



STANFORD UNIVERSITY

*Center for  
Russian & East European Studies*

Encina Hall, Room 200, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305-6055

**NEWSLETTER**

**Winter 1992**

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1991/92**

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**XVI Annual Stanford-Berkeley Conference**

It's Stanford's turn again to host the annual Stanford-Berkeley Conference. This year's conference, entitled "The Consequences of the Collapse of the Soviet Union," will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, April 10 in the Oak West Lounge at Tresidder Union, and will feature six panel discussions.

Speakers for the first panel, "Post-Soviet Politics," will be Professor Alexander Dallin (History), Stanford University; Professor David Holloway, Center for International Security and Arms Control, Stanford University; and Visiting Professor Andrei Melville (Political Science), UC Berkeley. Professor Philippe Schmitter (Political Science), Stanford University, will chair the panel.

The second panel, "The Economic Future," will be chaired by Professor Ronald McKinnon (Economics), Stanford University, and will feature Dr. Mikhail Bernstam, Hoover Institution; Professor Gregory Grossman (Economics), UC Berkeley; Professor John Litwack (Economics), Stanford University; and Visiting Professor Alec Nove, Center for Slavic and East European Studies, UC Berkeley.

"A New Historiography," the third panel, will feature Dr. Robert Conquest, Hoover Institution; Professor Terence Emmons (History), Stanford University; Professor Nancy Kollmann (History), Stanford University; and Professor Reginald E. Zelnik (History), UC Berkeley. Professor Steven Zipperstein (History), Stanford University, will chair the panel.

The fourth panel, "Nationalities and

Ethnic Relations," will be chaired by Professor Nancy Tuma (Sociology), Stanford University, and will feature Professor Roman Laba (National Security Affairs), Naval Post-Graduate School, Monterey; Visiting Professor Gail Kligman (Anthropology), Stanford University; Professor Gail Lapidus (Political Science), UC Berkeley; and Professor Michael Urban (Political Science), UC Santa Cruz.

Speakers for the fifth panel, "Post-Soviet Culture," will be Professor Gregory Freidin (Slavic Dept.), Stanford University; Visiting Professor Andrei Sinyavsky (Slavic Dept.), Stanford University; and Visiting Professor Mikhail Kolesnikov (Art), Stanford University. Professor Herbert Lindenberger (English and Comparative Literature), Stanford University, will chair the panel.

The sixth and final panel, "Future of the 'Field,'" will be chaired by Dr. Richard Lyman, President Emeritus, Stanford University, and will feature Dr. Dorothy Atkinson, Executive Director of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies; Professor George Breslauer (Political Science), UC Berkeley; Professor Robert Crummey (History), UC Davis; and Professor Martin Malia (History), UC Berkeley.

Two years ago the conference at Stanford dealt with Soviet nationalities problems. The resulting publication is available at the CREES office.

## Ethnic Communities Seminar

The Armenian Professional Society of the Bay Area, in co-sponsorship with the Commonwealth Club of California and the World Affairs Council of Northern California, presents a seminar entitled "Ethnic Communities and Their Homelands: A Post-Soviet Perspective." It will be held on March 28, 1992, at the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco at 595 Market Street, San Francisco.

The seminar will examine the dynamics of change occurring in certain ethnic communities having a homeland previously under Soviet influence. The morning session, to be chaired by Professor Norman Naimark of Stanford University, will focus on the social and political interaction with the homelands and the resulting changes in community orientations.

Admission is \$10 for members of the Commonwealth Club of California and \$12 for non-members.

For additional information, please contact Suzy M. Antounian, Seminar Coordinator, at (415) 921-5044.

## St. Petersburg Impressions

February 1992

The Finnair flight touches down one afternoon in February on the ever-bumpy runway of the Pulkovo Airport at St. Petersburg (formerly Leningrad, formerly Petrograd, formerly St. Petersburg). A light snow covers the ground; the low winter sun casts a soft pink hue over everything. I have been away from Russia (formerly the Soviet Union, formerly Russia) for a year, and am eager to see what changes may be visible in this fascinating country that used to be unchanging.

### The Farmers' Market

I decide to visit the Kuznechnyi (Blacksmiths') Market, one of the better markets in town (near the Vladimirskaya Metro Station and the Dostoevskii Apartment/Museum).

