times lecturing on a faculty exchange, doing research in the National Library of Uzbekistan (granted, on a Russian History topic), and spending time in the mountains of Kyrgyzstan. Here are some anecdotal impressions from my most recent visit, over two months this summer, which may illustrate the tension between the Soviet past and the challenges of change at the end of the twentieth century.

In the eyes and lives of many individuals in Central Asia, independence has been at best a mixed blessing. Economically, the Central Asian republics under Soviet rule had been amongst the poorest; although as everywhere in post-Soviet space there are now the nouveaux riches, many ordinary citizens feel that they are worse off. I spent one evening in Tashkent answering questions about what my family's life in the U.S. is like and then finding myself being mildly harangued by my polite Uzbek interlocutors, who could not imagine how any household should need, much less be able to afford, two cars and feel squeezed on a University of Washington Associate Professor's salary. This family's income amounted to about one dollar a day. It seems, my Tashkent acquaintances noted somewhat bitterly, that President Karimov is more interested in erecting fancy government buildings than in improving the lives of ordinary citizens. And in fact there is ample evidence in the still largely run-down Soviet ambience of Tashkent that expensive new public buildings are a priority. This and the rather lavish expenditures on the independence day celebrations seems not dissimilar from old Soviet campaigns of encouraging

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conference with the Middle East Center, as well as the annual REECAS Regional Conference in April.

The REECAS Center's Central Eurasian Information Resource, an initiative designed to give faculty, students and the public access to many kinds of information on the region that are available only in non-traditional formats, has taken a leap forward with the award of a $300,000 grant from the Department of Education. Seed-money for the CEIR is included in the present three-year National Resource Center grant. The new grant, one of the first awarded under a new Title VI program with the cumbersome title "Technical Innovation and Cooperation for Foreign Information Access," has the head of the UW Libraries Slavic and East European Section, Michael Biggins, and the REECAS Director, as joint Principal Investigators, and brings The Evergreen State College and South Seattle Community College into a mini-consortium. The grant will provide for access to on-line newspapers and journals from the REECAS region, the digitization and presentation on the Internet of important statistical materials that would otherwise be available only to a handful of specialists, the building of a large collection of online images of the art, architecture, history, geography and culture of the region, and work with faculty at the three institutions to bring these newly available materials into the curriculum. As a related activity, we are digitizing the better-quality material from the REECAS Center's slide collection, which has long been a resource for outreach and instruction, and making these images available on the Internet. This will both solve the problem of the physical deterioration of the slides, and make access to the materials considerably easier for teachers in schools and colleges outside Seattle.

Where visiting speakers are concerned, this year's most noteworthy guests from the REECAS region are two former prime ministers of Russia, due to speak in a series of high-profile lectures on American foreign policy organized by Professor Herbert Ellison. Sergei Kiriyenko unfortunately had to cancel his talk in October, but efforts are being made to reschedule it, while Arkady Gaidar will be speaking on campus in January 2000.

A new feature of the REECAS Center newsletter, beginning with this issue, is regular updates on current affairs selected from the four regions into which our activities fall – four rather than three, since Baltic Studies at the University of Washington have reached the point of being a distinct curricular option in the program, and the new millennium may yet see the addition of a 'B' to the REECAS acronym. In this issue, Daniel Waugh covers Central Asia and Guntis Smidchens the Baltic States. Russia and Eastern Europe will be covered in the Winter and Spring, when we will be bringing you more news, reports, articles and announcements of our activities.

James West

James West is Director of the Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies Center, and Associate Professor at the University of Washington.

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EVENTS

American Policy in the New Century

A lecture series

Sponsored by the Jackson School of International Studies and the World Affairs Council
Information: 206/543-4842

January 18
Russia at the Crossroads: Building a New Russian Economy
Dr. Yegor Gaidar, Former Prime Minister of Russia. 7:30 pm, Kane Hall 130

February 3
US Policy in the New Century: US Policy and the Former Communist World
Jack F. Matlock, Former United States Ambassador to Czechoslovakia and to the Soviet Union; George F. Kennan Professor of History, Institute of Advanced Study, Princeton. 7:30 pm, Kane Hall 130

March 9
US Policy in the New Century: The US and Europe in the New Century
Dr. Josef Joffe, Editor and Publisher, Die Zeit, Hamburg. 7:30 pm, Kane Hall 130

April 5
US Policy in the New Century: The US and Asia
Michael Armacost, President of the Brookings Institution and former US Ambassador to Japan. 7:30 pm, Kane Hall 130

April 18
US Policy in the New Century: US Security Challenges
Robert M. Gates, Former Director, Central Intelligence Agency. 7:30 pm, Kane Hall 130

May 3
US Policy in the New Century: America in the Twenty-First Century
Paul B. Johnson, British scholar, author, lecturer. 7:30 pm, Kane Hall 130

May 24
US Policy in the New Century: The US and the Global Economy
George Russell, Chariman, Frank Russell Company. 7:30 pm, Kane Hall 130

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public enthusiasm for the regime and its accomplishments.

Yet not everyone expresses this discontent. Another of my new acquaintances, a Russian who works for one of the businesses that is flourishing in the “new” economic climate in Uzbekistan, was considerably more positive about the achievements of the regime. His company pays him all of $10 a day, and he pointed out, rather proudly, the fact that an Uzbek-Korean auto venture is now producing a good range of small cars, and the fact that the roads in Uzbekistan are substantially better than those in neighboring Kyrgyzstan. Indeed, the strategically important new road being constructed over the mountains to connect Tashkent with the Ferghana Valley is impressively engineered, at the same time that the National Library struggles for want of adequate government support.

The economic situation in rural Kyrgyzstan seems to be substantially worse than in Uzbekistan. According to Western theorists, this should not be so, given the fact that Kyrgyzstan has taken more meaningful steps in the direction of privatization than most of the other Central Asian countries. Yet, in the small towns on the edge of the Pamir-Alai mountains, privatization of farm land has left many families on the edge of economic disaster, if they could not make the adjustment to life where the state no longer provided services and material support. In many cases too, individuals whom the state had employed as educated professionals (for example, as geologists and engineers) found themselves without jobs at the end of the Soviet era. Even the families who have managed to do well in the herding economy of the area readily admit that there are no jobs for the young people. Government family assistance programs are so poorly funded that some families now do not even bother to apply for the meager financial support. In most of these rural Kyrgyz households, wheat flour is one of the essentials in the traditional diet. Thanks to the fact that a year ago the Kyrgyz government sold off much of its wheat reserve in order to pay its energy debt to Uzbekistan, the price of flour more than doubled within a year. To add to these woes, this year a late spell of cold weather in the spring totally destroyed the apricot crop, which is an important source of income in the region.

Monument to Uzbekistan’s independence, Tashkent

Some of the families now rely very heavily on income from the brief summer trekking season, during which they lead the baggage trains and help with food preparation for foreign clients. In one very sad case, one of these horsemen died unexpectedly two years ago, leaving his widow to bring up five daughters. For this family, renting out the lone horse they own to the summer treks is of critical importance to make ends meet. A perception that too few families might be profiting unduly from the treks has led to pressure from local officials that a much broader range of individuals be allowed to share in the very limited “largesse.” Whether such pressure can be resisted remains to be seen, for in general, as everyone hastens to remind you, the problem of corruption and the absence of an effective legal system is one of the greatest obstacles to economic progress throughout Central Asia today.

Although independence has too often seemed to undermine an already poor economic situation in Central Asia, it has had the benefit of allowing Central Asians to recover or reassert aspects of their history and traditions that had been suppressed under Soviet rule. One can see this at various levels in society, an obvious example being the promulgation in Uzbekistan of what we might term an official “cult of Tamerlane.” Substantial government expenditures in connection with celebrations in 1996 accelerated major restorations in Samarkand, his capital in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century. The same year saw the construction of the Timurid Museum in Tashkent, a rather elegant building in somewhat fanciful pseudo-Timurid style, which weaves in its exhibits a somewhat misleading cultural genealogy of the Timurids. Clearly in the first instance the audience is Uzbek, since the major narrative descriptions in the museum are only in that language. However, the President’s statement that Timurid achievements are a testimony to the greatness of the Uzbek people (even though the Timurids were not Uzbek) is also displayed prominently in English. A statue of Tamerlane has replaced the bust of Marx in the adjoining central park. In analogous fashion, a disproportionately

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small globe with a disproportionately large Uzbekistan at the center of the world now rests like a golf ball on the pedestal that in 1991 still supported a colossal statue of Lenin. This "re-statued" and renamed "Independence Square" is an excellent reminder that one important challenge for newly independent Central Asia is to create the symbols for a new national identity.

In most parts of the former Soviet Union, rehabilitation of the victims of Stalin began in the waning years of that empire and continues apace. In Kyrgyzstan, the main square in the center of the capital Bishkek retains its Lenin statue in front of a striking modern building that houses the state museum of history and culture. While an apotheosis of Lenin still dominates the grand staircase inside the building, the main exhibits remaining open are the ones dealing with "pre-history" and the persistence of traditional material culture in the twentieth century. The floor that had been devoted to the Soviet era is closed, presumably for want of funding for renovation but perhaps as well because decisions are still being made as to what version of the country's history to present. At the same time, a special exhibit of photographs and documents celebrating the prominent Kyrgyz author Chingiz Aitmatov was very explicit about the fact that his father had been arrested and executed during the purges in the 1930s. Similarly blunt treatment of the impact of Stalinism on Kyrgyz cultural leaders was to be seen in the tiny but rich display of the local museum in the distant resort town of Chopan Ata on the shores of Lake Issyk Kul.

