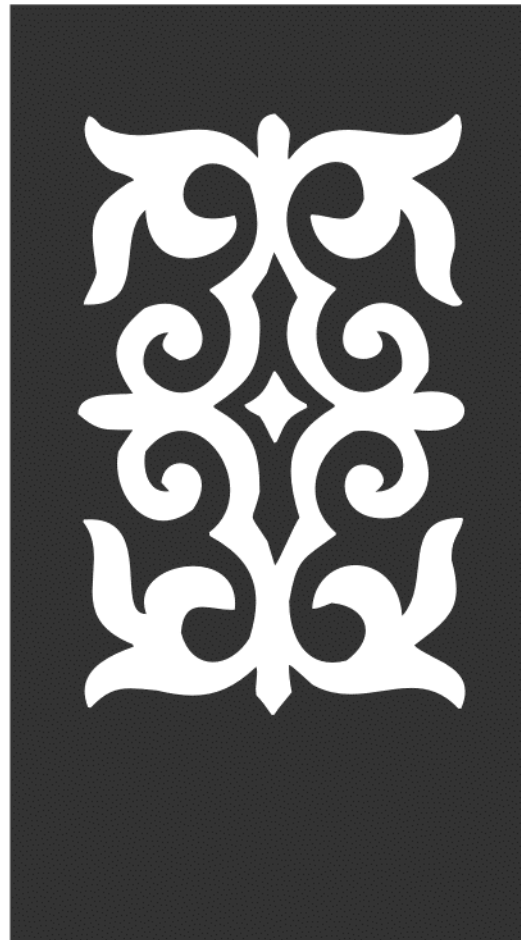


C E S R



Central Eurasian Studies Review

Volume 1

Number 2

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CENTRAL EURASIAN STUDIES SOCIETY

c/o John Schoeberlein, President
Harvard Program on Central Asia and the Caucasus
1737 Cambridge Street
Cambridge, MA 02138, USA

Tel.: +1/617-496-2643

Fax: +1/617-495-4338

E-mail: CESS@fas.harvard.edu

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Central Eurasian Studies Review

Publication of the Central Eurasian Studies Society

Volume 1, Number 2

Spring 2002

ISSN 1543-7817 (On-line)

Contents

PERSPECTIVES

- The “Barnaul School” of Central Asian Studies: A Brief Review of Scientific Research in Barnaul Concerning Central Asian Politics and International Relations, Vladimir Boyko* 2

RESEARCH REPORTS AND BRIEFS

Reports

- Conceptions and Uses of “Victimhood” in Contemporary Mongolia, Christopher Kaplonski* 9
- Ongoing Archaeological Excavations in the Lower Don Region, Russia, Jeannine Davis-Kimball* 11
- Negotiating Inside/Outside in Post-Soviet Kazakhstan: Footnotes from Field Research, Cengiz Surucu* 13
- Shifting Social Networks in Post-Socialist Kazan, Helen Faller* 15

Brief

- Network Community Creation in Kazakhstan, Elena G. Gayevskaya* 18

REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS

- Book Review:** Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan’s Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics and the Rise of the Taliban*. Reviewed by Resul Yalcin 19
- Abstract:** *The TOL Annual Survey 2001 CD-ROM*. Prepared by Rafis Abazov 22

CONFERENCES AND LECTURE SERIES

- The Ninth Annual Indiana University Central Eurasian Studies Conference, Kerry Cosby* 23
- Middle East Studies Association 2001 Annual Meeting, Marianne Kamp* 24
- “Abseits der Seidenstrasse”: The Silk Road and Beyond: Art and Culture from Central Asia in Berlin, Beate Eschment* 25

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENTS

- “Legal Systems of Islamic Countries” at Sofia University, Vladimir Chukov* 28

Perspectives

The “Barnaul School” of Central Asian Studies: A Brief Review of Scientific Research in Barnaul concerning Central Asian Politics and International Relations

Vladimir Boyko, Associate Professor of Modern Asian Studies and Research Director of the “Russia and the East” Laboratory, Center for Regional Studies, Barnaul State Pedagogical University, Barnaul, Russia, boyko@bspu.secna.ru

Barnaul is the metropolis of Russian Altay. It was founded as a settlement in 1730 and with the passage of time became one of the main administrative and industrial centers of Asiatic Russia with a population of about 700,000 and many universities. From the very beginning, the city developed multinationally with local indigenous Turkic groups. It became a primarily Slavic city during the Stalin period, as a result of the population transfer policies of the time, but since the Virgin Lands campaign of the 1950s, and especially in the 1990s, in-migration from across the former USSR and from overseas has again made it much more multinational. Its ethnic situation has been basically quiet and without conflict.

The study of interregional interactions in the Great Altay [*Bol'shoi Altai*] and adjacent territories, both in its concrete specificity and in the formation of conceptual frameworks, including their historical connections, builds upon longstanding traditions of scholarly research in Asian Russia in general, and is, in Barnaul, contextualized by the interdisciplinary field of inquiry in particular, which is here called “research on Central Asia.” Although it is difficult to periodize precisely the development of those scholarly traditions, a necessary reference point is the 1860s, the decade when Vasilii (Wilhelm) Radlov, future member of the Academy of Sciences and future director of the Asian Museum in St. Petersburg, began his professional and scientific career in the field of Turcology and related subjects. It was nowhere else but Barnaul, where this young German scholar of the humanities spent the first twelve years of his life in Russia. It is unfortunate that neither Radlov’s research nor that of other enthusiasts, be they serious scholars or amateurs, found anyone to continue them towards the end of the nineteenth century, or even during the entire first half of the twentieth. The only exception to this

would be the great ethnographer Leonid Petrovich Potapov, author of numerous works written during the Second World War on the history and ethnography of the peoples of southern Siberia, and of Altaics in the first place.