I haven't seen such a well-stocked market in a northern Russian city in February in years! Good-looking sides of beef and pork hanging from hooks, neatly sliced cuts of meat, fresh lamb, offers to cut off the parts of your choice, every vendor's stall occupied (not so long ago, this same meat counter was empty, save for one pig's head!). I see fresh tomatoes, obviously grown down south and looking delicious. Gorgeous red, yellow, and orange roses, begging to be bought for your sweetheart. And there are no lines! What's going on?

I ask the prices. 350-450 rubles for a kilo of meat, 180 rubles per kilo of tomatoes, from 40 to 60 rubles per rose. Even if average wages are up, a native could easily blow a month's salary at the market on a kilo of meat, a kilo of tomatoes, and a half-dozen roses.

I walk up to a lady with two jars full of

pretty carnations and ask, how much? "Six rubles per flower," she says. "I'll take them all," I say, as I start fishing for my bulging wallet that I have squirreled away in my fanny pack, which in a crowd I keep hanging in front of me (pickpocketing is on the rise, and foreigners are becoming targets). My intended recipients of the flowers are the ladies in our group (14 of 26) and our local guide. The carnation vendor thinks that I am having a language or math problem. No, I assure her, I really want to buy all her flowers. She carefully counts her flowers: 80 flowers, or 480 rubles, which is to me \$5.60 (or, "in principle," \$4.80 [see below]).

For the first time in years in Russia, there's reason for me to shop for things in rubles. But what of the St. Petersburgians? My friend, Volodya, a senior research professor at the Academy of Sciences, earns not much more per month than my flowers cost, plus a few tomatoes. I should add that he earns his salary only "in principle," because, due to the general shortage of cash, he hasn't been paid in three months.

Outside the market, a phenomenon new in recent years: a gauntlet of people along the sidewalk, maybe 200 of them, each holding up something for sale — a bar of soap, a pair of shoes, a child's dress, a pack of cigarettes (from 80r to 100r for a pack of Marlboros), a bottle of mineral water, a bottle of vodka. Standing in a light snowfall, most of the sellers look well dressed; this must be new for them, this desperate need to augment inadequate wages or, in some cases, to replace lost salaries. I feel for these people. I knew they would be here, but I hadn't imagined there would be so many. Ordi-

*continued on page six*

## Slavianskii Dom

Slavianskii Dom, the Russian and East European theme house, is in full swing this winter quarter. The Russian table is continuing, with the advanced session on Mondays at 6pm and with beginners meeting on Thursdays at the same time. The price has been "freed," but is still subsidized well below market levels. Now for graduate students it will cost \$40 and half that for undergraduates. This includes Sophie's wonderful French cooking for 10 weeks and is a real deal. Polish table takes place on Tuesday evenings.

The Dom sends out a big welcome to its newest Theme Associate, John Toth, who is just back from Poland where he worked extensively on the privatization of Poland's economy. He will make use of this experience in leading his theme group on the transitional economy in Poland. Other theme groups include Andrea Koerselman's seminar on Russian Modern Art,

Elina Tsomik's exploration of Russian composers, Stephan Gutzeit's group on political philosophy, Kim Friedberg's drama group which will read Russian plays, and Louis O'Neill's discussion section on current affairs in Eastern Europe and the ex-Soviet Union.

The house is hosting a first year Russian conversation section on Thursdays at 7pm in the library, as well as two one-unit classes. On Monday nights from 7-10 (directly after advanced Russian table) Paul von Stamwitz leads a film seminar entitled "Wajda and Tarkovskii." "Ashes and Diamonds" has been shown, and other classics to be shown include "Solaris," "Man of Marble" and "Andrei Rublyev." Also, on Tuesdays from 7-10 pm the Dom offers "Introduction to Poland," which is being run by the Overseas Studies Department.

Louis O'Neill  
MA Student, CREES

# Slavic Department News

The Slavic Department and CREES are pleased to announce the spring quarter arrival of Andrei Sinyavsky (pseudonym Abram Terts), this year's Kendall Visiting Professor in Soviet Studies. Sinyavsky, a distinguished Soviet writer and former dissident, will teach two special courses in the Slavic Department: SLL 240, "Foundations of Soviet Civilization" (4 units) and SLL 300G, "Mayakovsky, the Poet of the Revolution" (4 units). Both courses will be taught in Russian.