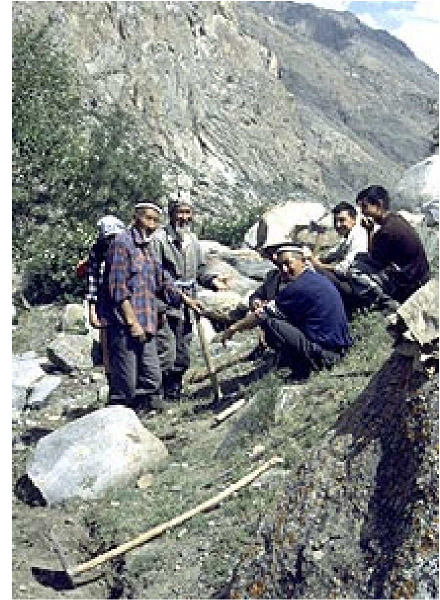
Location of Turdali Mergen's last stand, Laylyak Valley, Kyrgyzstan

For me, the most interesting manifestation of the rehabilitation of a suppressed past was in one of the scenic mountain valleys of the Pamir-Alai. At the intersection of the Uryam and Laylyak, two rushing glacier-fed streams that pass through dramatic gorges, stands a newly built herder's hut, in front of which "Mergen's House" is spelled out in graffiti on rocks.

This was not there three years ago. What is now being commemorated is the location where Turdali Mergen, the last of the Kyrgyz leaders of the Basmachi rebellion against Soviet rule, died in the mid-1930s. A stone-walled enclosure marks his burial place at the foot of the adjoining rocky spur where he held out until, as the story goes, his own followers murdered him. Open discussion of, much less veneration of, the Basmachi would have been impossible a few years ago.

My last vignette to illustrate the intersection between the past and the situation at the end of twentieth century is from the Karavshin valley region in the Pamir-Alai. The granite faces carved by glacial action eons ago now lure extreme rock climbers to reaches of this valley system. In the lush green below the cliffs, several families now herd sheep, cattle and yaks, and some of their homes suggest substantial prosperity by local standards. Of course, following tradition, it seems that the women still bear the greatest burden of the family's work; all one has to do is contrast the youthful appearance of the men with the faces of women old before their time to get a sense of how difficult the women's lives must be. In one case, as we were photographing a young woman at work separating the cream from the milk (the processing of milk products is one of the most important daily tasks), her husband, dressed in his "Adidas" sweats, insisted on jumping into the picture primarily in order to display his new boom box.

While one might conclude that the new is fast encroaching on the old, it was interesting to meet, about a mile down the valley, Sharip, a vigorous 73-year-old, who was supervising a small work crew.



Digging of a new irrigation ditch, Karavshin Valley region, Kyrgyzstan

They were using traditional technology (pick-axe and mattock) to dig an arik (irrigation ditch), that would help restore some agriculture to what had at one point been a small village stretched along the central part of the valley. Sharip had been born there, and his father and grand-father before him. In the Soviet period, with government support during collectivization, the village grew from a summer encampment to a year-round settlement. Then, with the shift toward state farms (sovkhozy) in the mid-1950's, when there was an effort to replace what were considered to be the more "backward" collective farms (kolkhozy), the government evicted the villagers, leaving behind houses now in ruins,and the shells of a former school and a store, identifiable as such now only by a rusting scale next to its crumbling wall. What Sharip is trying to do, now that this is permitted, is bring his birth village back to life. As he explained, there is a saying in Central Asia to the effect, "First you bring the water, and then the people come." It would be nice to think that he may succeed—after all, in some of these remote mountain valleys, the potential for relative prosperity such as has developed in analogous areas in, say, northern Pakistan, could develop in part based on labor-intensive cultivation of small plots. Yet, as the boombox culture

of his young neighbors up the valley might suggest, enlisting the younger generation in the venture may prove to be impossible. The unfortunate attractions of “modern” culture lure them away. While a few impressions are not sufficient to elaborate a vision of what we might expect on the anniversary of Central Asians’ independence in a decade or two, it seems clear that reality is substantially more complex than Western policy makers and pundits would like to have it. 1991 certainly did not mark the “end of history” any more than it ushered in an era of capitalist prosperity.

The author is Associate Professor of History and International Studies at the University of Washington and co-editor (with M. Holt Ruffin) of *Civil Society in Central Asia* (University of Washington Press, 1999).

Toward an International History of Environmentalism

BY B. HOWARD DEAN

For the past few years, I’ve taught Comparative Environmentalism at the University of Washington in Seattle. Twice I’ve taught the class simultaneously at the UW and at The Evergreen State College (TESC) in Olympia. For the past two summers, I have used distance-learning technologies (videoconferencing) and web based instruction methods (WEB CT) combined with a seminar format. My goal is to offer the course to students of environmentalism at the UW, TESC and in Russia and Ukraine.

For the purpose of the course, environmentalism is defined as an action to defend or protect nature. I’m trained as a planner, and this contrasts with the professional mandate of the planning profession — to manage land use change. Despite the best intentions of sustainability advocates, it is the job of planners to plan for growth and development. In an international context, incidents of environmental activism often occur in response to planning. At the behest of the international environmental community, the international development and planning process now includes at least a token citizen participation element. What remains to be seen is whether or not environmentalism as an idea has the power to influence how we plan for the future of the planet.

The integration of a distance-learning component into a small, seminar-based class has been challenging. Among other impacts on my teaching, I’ve literally broadened my horizons to imagine the world as a classroom. As an affordable study abroad option, distance learning offers the possibility for students from different countries to meet on line and develop international virtual learning communities. The idea of learning communities draws from a rich tradition in alternative education that emphasizes how students learn as much as what students learn. In a learning community, students and faculty work together to optimize the educational process. I teach in the Community and Environmental Planning program (CEP), where each student designs an individualized interdisciplinary program of study. Students also learn by participating in the governance of the program. The CEP learning style is not for everyone, but is ideal for the self-motivated student who works well alone and prefers creative work to tests.

With the program emphasis on process, rather than grading (all CEP classes are C/NC), the CEP program provides an optimal setting for the Comparative Environmentalism course. When it comes to environmental planning there is rarely one right answer. In the thirty years since the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) became law in the United States, planners have learned that the involvement of people in planning makes the process of planning as important as the master plan. In an international context, citizen participation in the planning process takes on a whole new level of potential meaning. With its emphasis on participation, the CEP program offers a possible micro-model for participation in the international environmental planning process.

My current research focuses on a comparison of Hanford and Chernobyl. Because of the historical relationship between national defense and atomic energy, public involvement in this critical environmental issue has been extremely limited. Yet the nuclear industry may be the most important environmental issue of all. I’ve discovered that many people are militant recyclers, yet recycling appears trivial compared to Chernobyl or Hanford. The summer 1999 Comparative Environmentalism class visited Hanford this past August. A class visit to Kiev is planned in the near future. I’ve introduced the study of Hanford and Chernobyl to the Comparative Environmentalism course because nuclear energy and nuclear weapons represent the abyss at one end of the environmental movement. For many people, all things nuclear represent an area of specialized knowledge about which we cannot imagine understanding. It is far easier to obsess about recycling than it is to debate nuclear power. Here in Western Washington, Hanford is farther away psychologically than Chernobyl.

Comparative Environmentalism is not a traditional area studies class. I encourage class members to examine what they think they already know about both environmentalism in the United States and what they think they already know about the former Soviet Union. We review the history of the American environmental movement and discuss how environmentalism around the world might be understood in relation to the history of science, as popular culture, or as a means for political participation. Comparative Environmentalism is a fun, easy class that addresses a timely and challenging subject.

B. Howard Dean is a Lecturer at the University of Washington in the Community and Environmental Planning Program

Regional Update: The Baltic Countries

BY GUNTIS SMIDCHENS

The University of Washington is the only American university to teach all three national languages of the Baltic countries: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The language courses have attracted well over 100 students since the program's founding in 1994 as a joint effort by REECAS and the Department of Scandinavian Studies, providing another generation of American students with research skills in this region. The first Baltic dissertation (on development of the tourism industry in Estonia after 1991) was defended in April this year, and several more are in the works.

Economic Developments:

In news from the Baltic region, integration with West Europe continues: Estonia will join the European Union in the first round of expansion, possibly as early as 2001, and Latvia and Lithuania have also satisfied requirements for accession.