The Slavic Department will be holding a conference devoted to Sinyavsky's work on May 4, 1992, beginning at 10 a.m. (location to be announced). The title of the conference will be "Abram Terts: Good Night, Soviet Civilization." Participants will be Professor Donald Fanger of Harvard University, Professor Catherine Nepomnyashchy of Columbia University, literary critic Peter Vail of New York City, literary critic Alexander Genis of New York City, Professor Lazar Fleishman of Stanford University, Associate Professor Gregory Freidin of Stanford University, and doctoral student Sara Fenander of Stanford University. Andrei Sinyavsky and his wife Maria Rozanova, literary critic and editor, will be the honored guests. The Slavic Department conference will feature an exhibit of Sinyavsky's books, which have been published in several languages, and all his articles that have been printed by the Sintaksi publishing house. This exhibit will be the public's first opportunity to see the complete collection of Sinyavsky's work.

The Slavic Department congratulates three of its doctoral students who have been offered professorships. Jehanne Gheith has recently accepted a tenure-track assistant professorship in Russian literature at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. Gheith, a specialist in 19th century Russian literature, will teach a course this fall on Pushkin and Dostoyevsky, and will teach a course in narrative theory in the spring. Tom Hodge, also a specialist in 19th century Russian literature, has accepted a tenure-track assistant professorship in the Russian Department at Wellesley College in Massachusetts. He will be teaching first-year Russian both semesters of next year, along with surveys of 19th and 20th century Russian literature in translation (fall and spring, respectively). Natasha Sankovitch has accepted a tenure-track assistant professorship as the Russian specialist in the Humanities and Classics Department at Ohio Wesleyan University. She will be teaching classes in 19th century Russian literature, as well as mythology and folklore. Congratulations and best of luck to all!

The Slavic Department also announces its summer language program. Intensive courses will be taught at the beginning level by native speakers: Professor Rima Greenhill (Russian), Visiting Professor Waldemar Martyniuk from Jagiellonian University in Kraków (Polish), Visiting Professor Ivana Bozdechova of Charles University in Prague (Czech), and Visiting Professor Jasmina Bojic (Serbo-Croatian). The Slavic Department will also be offering "Masterworks of Russian Prose," a course in 19th- and 20th-century Russian literature in English translation. For more information, please see the adjacent announcement, or call the Slavic Department at (415) 723-4438.

## STANFORD UNIVERSITY 1992 SUMMER LANGUAGE INSTITUTE

### DEPARTMENT OF SLAVIC LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

#### NEW SUMMER PROGRAM (June 23 - August 15, 1992)

The Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures is offering a new summer program in intensive **RUSSIAN, POLISH, CZECH** and **SERBO-CROATIAN** languages, taught by native speakers. Each course covers the equivalent of one year of college-level language study.

#### **INTENSIVE FIRST-YEAR RUSSIAN FOR BEGINNERS:**

MTWThF, 9:00-12:00, 12 units. For course structure information please contact Dr. Rima Greenhill at (415) 723-8240.

#### **INTENSIVE FIRST-YEAR POLISH FOR BEGINNERS:**

MTWThF, 9:00-12:00, 12 units. For course structure information please contact Visiting Professor Waldemar Martyniuk (Jagellonian University, Kraków, Poland) at (415) 725-0012 or (415) 328-0669.

#### **INTENSIVE FIRST-YEAR CZECH FOR BEGINNERS:**

MTWThF, 9:00-12:00, 12 units. For course structure information please contact Visiting Professor Ivana Bozdechova (Charles University, Prague, Czechoslovakia) at (415) 725-0013.

#### **INTENSIVE FIRST-YEAR SERBO- CROATIAN FOR BEGINNERS:**

12 units. For course structure information please contact Visiting Professor Jasmina Bojic at (415) 725-0012.

#### In addition, **MASTERWORKS OF RUSSIAN**

**PROSE**, a Russian literature in English translation course, will be offered. The course will cover some of the most admired works of Russian literature of the 19th and 20th centuries. Staff, MW, 1:15-3:00, 3 units.

For information and application materials  
please contact:

Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures  
Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305  
(415) 723-4438.

## Interview with Heinrich Bortfeldt

Dr. Heinrich Bortfeldt, formerly of the Socialist Unity Party Social Science Institute in Berlin, is a German Marshall Fund Visiting Scholar at Stanford. He has recently published a book called *From the SED to the PDS: Transformation to Democracy?*

**KG:** What research are you working on now at Stanford?

**HB:** I was awarded a grant from the German Marshall Fund of the United States, which took me to the U.S., and the title of the project is "the American approach toward the transformation of East Germany in 1989-1990," which means the transformation of East Germany [due to] the revolution at that time, and the American approach and the American policy toward German unification. I did some research during the fall semester [1991] at the Virginia Military Institute, which is not far away from Washington D.C. I collected a lot of material and conducted several interviews with people from the State Department; for example, with the last American ambassador to East Germany, Richard Barkley, and the last American ambassador to West Germany, Vernon Walters. Now I am here at Stanford to continue my research. I had several interviews with professors from Stanford and from Hoover too; for example, with the director of CREES, Norman Naimark, and next week I will have an interview with the former Secretary of State, George Shultz.

**KG:** How have you adjusted to the transition to academic freedom?

**HB:** This question is not easy to answer because everything is still in flux. To be honest, I was a believer in the ideas of Marx; I wanted to make [the system] better than the older generation did, and to learn from history, but that project has failed. But nevertheless, [the transition] might not be too difficult for me because my former research dealt not only with the ideas of socialism or communism. ... I did my Ph.D. on German postwar [WWII] history as seen from the American perspective: how American historians and political scientists viewed German history. I was interested in their view on German history because I became aware of the fact that there are more historians in the United States who deal with German history than in Germany. I dealt with American history and history writing in America, as well as historiography in West Germany, so I did not focus only on the East German view of history or communism, but on the Western view of German history or communism as well. And then when I came to America, I taught two courses with another professor at the Virginia Military Institute: one course on Western Europe but focusing on Germany, and the other course was on communism. ... What was amazing for me was that I taught at a military institute, and I experienced academic freedom there. ... It was different in East Germany; you had to give your manuscript in advance to your boss [for approval]. But here no one told me what to do or what to teach; I knew [I would be teaching] a course on Europe, focusing on Germany, but no one wanted to have a manuscript or check me out or anything. It was fascinating for me.

**KG:** What were your experiences with censorship under the East German government?

**HB:** If you wanted to publish a book, there was censorship. There was some kind of censorship in the libraries as well. If I wanted to read a book from a Western country, on American views of German history, for example, I needed permission from my boss to read it because it is from a Western country. I got this permission because I did research on America and West Germany, ... but others had to ask in advance for it. I would like to differentiate [between censorship in the lower and upper levels] within the SED, the Socialist Unity Party, that was in fact the communist party; it was quite different if you ask [about] censorship in the higher level or in the lower level. For example, in the lower level there were open discussions; you could criticize Erich Honecker and the party and everything you wanted. But it was a different story in the higher level: everyone was aware of the fact that there is a certain framework, let's say, and you were not allowed to go further. Everyone knew ... that you can discuss this or that question, but if you would discuss the church, the system, or the politburo, it is a different story.

**KG:** So in the lower level, people could have open discussions, and no one from the upper level would punish them for having those discussions?

**HB:** It happened sometimes, but mainly the leaders didn't care for the rank and file members of the party. They lived in their own world; they were very isolated from what the people were really thinking. People were punished; for example, ... when I worked as a teacher during the 70's, I went with my class into a church to listen to a concert. [This] was not allowed ... because there was a sharp division between church and state in East Germany. ... They made some notice in my files that I went to church.

**KG:** What happened when you submitted manuscripts or articles? Did they come back with whited-out sections, saying you could publish everything but those sections?

**HB:** Yes. For example, it happened that when the changes began in East Germany in the fall of 1989 I wrote two articles about the American attitude towards unification. I gave it to the publisher, and he said, "It's very interesting, but now I prefer to publish something about the peasants' war," which was several hundred years ago.

**KG:** So censorship was more in the topic that they would want you to write or not write about. But you still couldn't say whatever you wanted within the topic, though.