Legislation in the three Baltic parliaments aims to adjust their economies to the world market and also to new environmental and health standards. Earlier this year, Estonia passed a law to ensure sustainable forestry. The Lithuanian government made a controversial decision to shut down the first of its two Chernobyl-type nuclear reactors by 2005. Tobacco advertising has been banned in all three countries. Economic orientation to the West was demonstrated in October with Lithuania's decision to sell a 33% share in its oil sector to US-based Williams International, despite intense pressure by the leading Russian crude oil producer. LUKOil halted oil supplies when Lithuania denied its request for 33% ownership in the Lithuanian oil pipeline, refinery, and sea terminal. Negotiations recently began with the second-largest Russian oil exporter, Yukos, to replace LUKOil as Lithuania's chief supplier.

Political Developments:

A possible merging of the "5+3" Nordic and Baltic States has appeared on the horizon. In a meeting with Latvian President Vike-Freiberga in October 1999, President Grimsson of Iceland proposed that the Nordic Council be enlarged to include Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Military alliances are high on the Baltic political agenda, as the three countries coordinate efforts to join NATO. Preconditions include raising defense spending and, perhaps more importantly, reform of the military structures inherited from the Soviet Union. Political analyst Paul Goble has recently pointed out Lithuania's success in professionalization of its army on the administrative level, establishing the role of non-commissioned officers (many of them women).

The Latvian presidential elections in July surprised both domestic and foreign analysts, as Vaira Vike-Freiberga was elected as a compromise candidate. Having spent most of the post-WWII years in Canada, where she was a Professor of psychology, Vike-Freiberga was seen as an "outsider" by her opponents but nevertheless continues to enjoy high public approval ratings. The Latvian Presidency holds little political power, but Freiberga exercised her authority almost immediately after entering office by sending a controversial language law back to the parliament for reconsideration.

In Estonia, elections for local and municipal governments were held on October 17. Because all permanent residents of Estonia (both citizens and noncitizens) vote in these elections, they may be seen as a barometer indicating the integration of noncitizens, most of them ethnic Russians, into Estonian political life. In the capital city of Tallinn, neither of two opposing Estonian camps gained a majority in the city council, and the Russian-speaking "Peoples Trust" is now seen as a possible coalition partner in creating the city government.

In domestic affairs of all three countries, populist government spending programs are gaining public support as the aging populations demand more social welfare programs. In Latvia this November, a referendum will be the culmination of a massive protest against a recent law raising the retirement age and restricting payments to working pensioners.

Human rights reforms continue to be on the domestic agenda as a precondition to integration with Western institutions. All three Baltic countries have rescinded the death penalty and are striving to raise the conditions of their prisons to Western standards. In Latvia this September, discussion began over a law to recognize same-sex marriages.

Western and native commissions generally agree that the national language policies of the three countries may be a hindrance to economic integration with the West, but do not constitute human rights violations. In August, the UN Committee on Racial Discrimination criticized Latvia for its sluggish naturalization process (about 25% of the residents of Latvia are not citizens). Perhaps unrelated to the UN Committee report, applications for Latvian citizenship have been rising in recent months. In September, a record high of 1639 persons (about 95% of applicants) received Latvian citizenship.

The Latvian language requirement for citizenship is seen by some of my American colleagues as a major obstacle to naturalization and integration of noncitizens. In September this year I had the opportunity to meet the test administrators and observe language tests at the Latvian Naturalization Council in Riga. Almost all applicants for citizenship to date have passed the test, which is comparable to the final examination taken by University of Washington undergraduate students after three quarters of Basic Latvian instruction.

In Estonia, too, language policies are in the news this fall. A new law requires that, beginning in September of 2000, all primary schools must offer Estonian language instruction beginning with the first grade. Many Russian-language schools already teach Estonian, generally at the initiative of the parents or teachers.

In the Latvian news this fall was the trial of Mihails Farbtuhs, a Soviet official who

in 1949 helped organize the mass deportations of Latvians to Siberia. In September, Farbtuhs became the second NKVD official convicted for crimes against humanity and sentenced to prison in Latvia. Estonian courts have also convicted several instigators of the deportations, but placed them on probation instead of assigning prison sentences.

Finally, in cultural affairs, the mass singing traditions of the three countries are alive and well, despite fears that they might wither in the onslaught of Western popular culture in the post-Soviet world. This summer, Estonia celebrated the 130-year anniversary of its National Song Festival, attracting more than 100,000 people to the closing concert on July 4. President Lennart Meri spoke to the audience, commenting that, although choir music may not be "fashionable" lately, for Estonians this tradition is not a matter of fashion, but rather, of the heart, mind, and love.

Guntis Smidchens, University of Washington Lecturer in Scandinavian Studies, submitted the Regional Update for the Baltic Countries.

NEW ITEMS

in the REECAS Center Outreach Center

VIDEOTAPES

The Baltic States
Part of the "One World" series of tapes. This tape is suitable for middle-school students.

Bosnia: Peace Without Honor

Central Asia: Kirghizstan and Uzbekistan
A travel video that shows the wilderness, deserts, and high mountains of Central Asia. Includes looks at local culture and discussions of the Silk Road.

Cold War
CNN's epic eight-volume examination of the key events, personalities, and consequences of the cold war. Includes rare footage of historical events and interviews with people who shaped history.

The Face of Russia
This three-tape set highlights the centuries-old history and culture of Russia. Includes discussions of art, literature, music, cinema, and architecture. Each tape is 60 minutes long.

Ghengis Khan: Terror and Conquest
Produced by A&E Network, this tape examines the impact the great Mongol warrior had on the lands and people he conquered.

The Making of Russia 1480-1860
Examines the history of Russia from the establishment of its first imperial dynasty to the 19th century.

BOOKS

The Revised Soviet Union (TEACHER'S EDITION)
by Susan Finney

LESSONS PLANS

Choices in International Conflict
Produced by the Stanford University Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education (SPICE), this set of interactive lesson plans allows students to learn how world leaders make decisions that affect international relations.

Do Russia's Schools Need School Boards?

BY STEPHEN T. KERR

A debate currently underway in Russia's educational system sheds interesting light on the general state of Russia today. The debate, simply put, is this: Should the country's schools have school boards? At first glance, it seems a mundane and not terribly significant question — Would it make any difference? Would anyone care? What use are school boards, anyway?

But if we dig a bit deeper, we can see that this question is actually a fairly significant one for Russian society. To understand why, we need to think about the history of Russian education, the ways that school boards work and how they connect to local society, and what this debate among Russia's educators may yield.

In the past, especially in Soviet times, there were no school boards in Russia; in fact, the schools were a part of the "Command and Administer" state, another well-tuned machine tool to turn out "cogs" (well-trained workers) to support the system. The system was highly centralized, and Soviet education ministers rightly boasted that, "If it's 11:00 a.m. on October 13, all the tenth-grade history teachers are covering Lenin's 1919 speech on the dictatorship of the proletariat, and they're using the approach suggested on page 416 of the teacher's manual." The ministry passed directives to the republic ministries, which passed them to the oblast-level education offices, which informed the city office what was to be done, which told the individual school directors what they were to do. Directors [principals] were most often political appointees, or at least selected from among the most politically "reliable" teachers. The system generally took little notice of the community, or of parents, whose only role was to attend periodic meetings with teachers and risk hearing their children publicly ridiculed by the educational authorities. Information flowed from the top down, from the rulers to the ruled, with little opportunity for feedback or any input into the way the system worked.

Things changed some during the Gorbachev era, and then again with the dissolution of the USSR in 1992. Some schools began to include parents in their activities, and new kinds of schools appeared — private schools, special schools with "intensive study" of particular subjects (often English), schools with particular emphases on democratic process or national identity. As the economic situation changed, and as the level of federal support for education declined, school budgets began to depend more and more on local (regional or city) funding, and more and more schools turned toward local industry and the "New Russian" entrepreneurs as sources of support. A variety of new arrangements sprang up, including some in which ostensibly state institutions were being de facto managed and run by local economic interests.

In an attempt to address the increasingly diverse relationships among state schools and various local interests, the Russian Ministry of Education recently put forward a draft law on school boards, suggesting by example that schools might establish a "board of trustees" to oversee everything from how school programs are defined, to the use of school resources (and the search for new funding), to arrangements for food services for students, to teachers' own professional development. Boards would be elected from the local community, and could include members from local business, local government, parent and other groups.

How dull. School boards, of all things! Those among the readers who are teachers may groan — the banes of their existence! Elected bodies, some of whose members seem dull as posts, while others focus sharply, and endlessly, on pet issues.

But for Russia, this is not only something new, but something that may ultimately be extremely important. For school boards are perhaps the most intensely local political institution in American life: they are the venue where voters can make their wishes felt immediately, where ideological battles (Connect all classrooms to the Internet? Teach creationism? Ban poor achievers from football?) are waged on the home front, with results that are immediate and visible to all. Boards also (in many places) recommend taxes and bond levies to voters, and the success or failure of these issues has a direct impact on what the schools are able to do. They are, in other words, a very real manifestation of local political power. Their health and activity could be read as an indicator of the vitality of democracy generally. Many Americans trace their first memories of democratic process to sleepy visits to school board meetings with their parents, hearing real and impassioned debates, learning about Robert's Rules of Order (or seeing them in action), with motions, amendments, voting, and so on. Some political analysts have suggested that democracy on the national level cannot exist without these sorts of local involvement in social and political decision making.