**HB:** Yes, but as far as this example is concerned, it was in the 16th century; no one would quarrel about this. But what I was writing about was happening right now, and this was too challenging for them. ... You didn't want to be involved in current affairs. To be on the safe side is to write about things or issues which were long gone in history. Or, for example, if you wanted to publish an article, there were lots of discussions within the institution [and] you got some criticism. ... Everyone knew exactly what the limit was: going too far would mean the end of your career. I was aware of this fact too. I was trying to be critical, but not too critical. One example to add: do you remember when there were events in China, in Tiananmen

Square [in June 1989]? The East German government and the communist party applauded this kind of solution, having tanks come in. I was in favor of a political solution. My opinion was that to solve a students' protest with tanks cannot be a solution of the 20th century. You have to negotiate and find political solutions. After saying this to my boss, I was considered [to be] a weak liberal, not a tough communist. The result was that [he wondered], and he was a real hard-liner, "can I trust Bortfeldt anymore?"

**KG:** What kind of research and writing were you able to do under the former East German government, considering the ideological restrictions and limited access to resources?

**HB:** [Because of my field], I was allowed to read Western literature, history books on America and West Germany. ... I was allowed to use the [library at the] John F. Kennedy Institute in West Berlin twice for that stay, but not to have personal contacts. ... It was ridiculous. ... And then for my Habilitation [second Ph.D. dissertation] I was allowed to go to the U.S. I was awarded a grant from IREX in Princeton, which took me to the U.S. for the first time in the fall of 1988, for three months. I [did some research] in Washington D.C. and at Stanford as well. And on this occasion I met Norman [Naimark] for the first time. My ideological restrictions? There were some, of course. For example, according to the ideology, especially to the ideas of Lenin and Leninism, the USA was considered as an enemy and as the obstacle to progress and world peace. America was seen as the bad guy, responsible for everything bad in the world. This goes back to Lenin's criticism of imperialism. ... This was the ideological restriction.

**KG:** I also meant to ask whether they said to you, "No, we want you to present your material this way."

**HB:** Yes. ... When I was here three years ago, I came back with many, many questions, and I compared the two systems, of course. I had many questions especially as far as democracy is concerned, [as far] as the use of power is concerned, [as far] as the control of power is concerned. And when I came back in December of 1988, there was already a tough situation in East Germany. For example, in November, the Soviet magazine Sputnik was forbidden in East Germany.

**KG:** Because it was considered too progressive?

**HB:** Yes. When I came back, I found a different situation in East Germany from the situation I left. I wanted to speak about my experiences in the U.S., but no one was interested. I got half an hour to speak at a party meeting about my three months' experience in the U.S. After half an hour, the director looked at his watch and thought it was enough. ... On the official level, no one was really interested in talking about democracy or power, but in private, [it was] very different [because] ... the situation was too tough at that time. When I defended my second dissertation after that visit to the United States, one of the professors criticized me [in] that I was a victim of Gorbachev's ideas, and the other said that I should have criticized the American political system more heavily than I did.

**KG:** How much were you able to travel under the government?

**HB:** Traveling to the East was not a problem, so my family and I went several times to the Soviet Union, to Czechoslovakia, which we liked very much, to Poland, and to Hungary; but traveling to the West was impossible. This is my second visit to a Western country, excluding West Berlin, and when we came over in June to the United States, it was the first [time] for my family, for my wife and my two daughters, to visit a Western country. ... My wife is a teacher of English and history, and she has been teaching English for almost 20 years, but for the first time ever, she has visited an English-speaking country.

**KG:** How is German reunification affecting Communist and formerly Communist East German political scientists and historians? What about former East German political scientists and historians in general, regardless of party affiliation?

**HB:** I can speak in general and I can speak in a personal way. ... I was a member of the Communist party, and my institution was a research institution of the central committee. The Communist party collapsed, and as a result, my institution collapsed and was dissolved [some months] after the wall came down, as were many other institutions which were close to Marxist and Leninist ideology. History departments, economics departments, cultural departments — many of them were dissolved as well.