In Russia, this new institution will not come into being easily or without debate. Questions have already been posed to those who drafted the original proposal (the Federal Center on Experimental School Programs): Will these boards squander the limited budgets that schools now control? Will they be taken over by industrial or Mafia interests? Will they really deal with the needs and concerns of all students, or only with those rich enough to have their parents elected? The worries are genuine, and well-rooted in Russia's unhappy recent experience with the forms of democracy on the national level. The question for Russian educators, parents, and political figures will be whether enough trust remains among the populace to create meaningful bodies that will exercise some direct control over one of the few institutions in which Russian retain some real pride—their schools. If they do, we may see the rise of a local institution that will be a kind of training ground for democratic action on wider regional and national scenes.

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Remembering Academician Dmitrii Sergeevich Likhachev

BY DANIEL C. WAUGH

The death of Academician Likhachev on September 30 at age 92 deprives us of one of the last of the traditional intelligentsia and one of the most eloquent defenders of old Russian cultural values. He experienced the worst consequences of the Revolution when he barely survived incarceration in the Gulag on the Solovki Islands in the White Sea. Even after he was rehabilitated and had launched a distinguished academic career, his open profession and practice of Orthodox Christianity played a role in delaying the receipt of honors he deserved. With the end of the Soviet era, he became something of an icon in his own right as a kind of cultural conscience of the nation. Unlike Solzhenitsyn, who may be seen as an Old Testament prophet in a country not wanting to listen to his message, Dmitrii Sergeevich was widely hailed as one of the most respected Russians in an era when, it seems, few merited or in any event received respect. His career can be followed in other accounts (for example, the obituary in the New York Times on October 1, 1999). My comments here are primarily a personal perspective, since I was fortunate to have had some personal interaction with Dmitrii Sergeevich.

My first meeting with Dmitrii Sergeevich was in 1968, when as a rather green exchange graduate student in Leningrad I was invited to attend the regular meetings of the Division of Early Russian Literature which he headed in the Academy of Sciences Institute of Russian Literature. For me, those meetings were an essential part of my education regarding study of old Russian culture and, perhaps more importantly, the often contentious scholarly traditions involved in that study. It seemed that Dmitrii Sergeevich possessed a unique understanding of those traditions, intertwined as they were with his own long career. He could, for example, evoke the tragedy of circumstances in which personal relations among scholars prevented their effective communication on the eve of the siege of Leningrad, which he lived through but they would not survive. Where his colleagues in the late 1960s might become strident over differences that probably were much deeper than purely academic principle, he would attempt to mediate. Presentations which might have seemed arcane somehow became important in the clarity of Dmitrii Sergeevich's lucid summaries that closed each session.

His passion in defending what he valued as the "texts" defining old Russian culture might at times lead him to positions with which I could not necessarily agree. He played a key role in orchestrating what was really a vicious and unequal battle to condemn the views of the otherwise much respected historian Alexander Zimin, whose sin was to question the authenticity of the famous medieval epic, "Igor' Tale." A few years later Andrei Tarkovskii's film "Andrei Rublev" provoked controversy. I happened one day to see a Stengazeta (bulletin board "newspaper") in the Institute of Russian Literature, in which various of its scholars expressed their opinions about the film. Dmitrii Sergeevich was unhappy about the film, at least in part because he could not accept its depiction of so much filth (*griaz'*—I think this was to be construed both literally and morally) in the Russia of Rublev, who was one of his cultural heroes. And a few years after that, he was uncompromising and brusque in his dismissal of Edward Keenan's heretical views about the authenticity of the "Correspondence" between Tsar Ivan IV and Prince Andrei Kurbskii. Although Dmitrii Sergeevich wrote the "Bible" of textual criticism for old Russian literature (in the second edition of which, I noted with some pride, he added material with reference to a small contribution I had made), it seemed nonetheless that he was willing to violate his own rules where it served his purpose of strengthening Ivan's credentials as an author.

On the eve of my departure from Leningrad after a second year there in 1972, I visited Dmitrii Sergeevich at his dacha, near which his remains have been laid to rest under the birches and pines. He was genuinely grieved by the fact that the poet Joseph Brodsky, who would later receive the Nobel Prize, had been just been exiled from the Soviet Union. And he used the occasion to lament more generally the way in which Old Russian culture had suffered under the Soviet regime. I was very much touched by his willingness to share with me some of his deepest concerns. I felt privileged that while in Leningrad as a mere graduate student, he had accepted me as a colleague among scholars whose accomplishments to this day are beyond my grasp. When later I published my first book, he agreed to write a foreword to it that was overly generous in its praise.

In 1975, when I was on a brief visit to Leningrad, I met him in his office at the Institute of Russian Literature. This was the first time, I believe, that I had noticed on his desk a plaque indicating that it had previously been the desk of the greatest student of Russian chronicles, A. A. Shakhmatov. In a very real way Dmitrii Sergeevich laid claim to Shakhamatov's legacy, since he himself was a prominent student of Russian chronicles. This served as yet one more reminder of the depth of the scholarly and personal traditions which we must understand if we are to appreciate the human context for the often complex academic life of the Soviet era. During that visit, even though I had no "official status," merely by picking up the phone Dmitrii Sergeevich was able to gain unprecedented access for me to the inner sanctum of one of the local archives. He had faith that my project would contribute in important ways to our knowledge of old Russian manuscript collections; in fact his influence may well account for its subsequent publication by the Academy of Sciences Library at a time when foreigners were rarely so published in the Soviet Union.

One might wonder whether Dmitrii Sergeevich's intense nationalism was always compatible with the traditions of scholarship, which he fought to maintain

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Filming the Yeltsin Story

BY HERBERT ELLISON

I have recently returned from London where I worked on the "rough cut" of the first of two films on the Yeltsin era. It is a project on which I have been working with First Circle Productions of London, and Pacem Productions of Los Angeles, for the past two years. It has been a fascinating experience, full of surprises and rich in insights into the revolution Russia has undergone since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

The first film deals with Yeltsin's career before coming to Moscow in 1985, his conflict with Gorbachev in 1987 and removal from the Politburo, his reemergence as the key leader of the Interregional Group in the Supreme Soviet following the elections of 1989, and his role in the failed coup of August 1991. The second film covers the years of his leadership of the new Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union, following the story through the economic reforms, the clash with the Supreme Soviet and the new constitution in 1993, the (first) Chechen War (1994-96), the Presidential Election of 1996, the reform renewal in 1997 and the financial collapse of August 1998, and the events of the year of revolving door prime ministers.

For me the most fascinating part of this experience, which closely parallels that of making the four films of "Messengers From Moscow" a few years ago, is the insight into historical events that is provided by carefully structured filmed interviews with key participants, and by archive film. Having spent my life mainly as a "library and archive" historian, I find it a revelation to see and hear the filmed interviews with a large number of the participants, often answering questions that I had helped to prepare for them. To hear Mikhail Poltoranin describing the homey scene at Yeltsin's dacha when the decision was made to challenge the coup leaders in August 1991, and speech-writer Lyudmila Pikhoia describing the view from her office window of Yeltsin climbing onto the tank to deliver his challenge to the coup, provided a powerful feeling for those events. The same was true for the interviews with the coup plotters, including KGB head Vladimir Kriuchkov, and for both supporters and opponents of Yeltsin in the parliamentary crisis of 1993.

The interviews provided an amazing number of new insights for me into events and people. Yeltsin emerged very vividly in the descriptions of his life as Obkom Secretary in Sverdlovsk: his stern discipline of subordinates who were failing their responsibilities; his visits to shops to inspect goods and service and search for evidence of corruption; his rides on the bus and subway, and his skillful use of television to present himself and his program to the public. It was entertaining to hear a description of his disciplining subordinates shortly after his appointment as the Moscow Gorkom Secretary — especially the day when he marched them through knee-deep sewage in the basement of a large apartment building to encourage them to attend to the needs of ordinary citizens. Hearing of his management of the Moscow city party leadership one could well understand the venom of their attacks on him when he was forced by Gorbachev to leave the hospital where he was recovering from a heart attack to face condemnation for his behavior.

And there were insights into the scale and complexity, organizational and political, of the process of economic reform from Yegor Gaidar and Anatoly Chubais. They, and other young reformers such as Boris Nemtsov and Sergei Kirienko, gave much credit to Yeltsin, noting the innumerable ways in which his leadership and determination made possible the peaceful dismantling of the Soviet Union in late 1991, and the inauguration of economic and political reform. There were criticisms too, but always with a sense of their pride in having worked with a great leader and a major figure in Russian history. From the dozens of interviews a whole new set of insights and perspectives began to emerge.

Another fascinating and rewarding side of the film production process was working with the British production company, First Circle Films. Its head, Daniel Wolf, is a Cambridge graduate with a very scholarly approach to film documentaries. The range of his reading, and his determination to go to historical sources and maximize the range of interviews, reveal a commitment to the highest level of film journalism. It is utterly fascinating to watch the way key quotations from the interviews are woven together to produce a story, and this in turn is enlivened by the film personalities of the interviewees, the documentary footage, and the commentary. Film-making of this quality requires that the production team (and not just the Chief Consultant—my over-rated role) know a great deal about the history and the personalities on which the films are focused.