**KG:** Did all of those people lose their jobs?

**HB:** More or less, yes. ... I was unemployed for almost half a year. It was terrible for me, because I was raised in East Germany. ... I never thought that I should become unemployed one day. ... [Employment] was guaranteed, and according to our ideology, unemployment had something to do with capitalism, not with socialism or so-called socialism. ... It was not a financial problem to be unemployed; I got 68 percent of my salary. It was not very much, but the really challenging problem was the psychological one, to be unemployed for the first time ever, at the age of 40. But [with] our first hard currency that we got after the monetary union on July 1 [1990], we bought a personal computer, and I worked very hard during my time of unemployment. I wrote three articles for a West German journal which is published in Bonn, Deutschland Archiv, and I finished my book on the collapse of the SED. So I was quite productive during that time; I made the best of everything.

I applied for several jobs, and it happened one day that I got two letters, one from the Fulbright Commission, and they said, "It sounds interesting, but unfortunately —", and the other one came from the German Marshall Fund from the United States, and they said yes! ... So I have a job more or less for one year, until next summer, and then I don't know. So I am applying right now for a new job. This is [also] part of the history of many political scientists and historians of the former GDR. But I would say that I'm quite lucky that I was awarded this grant. Anyone could apply for [it], not only scholars from East Germany or former East Germany, but everyone in united Germany at that time. ... I suppose that most former political scientists and historians who dealt with the latest history, not with ancient history, have lost their jobs. Unemployed professors who are in their late 50's and early 60's are in early retirement.

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narily, I take lots of photographs, but I have purposefully left my camera in my hotel room. These people are already humiliated enough; they don't need some foreigner snapping their picture.

The longest line in the vicinity of the market, all men, attracts my attention. In the kiosk at the front of a nervous, shifting line is the prize: half-litres of rubbing alcohol, at 40 rubles per bottle. The bottles are of generic green glass, the labels in crude typescript: "Pure distilled spirits, for external use only." Nothing else on the label — no factory name, no warning label about ingesting the stuff. Elsewhere around town during my nine days in St. Petersburg, I see many more lines at similar kiosks for the same little green bottles, men carrying away as many bottles as they can carry.

### **In Church**

Next to the market, I go into a functioning church that reopened only last year (the 18th-century Church of the Vladimir Mother of God). It's only partially refurbished with the icons and other accoutrements that a Russian Orthodox church typically displays, but there are lots of people around, and not just casual visitors like myself. People line up to buy votive candles, then they make the rounds of the candle stands in front of their favorite icons, bowing and crossing themselves, whispering prayers in memory of lost loved ones. A lady of the church, dressed in the obligatory black, is selling small communion breads to be included in the next liturgical service (to put it more properly, she asks for specified donations for the breads); the purchasers/donors bend over pieces of paper, writing the names of loved ones — living and deceased — to be mentioned in the next liturgy (health to the living, repose — to the dead). Also available are pre-sanctified breads to be taken home to the bedridden.

Before a side chapel is a young bearded priest lecturing a group of teenagers about the do's and don'ts of the Christian life. When he finishes, he gently touches each one of them and wishes them well in their new lives. A bit embarrassed by the presence of us onlookers, they reach for towels and start to dry off their heads and shoulders. It's a baptism! Now I notice the baptismal font. On the lectern where the priest performed the service is his penciled note listing the diminutives of his new flock of lambs: Misha, Natasha, Iurii, Son'ia, et al.

Seemingly in natural succession, the church busies itself for its next service: a wedding! God, the couple looks young! Whose parents will they have to live with, and for how many years? The bride is beautifully attired in a lacy white wedding dress that any girl in America would be delighted to wear. How much did that cost them, I wonder — even if Mommy made it? The priest intones the opening prayers, the deacon and choir respond in turn, and the wedding party processes the length of the church to the lectern before the royal doors of the iconostasis.

The priest reads the principal wedding prayer: "Bless this marriage, O God, and vouchsafe unto these thy servants, Andrei and Natasha, a peaceful life, length of days, chastity, mutual love in the bond of peace, long-lived seed, gratitude from their posterity, a crown of glory which fadeth not away. Preserve the sanctity of their bed unassailed. Fill their houses with wheat, and wine, and oil, and with every beneficence, that

they may bestow in turn upon the needy." Indeed, I think to myself, may they find peace and love, not to mention wheat and wine and oil.