Russian studies majors will want to know about the inimitable and indispensable Teresa Cherfas, the Executive Producer who did her Russian studies at Oxford. Her years of work in Russia, including both filmmaking and journalism, have given her an amazing array of contacts and depth of insight into Russian culture, history, and contemporary affairs. And her extraordinary intelligence and charm combine with a faultless command of Russian to make her a brilliant interviewer. She studies the background and personalities of her subjects, conducts a preliminary interview with each to find key questions and themes for the interview, and then returns with the camera crew for the final interview and filming. As I read the interviews, or watched them on film, I was constantly amazed by the care and the candor of the responses.

In sum, this is documentary television at its very best. I am proud to have played a modest role in it, and the current book I am writing on the Yeltsin era will benefit immeasurably from the information and insights I have gained in the process. Daniel Wolf's production of "Messengers from Moscow" our first collaboration, was a finalist for the best film-documentary of the year in Britain for 1995. I am confident that he and his colleagues have scored again.

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Impacts of Population & Markets on the Sustainability of Ocean and Coastal Resources of the North Pacific: The Russian Far East Perspective

BY VLAD M. KACZYNSKI

What Do North Pacific Coastal Countries Share?

While socio-economic and political interests of the North Pacific Rim economies may be fragmented, they are all equally concerned with the interdependence on the marine environment, increasing population pressures, reliance upon shrinking ocean and coastal resources, and globalization of their economies. Through international markets, trade, transportation links, and movement of capital, these interdependencies reverberate throughout the region, with consequences that must be solved jointly by all coastal states of the North Pacific.

The International Conference on Impacts of Population and Markets on Sustainability of the North Pacific Ocean and Coastal Resources, which took place on June 3-4, 1999, addressed these concerns. It was organized by the School of Marine Affairs and funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Science Foundation, Hewlett Endowment for Marine and Environmental Studies, REECAS, Port of Seattle, and several private corporations. The Conference addressed population and marine environmental changes that will affect the North Pacific coastal economies in the twenty-first century. Eighteen scholars and practitioners from the People's Republic of China (PRC), Japan, the Russian Federation, Korea, Taiwan, Canada, US, and Mexico presented country studies and discussed coordinated policy measures that could be adopted to secure sustainability of the marine and coastal resources of this region. Observers from Chile and Peru also participated.

The Russian Far East Perspective

The perspective of this region was addressed by four specialists: Prof. Vyacheslav K. Zilanov, former Deputy Minister of Fisheries, Moscow; Dr. Alexander N. Vylegzhanin, head of the private law firm Res-Lex and adviser to the Russian Duma, Moscow; Prof. Alexander P. Latkin, Director of the Vladivostok Institute of Economics and Forecasting and Mrs. Svetlana Kuzmina from Vladivostok University of Fisheries.

Population and Marine Environment

The main conclusion of the Conference was this: through intensifying use of marine and coastal resources in the North Pacific, human-induced environmental deterioration and resulting ecological changes are increasing at an accelerated pace. Because of expanding international trade, and the trans-boundary character of ocean and some coastal resources, adverse marine environmental changes in the region are caused both by local resource users and by international factors. Solutions, therefore, must be sought through international and regional cooperative arrangements.

International Market Pressures on the Far East Ocean and Coastal Resources

Foreign market pressures on the Russian Far East result primarily from growing international demand for its marine resources. This comes mainly from industrialized countries such as Japan, the United States, and Europe and is stimulated by increasing welfare of these societies, the growing densities and changing demography of the coastal, and particularly the urban populations, deterioration of these countries' local coastal ecosystems, and over-exploitation of marine living resources. Through international markets the effects of increased consumption of marine and fresh water resources are transferred to other countries and significantly amplified. An excellent example of such trans-boundary impacts is the Russian Far East, whose population is decreasing but foreign demand for forest and marine living resources of this region is causing significant overuse of the most commercially valuable stocks resulting in their decline.

Population Trends in the Russian Far East

In contrast to continuing population growth and migration to the coastal areas in the PRC, Mexico, United States, Korea, and Taiwan, the Russian Far East is affected by population decline. **figure 1** shows that during 1990–1998, the population of this region decreased from 5.6 to 5.1 million people, i.e., by nearly 9%. However, the biggest reduction took place in the coastal areas that are seen as a mainstay of the Russian marine economy, particularly fisheries, seafood processing, ports, and marine transportation. During that period the Magadan region lost 35.8% of its population, Kamchatka 15% and Sakhalin 13%. Equally disturbing are negative demographic tendencies in the coastal indigenous populations. In Chukotka, the population declined from 154,000 in 1991 to 81,000 in 1998, a 47% drop. The Koryaks have declined from 40,000 to 31,000, a 22% drop. From 1991 to 1998, the rate of growth of these populations declined two and a half times. Declining growth rate is the main reason of this trend which, in turn, is caused by worsening economic conditions, and fewer job opportunities. More difficult living standards are exacerbated by harsh climatic conditions, particularly in the extreme North.

Foreign Markets and Natural Resources of the Far East

With the territory equal to 36.6 % of Russia's landmass, and 5% of the total population, the Russian Far East region (including the Republic of Sakha) generates 40% of wood exports and nearly 70% of all marine catch in the country. Apart from gold, diamonds, copper, titanium, and other minerals, the newly discovered oil fields off Sakhalin Island have significant future potential to make the Far East region even more important for Russia and all North Pacific Rim economies. Although marine living resources from this region are a source

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of Russian seafood exports, valued annually at approximately US$ 1.2 billion, the future of this trade is uncertain because of the deteriorating health of the exploited stocks. The current workforce involved in the marine fishery industry declined from 565,000 in 1990 to 398,000 jobs. There are approximately 4,000 large fishing and support ships registered in Russian Far East ports, but this number is also shrinking due to aging and the slow renewal process of the Russian fleet. The most important living resources of the Far East region are Alaska pollock, salmon, cod and crab. However, there are many signs of their overuse; these include a decline in catches, lower yields and increasing competition for shrinking quotas between Russian companies. Events during the last three years show that these resources are under growing stress and need to be better managed and protected. Under the pressure of foreign demand Russian companies are not enthusiastic to accept any restrictions on their harvesting activity and are attracted by highly competitive prices paid by foreign buyers of these resources. Consumption of aquatic protein in Russia is declining because the domestic market has a relatively low purchasing power. A significant part of the population is living below poverty level **(figure 3)** and seafood for these people is increasingly seen as a luxury product. The strongest demand for Far East resources comes from Asia/Pacific countries whose citizens' growing per capita income increases their consumption of fish, timber, mineral, and energy resources. In addition to countries in Asia and the Pacific, Europe also imports seafood and timber from the Far East region. During the financial crisis in Asia and Russia, the United States became the largest buyer of Russian crab and processed Alaska pollock products from the Far East. Beginning in the early 1990's the Russian Far East became the major supplier of these resources to the world consumption markets. It is important to note that the region is exporting primarily raw materials or semi-finished products with little value added through processing. If full processing of these commodities was carried out in the Far East the value of exported natural resources would be five to ten times higher, with all resulting benefits to the local population and the coastal economy.

Transition to the Free Market System

Free market reforms in the Far East and newly created export opportunities have led to uncontrolled use and over-exploitation of the coastal forests and marine living resources. To the extent that the Russian Far East is integrating with the markets of the North Pacific, it is sharing the benefits of this region's economic growth, as well as the negative implications. These include unequal benefits from foreign trade between sectors, communities, and local and central governments, lack of enforceable resource management principles, distortions in trade practice, trans-boundary environmental problems caused by pollution, and use of trans-boundary aquatic resources. Those that were reported in the China-Russia border areas and Russian radioactive waste disposal in the Sea of Japan are particularly acute.

Demand for Marine Resources in the Region

Given the growing demand for seafood and timber in the region, pressures to continue overexploitation of the marine resources and coastal forests will remain strong because most of the developing and transitional economies of the North Pacific are slow to control the growing harvesting capabilities of their fleets. There is an urgent need for energetic and immediate action to reverse these trends. Population growth and increases in the consumption of marine and coastal resources by swelling numbers of affluent consumers, have caused massive shifts in demand for marine and aquaculture production, transportation of goods and marine tourism. Although the Asia/Pacific nations consume more agricultural meat products compared to fish consumption as a share of total protein increase, China and South Korea experienced a near tripling in fish as the share of total protein intake. As the largest and most influential seafood importing market in the world, in 1995 Japan imported US$ 17.8 billion worth of seafood products from across the globe, and Russia, from 1992 onwards became a major supplier of fish and crab to Japan. However, some authors in Mexico (Enriquez, 1999) and Russia (Zilanov, 1999, Latkin 1999) assert that international trade involving natural resources is likely to negatively affect the raw material exporting countries with consequences for their future generations.

The Need for Regional Cooperation

Considering a discernible human influence on the marine environmental change, the Conference participants strongly recommended launching a cooperative effort to design internationally acceptable policy measures addressing the impacts of population and market pressures on the ocean and coastal resources of the North Pacific. Apart from its scientific value in showing important population-markets-resources interrelationships, such a project could open productive and continuing international links between various institutions and experts in the region. This regional effort to secure environmental sustainability of the Pacific and its marine, coastal and fresh water resources lends itself readily as fertile ground for international cooperation that could contribute to improved mutual understanding, peace and stability in this region.