Outside the church on the sidewalk, the needy proliferate, begging — old women, toothless, bent with age and untold burdens; men without limbs (victims of war or traffic accidents or hazardous factory conditions); people with open sores, untreated deformities like harelip, unoperated-on tumors; one man on the ground has his pant legs drawn up so that you can see his legs. The skin on his legs, fiery red, looks as if it has been permanently broiled by the sun or scalded by hot liquid; open sores ooze pus.

I step to the side and fish for my wallet again, taking out a wad of 25r notes. I give some to each of the beggars and, embarrassed, accept their blessings. I'm embarrassed because, at 85r to \$1, my gifts, so generous in their eyes, cost me only pennies.

### **"Catch-22:" The Bank**

Wanting to change money the next morning, I approach the exchange bank window in the hotel. A motley, cigarette-smoking, restless bunch of St. Petersburgians — some 30 or 40 persons — crowds around the bank window. Rumor has it that the exchange rate of 100 rubles to the dollar is going to drop to as low as 50 to the dollar. Local citizens, taking advantage of new laws that make it more or less legal to possess foreign currency, are anxious to convert whatever foreign currency they have into rubles at the current high rate. The morning ritual, repeated daily without variation, proves bizarre: at 9:00 a.m. the bank window opens, and the first two or three customers are served; at 9:05, the window closes, and a well-worn, hand-lettered sign in English is posted, stating that the bank is out of cash.

The Russian government is printing money as fast as it can, and new 500-ruble notes have been introduced (my St. Petersburg friends ask to see one), but the printing presses cannot keep up with inflation. The morning bank ritual doesn't bother me: I discover I can change money with the waiters in the dining room at 85 to 1, which is good enough for me (in past years, the annoyingly disadvantageous official exchange rate valued the ruble at up to \$1.50; now the ruble costs me less than 1.5 cents!). Because of the cash "deficit" (everything worth having in Russia is in short supply, "defitsitnyi"), for the first time in my 33 years of visiting Russia the gray market rate for exchanging rubles for foreign currency is lower than the official rate.

The morning bank ritual reminds me of the many "Catch-22" situations I have experienced in Russia over the years. In this case, "in principle" (as the Russian expression has it), you can change money at the bank at 100r to \$1. But in fact, there's no cash. There's the old Soviet joke about the woman who tries to buy a train ticket to Principle, because she keeps hearing that "in principle" in the Soviet Union you can buy anything you want. I have often tried to explain "Catch-22" to my Russian friends, but if you haven't read Joseph Heller's book or seen the movie, you don't see the humor. Heller's conundrum is a Russian's reality.

*Jack Kollmann*  
*CREES MA Program Coordinator*

# Calendar of Events

- April 2**  
Thursday  
2 - 3:30 p.m.  
**Robert Conquest**, Hoover Institution, Stanford University  
**Alec Nove**, Visiting Professor of Economics, UC Berkeley  
*"Stalin: The Death Toll"*  
200 Encina Hall, Red Room.
- April 8**  
Wednesday  
12 - 1:30 p.m.  
**Georgi Vlasenko**, Filmmaker  
Video Presentation: *Memories of the Caucasus*  
200 Encina Hall, Red Room.
- April 10**  
Friday  
8:30 a.m. -  
8:30 p.m.  
**XVI Annual Stanford-Berkeley Conference**  
*"The Consequences of the Collapse of the Soviet Union"*  
Co-sponsored with UC Berkeley.  
Panels: *"Post-Soviet Politics," "The Economic Future,"*  
*"A New Historiography," "Nationalities, Ethnicity and Gender,"*  
*"Post-Soviet Culture," "Future of the 'Field.'"*  
Oak West Lounge, Tresidder Union.
- April 13**  
Monday  
Noon  
**Roger Pethybridge**, Director, Centre of Russian and East European Studies, University College, Swansea, Wales.  
*"Soviet Treatment of the Minority Nationalities in the 1920's and the Early Gorbachev Period — a Comparison"*  
200 Encina Hall, Red Room.
- April 15**  
Wednesday  
12 - 1:30 p.m.  
**Sorin Antohi**, Research Fellow  
Institute of History, University of Iasi, Romania.  
*"Education vs Anthropology: The Post-Communist Experience"*  
200 Encina Hall, Red Room.
- April 23**  
Thursday  
4:00 p.m.  
**Ivo Banac**, Professor of History, Yale University.  
*"The War in Yugoslavia"*  
History Corner, Room 203.
- April 30**  
Thursday  
Noon  
**Jochen Thies**, Editor-in-Chief, *Europa-Archiv*.  
*"Germany and Eastern Europe"*  
200 Encina Hall, Red Room.
- May 4**  
Monday  
10:00 a.m.  
**Andrei Sinyavsky Conference**  
*"Abram Terts: Good Night, Soviet Civilization"*  
Location TBA.
- May 18**  
Monday  
4:00 p.m.  
**Annual Donald M. Kendall Lecture**  
Arnold Horelick, RAND Corporation.  
Location TBA.

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**KG:** Is the government paying for their pensions?

**HB:** Yes. But it is very tough for scholars who are between the ages of 50 and 60; [they] are not able to find any work now.

**KG:** What sort of job would you like to have when you go back, ideally?

**HB:** My ideal would be to work as a professor at a university, maybe at Humboldt University in Berlin. That would be really great.

**KG:** Would you want to teach in the West?

**HB:** Why not?

**KG:** How have your views of the West changed as a result of your experiences here in the U.S. and under the unified German system?

**HB:** I wouldn't say that I had such a tough or negative opinion of the West [before I came here]. ... In my mind, America [is the] country of George Washington, of Jefferson and Paine, but on the other hand, America was connected with the Vietnam War. In my view there are two sides of America: one really great, liberal side [with] a great history, and the other side which [includes the] many homeless people. For example, in New York, I saw ... wealth and poverty. I remember very well [that] when I was here three years ago, I met a scholar in Buffalo, and we discussed [during] the whole night one subject, democracy: democracy in America and democracy in the former East Germany. My point was [that] of course you have freedom of opinion in America, but in East Germany you didn't have such freedom of opinion. But on the other hand, in East Germany there was no unemployment; there was social security for everyone, on a very low level, but there was social security. So it never happened to me that a man in the street asked me for money. ... When I first met people in Washington D.C. begging, it was a real shock to me, and I didn't really know how to behave in this new situation. So I had two sides of America in mind; [my view] was more or less balanced. But I was part of the [former East German] system, and I supported the system more or less, and as a result of this, Lenin's criticism of imperialism was in my mind, too.

[My view] changed mostly when I talked to American people, to American scholars, especially when we arrived in the United States, when people came and said, "How are you? Do you need something? If you need something, please let us know." They were so friendly to us. And then I was allowed to teach at a military institution, as a former member of a Communist party. I expected that someone would address me as a bad guy because of the Communist system, but no one did. The [VMI] cadets were very interested in my personal experiences in East Germany. So we had lots of interesting discussions, and no one treated me as a bad guy. This was very surprising for me. I was very grateful for this and appreciated it very much.

**KG:** Is there anything else we haven't covered that you'd like to share with readers of the CREES newsletter?

**HB:** Yes. I would like to stress that I am very grateful to CREES that I am here. I am grateful to Norman and his associates, Irina, Charlotte and Rosemary. They are very helpful and friendly and gave me great assistance so that I can continue my research. ... At CREES, they treated me respectfully as a scholar and as a human being, not as a bad guy from a bad system, and for this I am really grateful. ... [I] came from a system in which the bottom line was that America is the enemy, the bad evil in the world, even worse than France and Great Britain and the other Western countries. ... [I] did not come with this enemy picture, but [some of it] was still in my mind, because I was raised in the [former East German] system. I [lived] in the system for about 40 years; [it stays] in your mind [whether] you like it or not. You [heard] it every day. ... So there were some clichés still in mind, and after some weeks we said, "Where is the enemy? Where is the evil?" It was a real shock in the positive sense. [My wife] went back with quite a different view, and my view has changed a lot, too. ... That does not mean that I see uncritically everything which is going on in America. But my perspective is that I am here to learn; it's not my business to criticize America, because I am coming from a system which failed. And I do hope that my experiences in America will help me to start a new academic life. ... I have mixed feelings [for the future], but I am still hopeful.

*Kristin Gustavson*  
*MA Student, CREES*

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