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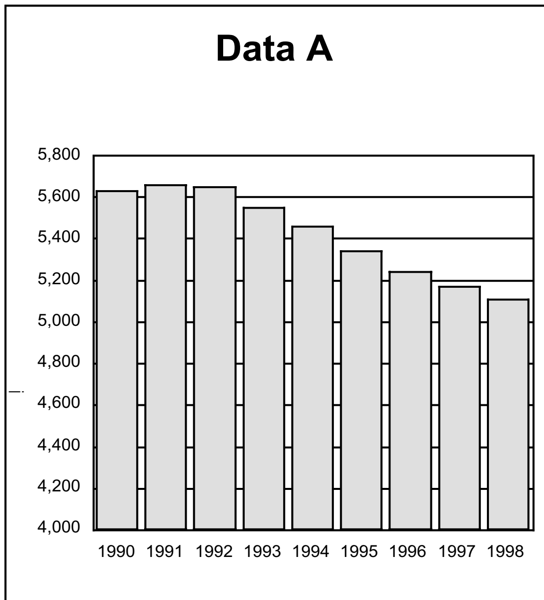
figure 1

Population Changes in the Russian Far East Including the Chukotka and Koryak Regions 1990 – 1998

Source: State Statistics Committee of the Russian Federation, 1998 (after Zilanov, 1999)



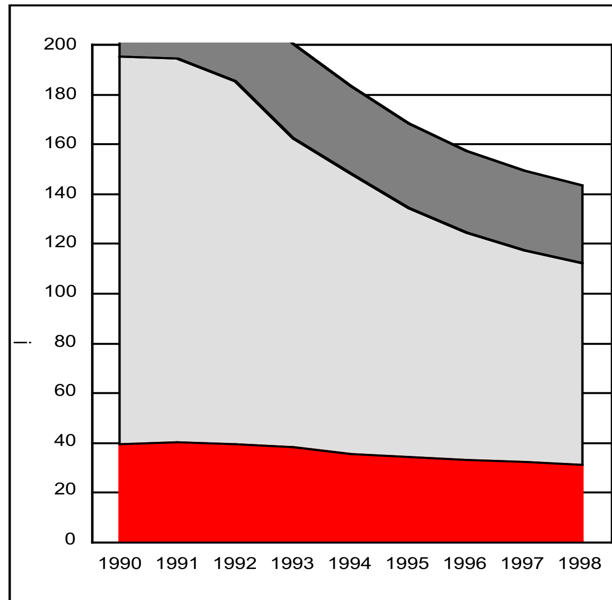


figure 2

Major Markets for Russian Seafood Exports 1990 – 1998

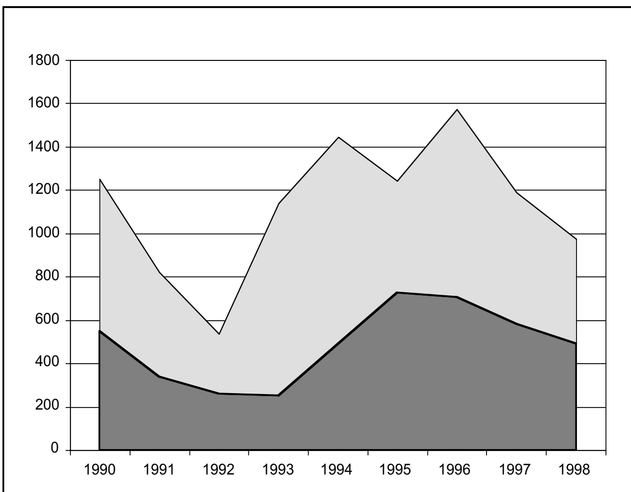
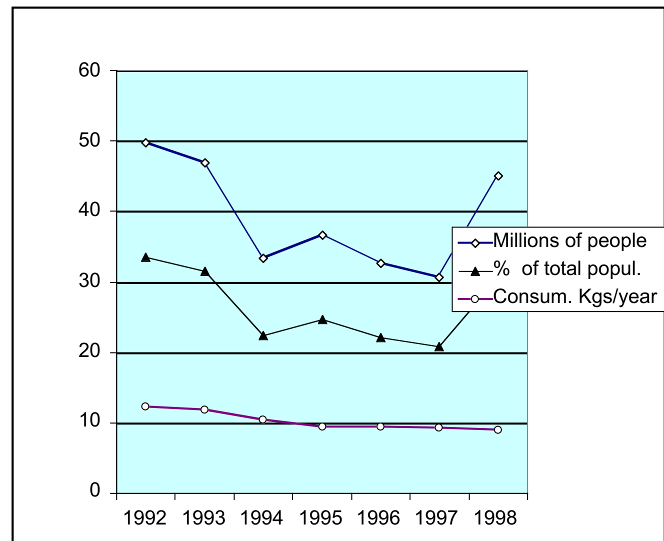


figure 3

Poverty Level and Consumption of Protein of Aquatic Origin in Russia 1990 – 1998



Life in Chukotka and the Chukchi

BY BRENT J. RORABACK

While the post-communist period has been a difficult time for all peoples of the Russian Federation, perhaps no segment of the population has suffered more than the "malye narody", the "numerically small" indigenous peoples, particularly those in the Russian North. More than twenty-six indigenous groups are so designated—numbering less than fifty thousand individuals—the vast majority of which live in Siberia and the Russian Far East. One such group, the Chukchi, lives primarily in the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug, located in the extreme northeast of Russia. The transportation of goods, and the maintenance of services for remote areas like Chukotka, heavily subsidized during the Soviet period, has decreased dramatically in recent years. Unemployment in the region continues to rise as businesses are forced to close in the face of new economic realities. This economic deterioration has lead to significant out-migration from the region. Living conditions among the Chukchi continue to worsen.

The realities of life in Chukotka have necessitated a return to traditional subsistence activities for some Chukchi as a matter of survival. Many scholars, activists, and others advocate a resumption of traditional activities not just as a means of sustaining the Chukchi through these difficult times, but also as a long-term strategy for ensuring their cultural survival, their economic well-being, and for the region's sustainable development. This idea, called "neotraditionalism" by some, proposes a blending of the Chukchi's traditional life ways with the realities of modern technology and economic activity. In proposing such a strategy, neotraditionalism must avoid the obvious dangers of a "noble savage" mentality as well as answer pressing economic, social, legal, and environmental questions. To say that the Chukchi could return to a pre-Soviet lifestyle is naïve in the extreme, and it is unlikely any serious neotraditionalist would make such a suggestion. Still, neotraditionalists must explain how, given the damage inflicted upon indigenous cultures by the Soviet system, the Chukchi and groups like them will rebuild even a neotraditional way of life.

Soviet-era policies had a devastating cultural and economic impact on the Chukchi. Many Chukchi were moved from their small, traditional settlements to larger villages; their reindeer herds were collectivized, their fishing activities taken over by Soviet vessels. The Chukchi, so adept at dealing with the caprices of nature, were hard pressed to keep up with the changes around them. The egalitarian, assimilationist policies championed by the Soviets quickly degenerated into policies of stratification with preferential employment in the new state industries given to non-natives. Wage differentials paid the native peoples one-third or one-fourth of the standard wage.[1] As industrialization increased throughout Siberia and the Russian Far East, so too did the negative social pressures already at work. Many abandoned the traditional ways altogether, seeking work in the factories or in construction. Unequal access to goods, services, and education prevented any sort of socio-economic parity between the Chukchi and the region's non-native residents.[2]

Along with the social costs, Chukchi culture also suffered under the communists. Most native languages in the region were banned in the 1950s.[3] Traditional beliefs were attacked, children forced to attend boarding schools. In the aggregate, Soviet policies toward the Chukchi amounted to a concerted effort to sever the deep ties between the people and the land. By taking the Chukchi off the land and away from their traditional lifestyles, preventing them from participating in traditional activities and distancing them from their traditional knowledge base, the Soviets disrupted a dialogue between these people and the land around them. This dialogue shaped, guided, informed, and defined them, forming the Chukchi identity. In the words of Debra Schindler: "Instead of creating mixed economies and effecting ethnic integration, policies of forced collectivization and resettlement destroyed the fabric of indigenous life which integrated the land, resources, and kinfolk into a coherent, functioning society."[4]

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent economic downturn has left Chukotka among the most impoverished of all Russian regions. The industrial sector was seventy-second in total output in 1996, the agricultural sector seventy-seventh in total production, the building sector seventy-sixth in capital investment.[5] During the Soviet era, 2% of the USSR's GDP went to subsidize the North's food and fuel needs. Today, that number is one-tenth of 1%.[6] While Chukotka's foreign trade totaled some $4 million in 1997, the okrug's exports accounted for only $20,000 of that sum. When Chukotka's governor Aleksandr Nazarov says, "The northern territories are in terrible shape," his comment seems an understatement.[7]

If neotraditionalism is to be seriously considered as a strategy for the Chukchi it must address key issues such as rights of property and control of resources. In recent years, presidential decrees have been enacted governing the establishment of "territories of traditional nature use" designated the "inalienable property" of indigenous groups. Once designated, a local referendum is required before expropriating the area for non-traditional activities.[8] Indigenous groups have also been granted the right to organize family- or clan-based communes (then receiving exclusive rights to renewable resources on land allotments), settlements, and even national *rayony*, or "regions."[9] In their statement, "Discrimination Against Indigenous People of the North," the Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia, and Far East detailed a number of steps deemed crucial for improving the situation among native peoples. The statement calls for, among other things, "direct licensing procedures that provide for the study of ways to develop coal/mineral deposits, production quotas and land tenure that guarantee traditional resource use and economic activities."[10] This emphasis on granting indigenous groups not only the rights to pursue their traditional activities without interference, but also to allow them to direct the course of development on their lands is fundamental to the neotraditionalist strategy.

Implementation of a program supporting traditional food harvesting is another

important step in this strategy. A possible model for this program is the Canadian Wildlife Harvest Support Program. The WHSP was designed to draw on and nurture the skills of native peoples, promoting their economic independence while enhancing the renewable resource economy. In the WHSP's initial feasibility study, Randy Ames writes:

> Social problems and cultural disruption are tied in large measure to a lack of economic opportunity, unemployment, and dependence on welfare. People caught in this dependency cycle make little economic contribution and merely perpetrate the problem. In order to break the cycle, and to develop attitudes essential to the formation and delivery of appropriate harvesting support policies and programmes, there must be official recognition that harvesters are "employed," and that harvesting is an occupation.[11]

For many indigenous groups in the north, traditional harvesting is a highly productive enterprise. Data from the Canadian Arctic suggests that production figures are uniformly high across the region, with annual averages of 300 kg per capita, and individual hunters averaging 1,000 to 1,500 kg.[12] The total value of traditional food production (not including fishing) has been estimated at $55 million annually.[13] Neotraditionalist programs need not be viewed as a form of social welfare, but as support programs for the food-producing sector of the region's economy.[14]

John Ziker has theorized that traditional economies, based primarily on subsistence but with secondary goals of exchange in the industrial economy, could allow for the long-term, sustainable trade in valuable renewable resource commodities such as fish, game, and high-quality furs.[15] While domestic markets for such goods within the Russian Federation are lacking, markets do exist overseas. Chukotka's proximity to the Pacific Rim and North America presents at least the potential for the export of these goods.

While commercial production may put much needed cash into the hands of native peoples, there is reason to proceed with caution. "Subsistence," says Ames, "is a social economy,"[16] and introducing or expanding commercial harvests poses a serious threat to that economy and the society surrounding it. The forces directing traditional and commercial harvesting are in fundamental opposition. Traditional systems reward individuals based on participation, while commercial reward is based on individual output.[17] This strikes at the very heart of the kinship arrangements around which indigenous life revolves.[18] For commercial harvesting to succeed, production must be an ongoing process maintained at a constant level. Not only does this run contrary to traditional patterns of harvest, nuanced as they are to the ebb and flow of life in the Arctic, but market demands and obligations may force indigenous harvesters to choose between current cash needs and social responsibilities.[19]

Beyond questions of culture and economics, there is serious cause for concern regarding that cornerstone of neotraditionalist strategy, Chukotka's environment. With traditionally harvested foods occupying a greater portion of the Chukchi diet, the safety of these foods must be examined. While at present scientific data on the health of the region's ecosystem is scarce, elsewhere in the Arctic there is ample cause for alarm. Recent studies in the Canadian Arctic have shown that levels of PCBs in bite-sized portions of whale flesh exceed recommended weekly doses.[20] Given Russia's record on the disposal of hazardous waste in the Arctic, it can be safely assumed that marine life on the Russian side is similarly, if not more, contaminated. As events force the Chukchi to depend more on traditional foods, and as circumstances make arctic animal populations less safe for consumption and more unstable as a reliable food source, subsistence may not be a viable long-term strategy for existence.

Neotraditionalism's task of reconstituting and strengthening native culture while building a sustainable way of life appears staggeringly difficult, its chances of success remote, but perhaps not impossible. Canada has recently implemented a neotraditionalist strategy on a grand scale. On April 1, 1999, the Canadian government turned over an area roughly the size of Western Europe[21] to the region's native population, creating a territory called Nunavut. Nunavut's people possess broad land ownership rights and management responsibilities for the region's natural resources. Although self-governing, Nunavut is not self-sufficient. In the 1999-2000 period, Canada will transfer $500 million to Nunavut.[22] "Of course there is a danger that Nunavut will end up as a perpetual welfare state," cautions University of Toronto political science professor Graham White, "but it would have been worse to leave things as they were."[23]

Sadly, for the time being, Chukotka can hope for little else. While it may not be possible to implement such settlements now, it may be possible to construct a more practicable strategy drawing on the experience of other nations and their indigenous peoples. It is a goal worth pursuing. Neotraditionalism could be the Chukchi's best hope at sustaining their culture for the present, and for the generations to come.

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16. Ames, et al, p. 5.
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18. Ames, et al, illustrate the importance of participation with the example of an Inuit seal hunt: "Inuit winter seal hunting is a cooperative effort in which participants must keep watch at numerous seal breathing holes. It might be that only one person succeeds in killing a seal, but his success is recognized as the result of the cooperative effort, and all participants share in the take. It is the contribution, whether of labor, expertise, or equipment, that wins the right to inclusion in resource sharing." p. 42.
19. Ibid., 42.
20. DePalma, Anthony. "An Arctic Meal: Seal Meat, Corn Chips and PCB's." The New York Times, 5 February 1999, p. A2.
21. Nunavut will cover some 770,000 square miles.
22. According to Finance Canada's Budget 1999:

    "New funding arrangements have been finalized for the Northwest Territories and for the new territory of Nunavut. These will take effect April 1, 1999. The arrangements were agreed to after extensive consultations with the governments and people of the north and will ensure these governments have the funding predictability and stability they need for sound financial planning. A similar funding arrangement with the Yukon should be in place shortly.

    "In 1999-2000 the federal government will transfer close to $1.3 billion to the three territorial governments: $500 million to Nunavut, $490 million to the Northwest Territories, and $300 million to the Yukon. Over the next five years, these transfers are projected to total approximately $6.9 billion, ensuring that territorial governments have the revenue they need to provide northern Canadians with health care and other public services. Territories will also benefit from increases to the CHST." See Finance Canada's Budget 1999, Federal Financial Support for the Provinces and Territories: New Funding Arrangements. (http://www.fin.gc.ca/budget99/fede/fed1e.html) (11 May 1999).
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Breaking the Vicious Cycle of Uncertainty in Post-Communist Russia

BY STEPHEN E. HANSON

In the wake of communism's collapse in 1991, many Western observers expected post-Soviet Russia to undergo a relatively smooth "transition to democracy and the market." Instead, for the past eight years, the Russian Federation has lurched from one severe crisis to another: extremely high inflation in 1992, a near civil war between forces supporting the president and the Congress of People's Deputies in 1993, a costly, bloody, and inept military invasion of Chechnya beginning in 1994, disturbingly strong electoral performances by anti-liberal ideologues in parliamentary and presidential elections in 1993, 1995, and 1996, a devastating financial crisis in 1998—and, as 1999 draws to a close, a new war in Chechnya. What explains this dismal record? What, if anything, can the West do about it?

In this brief essay I will argue that a key but underemphasized factor underlying the political and economic turmoil in post-communist Russia is the high degree of uncertainty about the future that has confronted Russian elites and ordinary people alike since the breakup of the USSR. In the face of such high uncertainty, long-term investments of every sort, both economic and political, have become irrational. Unfortunately, a society in which all decision-making is overwhelmingly short term in nature is bound to generate repeated institutional crises—which have the effect of making the future even more uncertain. Understanding the dynamics of this vicious cycle of uncertainty is crucial, I argue, if Russia and the West hope to devise effective policies for breaking out of it.

Economic Effects of Uncertainty

The original design of the strategy for rapid marketization of the post-Soviet economy in Russia was based upon the theory that macroeconomic stabilization, price and tariff liberalization, and privatization of state property would, after a painful but relatively quick period of adjustment, generate increased efficiency and economic growth. By 1997, substantial progress had been attained on all three main policy arenas above: inflation was down to single digits for the year, price controls had largely been abandoned, and around two-thirds of state property had been formally transferred to the private sector. Yet as the decade comes to a close, the Russian economy remains in a parlous state, with high levels of poverty, low levels of investment, and at best weak prospects for future economic growth. Why? Analysts have identified several economic reasons for these bad outcomes: extremely low levels of foreign and domestic direct investment, a very limited degree of enterprise and farm restructuring, capital flight amounting to tens of billions of dollars per year, severe problems with tax collection, and, as a result of all the above factors, an unsustainable dependence on expensive short-term debt to finance basic government operations.

Yet every one of these problems flows directly from the decision making process of rational actors in a society facing extraordinarily high levels of uncertainty. The absence of direct capital investments in the Russian economy, by foreign and domestic actors alike, is thus quite easily explained: given the political and social turbulence of the past decade, only a fool would sink substantial resources into projects that might require years to yield positive returns. That the Soviet Union's economic infrastructure was already crumbling and technologically outdated has exacerbated this dilemma, since as a result even light industry and consumer goods production often require significant initial capital outlays that no rational actor will make. It is understandable, then, that Russian entrepreneurs have concentrated on sectors with low start up costs, like "shuttle trading" (buying goods abroad and selling them on the streets) and the export of raw materials through old Soviet distribution networks.

Nor should economists have been surprised to discover that the new "owners" of rapidly privatized state factories and collective farms didn't often sink scarce

resources into full-scale restructuring. To do so would be rational only if one expected the rules of competitive capitalism to be the "only game in town" several years from now—but such confidence about the future of market institutions in Russia is itself hardly rational. A prudent factory manager, then, is forced to hedge his bets, leasing some parts of his enterprise to market-oriented entrepreneurs and stripping other factory assets to sell for cash, but also cultivating personal ties to rising politicians, pleading for continued state subsidies, and leaving large numbers of workers on the payroll (even if there are no funds to pay them with) so as not to diminish the factory's political clout in case of an anti-market backlash. It is rational, too, to put at least a certain percentage of one's liquid assets into dollars or personal offshore accounts; once again, given high social uncertainty, the costs of possible future prosecution for this sort of corruption must be discounted heavily, and weighed against the benefits of having a "nest egg" with which to protect one's family in case of economic meltdown. The same sort of reasoning applies to decisions to pay or evade taxes: to the extent that a state which may not exist much longer must rely on personal reporting of income, rational actors will quite understandably conceal whatever they can.

Thus, it is the inability of the Russian Federation to escape the vicious cycle of uncertainty, and not so much bad economic policy decisions per se, which explains the financial collapse in Russia in 1998. Certainly Western economists were right to warn against the inflationary effects of printing money for government spending in the economic environment described above: when revolutionary change is a real possibility, the value of large quantities of government-issued paper is likely to decline especially rapidly. IMF advice to raise tax revenues, however, was also unrealistic for the reasons given above. Finally, given high social uncertainty, basing government finance on short-term bonds couldn't work either: rational actors would invest only when offered absurdly high interest rates, but the resulting debt burden made subsequent government pledges to preserve low inflation and a stable ruble exchange rate even less credible. In the year since the 1998 crisis, to be sure, there has been a modest economic recovery due to the short-term boost the ruble devaluation gave to domestic producers. But arguably, there can be no long-run escape from the post-Soviet economic crisis until the general level of social uncertainty is somehow reduced.

Political Effects of Uncertainty

As more and more economists have begun to see how the warped incentives of a turbulent society can undermine economic reform, increased emphasis has been placed on the need for "good governance" during market transitions. Governments, we are told, must observe and implement the "rule of law" in order to reduce the uncertainty facing economic actors concerning the sanctity of contracts and the inviolability of property rights. A well-functioning judiciary is seen as the crucial foundation for this. Supporters of reform also call for the formation of a working system of political parties, which truly represent their constituents. Above all, government corruption must somehow be brought under control so that economic policy is made consistent and credible.

Unfortunately, such well-meaning advice also ignores the vicious cycle of uncertainty. Rational actors under conditions of high uncertainty are no more likely to invest in long-term political institution building than in long-term economic projects. While everyone would undoubtedly be better off in a society with stable legal procedures, truly representative democratic institutions, and uncorrupted public officials, no single individual can contribute anything significant to ensuring such an outcome. Indeed, in a world where everyone assumes that the government may collapse within a few years or months, individuals who respect the rule of law inevitably lose out: they get neither the benefits of a law-governed society nor the payoffs from corruption. Under highly uncertain conditions, then, rational citizens should ignore laws when they can and organize only when directly threatened, rational judges should worry more about pleasing powerful patrons than about upholding abstract legal principles, and rational politicians should fight for control over state assets rather than pay the high costs of developing genuine national organizations to represent ordinary people. Attempts to create special government bodies to control corruption in such an environment just recreate the problem on a higher level, since every watchdog agency is always, by definition, in an even better position to extract bribes. In short, under conditions of high uncertainty, general and perpetual corruption is precisely what standard economic theory would predict.

Environments of high uncertainty have another perverse political effect: they tend to promote radical ideologues while punishing moderates. In an environment where one political crisis follows another, ordinary, pragmatic politicians are forced to change their public positions every few months. Over time, then, avowed "centrists" lose all credibility. The only consistent people in chaotic societies are radicals with inflexible views of the long-run future. The persistent uncertainty in Russia since 1990 has thus made extremists like Vladimir Zhirinovskii and Gennadii Ziuganov—both of whom had already in the early 90s published their quite detailed explicit theories of a global conspiracy to destroy Russia—seem relatively principled and credible to their supporters. To be sure, the majority of Russian voters continue to reject extremism, and both Zhirinovskii and Ziuganov have suffered from declining popularity in recent years. But as long as significant minorities vote for anti-liberal ideologues, the stability of the Russian Federation will remain in doubt—further deepening uncertainty about the political future. Given Russia's significant arsenal of biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons, this is a dynamic that should be of direct concern to the West.

Breaking the Cycle

Fortunately, as the first decade of post-communism has shown, there are effective methods for breaking the vicious cycle of uncertainty outlined above that do not require the victory of extremist ideologues. One strategy is to publicize a realistic long-term strategy of integration into the peaceful and wealthy West. For those post-communist countries closest to Western Europe, widespread calculations that membership in NATO and/or the European Union

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was a feasible medium-term goal have done much to extend time horizons and make cooperative political and economic behavior individually rational. Indeed, in East-Central Europe, early individual decisions to build national democratic institutions or to sink resources into long-term investment have generally paid off. A widespread desire to be accepted as a part of "Europe," it appears, has thus helped to moderate both short-term corruption and long-term extremism in almost every post-communist European country.

Another method for reducing social uncertainty involves the generation of grass-roots networks of mutual trust and support. Even in the most chaotic environments, ties of family, of friendship, and of mutual experience keep social life from degenerating entirely into a "war of all against all." People in established communities everywhere tend to develop an acute sense for who can be trusted to engage in long-term cooperation and who cannot. Where state institutions and formal economic laws cease to function, informal ties of this sort become all the more important—as indeed they are in Russia today. In time, such communities can become the basis for the recruitment of committed activists interested in pooling their resources on a national level to create effective political parties and organized interest groups. As we enter the 21st century, we can expect that such grass-roots mobilization in Russia will further rather than hinder the progress of liberal institutions. Russians have already suffered through one anti-liberal ideological experiment, and given any sort of workable alternative, most are very unlikely to support another one. Indeed, the goals of civil society activists in Russia today are generally highly compatible with Western social norms.

Remarkably, however, U.S. policy since 1991 has tended to short-circuit both Russian faith in its long-term prospects for integration with the West and the process of grass-roots political and economic organization, while inadvertently encouraging the sorts of crises that deepen the vicious cycle of uncertainty. IMF-sponsored economic reforms have been predicated upon the mistaken idea that rapid transformations of Soviet institutions were crucial to make reform "irreversible"; thus elites and masses alike have been subjected to unsettling revolutionary changes in their daily life that were bound to upset social confidence in the regime's future. This has been followed in recent years by official Western recommendations to raise all utility prices to world market levels within a few years, to fire huge numbers of workers in critical sectors of government and industry, and to impose stricter bankruptcy laws on failing enterprises. All of these policies, once proposed, have tended to force most Russians to think about their economic survival in the near term rather than their best strategies for attaining wealth in the long run. At the same time, the West has introduced a new source of uncertainty on the international arena by introducing a policy of rapid NATO expansion that implicitly envisions the potential incorporation of every country in Europe but Russia. To be sure, the problem of uncertainty in post-communist Russia would have been enormous in any case, but such policies have surely exacerbated the situation.

One final implication of the analysis presented here is that deterministic "cultural" explanations for what has gone wrong in Russia are at best partial and at worst pernicious. Of course, there is no denying that decades of Leninist politics and Stalinist economics have left behind cultural legacies that make the establishment of a U.S.-style liberal capitalist regime in Russia extraordinarily difficult. Yet it is far too easy for Western analysts—some of whom played a direct role in designing the misguided Western policies described above—now to blame the poor results of reforms in Russia on a supposed "authoritarian and collectivist" mentality that has prevented citizens and entrepreneurs from behaving as predicted by Western democratic and economic theory. Actually, as we have seen, standard rational actor theory explains outcomes in Russia remarkably well. To announce that Russians have "failed to understand the market economy" and must be left to figure it out for themselves thus ignores our own failure to think through the logical implications of the theoretical assumptions about human behavior upon which the Russian reform strategy was originally predicated.

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in often difficult circumstances. Yet he left a remarkable legacy both in the cultural breadth of many of his own writings and in the stimulation and support of others whose work might otherwise have languished without strong advocacy. I found him to be a gracious and generous host who had the ability to inspire aspiring young scholars and, as we now know, a much broader public. His death is a loss to all of us.

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