In the 1960s Alexei Pavlovich Umanskii developed scholarly research on problems of international relations in Central/Inner Asia. He concentrated on state formations in southern Siberia and adjacent regions, and further undertook fundamental analysis of these states’ interrelations (and the state of the Teleuts especially) with their Turcophone neighbors (West Siberian Tatars, Oyrots and others), and also Mongols from the seventeenth century through the first quarter of the eighteenth (see, e.g., Umanskii 1995).¹ Lacking an adequate academic environment, Umanskii nevertheless became a high-caliber researcher in Barnaul due to his personal qualities and collection of numerous archival sources on subjects he investigated. Characteristically, he did not found his own scholarly school having graduate students, group projects, and so forth. For this, he was reproached by certain colleagues who were unaware of the specific scientific situation in Barnaul (personnel, source material, etc.) and whose method of work required proper concentration on, for example, the development of special skills (such as the decipherment of handwritten archival documents) as well as deep historico-ethnological knowledge. Nevertheless, Umanskii was the first humanities specialist in Barnaul who made the transition to

¹ In 1983 Umanskii published another leading work of research on the Teleuts and Russians. His work serves as the basis for a scholarly portrait of mutual relations among the small native peoples of Inner Asia with Russia and also Jungaria.

science, broadly construed, and he became an enthusiastic example for subsequent generations of archaeologists, foreign affairs specialists and others. One of Umanskii's first followers was Aleksei Dmitr'evich Sergeev, who became a specialist on the Barnaul region, easily and frequently transcending disciplinary frameworks in his studies of local history, and who made essential contributions to research having broad implications for how questions should be framed in Central Asian studies.

The field of "Asian Russia and the Asian Near Abroad" considerably developed and expanded thanks to studies by Vladimir Anisimovich Moiseev (a native of the Altay Territory) concerning the policies of the Qing Empire towards the Saiano-Altaic peoples. Moiseev's professional training synthesizes the traditions of several schools of Oriental studies and international relations, including the Moscow and Almatī schools in the first instance.² Moiseev carried out intensive research in institutes in Almatī, Kazakhstan prior to 1991. However, he returned home due to political and scholarly disagreements with certain colleagues, and thanks to his efforts the Altay State University founded its Faculty of Oriental Studies in 2000. Its basic orientation is towards Central Asian studies, in particular the mutual relations between Russia and the countries bordering it to the east (China, Kazakhstan, Mongolia). Moiseev's work is distinguished by deep knowledge of historical sources and a polemic approach. Moving to Barnaul seems to have been fruitful for Moiseev. Since his arrival, he has published two single-authored monographs in addition to collections of articles.³ His work has recently taken a new turn with the sponsorship by the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation (Taiwan) of a large-scale project on the history of Russian-Chinese relations in Xinjiang from the beginning of the nineteenth through the first third of the twentieth centuries.

Moiseev's students (Oleg Valer'evich Boronin, Andrei Iur'evich Bykov, Konstantin Viktorovich Khakhalin, Oksana Anatol'evna Omel'chenko and

others) work successfully in the field, and the majority of them have already defended dissertations. Thus Boronin has considered in detail the important question of dual tributary obligations [*dvoedannichestvo*] and dual subject relations [*dvoepoddanstvo*] of the Turkic peoples of south and southwest Siberia from the seventeenth century through the 1860s. Boronin believes this phenomenon of geopolitical history originated in the utter defeat of Jungaria by Qing China in the 1850s, the relative balance between Russia and China in Central Asia, and the Russian government's unwillingness to damage favorable trade with China. However, by the 1860s, the change in the balance of forces in Southern Siberia and Central Asia put an end to dual subject relations in Altay, and the demarcation of the frontier between these two great empires began (Boronin 2002). Khakhalin, probably the best Barnaul expert on the Chinese language, has investigated the differentiation of the Russian and Chinese spheres in Central Asia (1864 Chuguchak Protocol and other source documents).

In the early 1980s, work by Vladimir Nikolaevich Vladimirov (see, 1984a, 1984b, et al.)⁴ concentrated on foreign factors in the social and economic development of the Southern Altay in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including the modern and historical demography of Russian Siberia and its transborder regions. Bykov's potential as an expert steadily increases thanks to his success in grant-seeking and contacts with Moscow academic circles. His sphere of interests includes characteristics of the foreign policy of Siberian authorities in the mid-nineteenth century and their autonomy in decision-making on international problems. With Moiseev's help, Bykov has moved from Kazakhstan and is, accordingly, an expert on the realities of the place. He is developing a special course for the university on the Commonwealth of Independent States. Omel'chenko's life has taken a similar course: she has a unique background, thanks to scholarly-vocational training in the St. Petersburg School of Sinology. Her interests concentrate on modern Xinjiang, and she has a good knowledge of both Chinese and Japanese (see Omel'chenko 2002).

The professional fate of Valerii Anatol'evich Barmin has likewise subjected him to remarkable

²His teacher was the well-known researcher on Central Asia Boris Pavlovich Gur'evich, a significant part of whose scholarly archive (copies of documents and books) he managed to transfer to Barnaul.

³One of these publications (Moiseev 2001) is a selection of his publicistic work, essays and scientific articles published in various editions over the last ten years. It is very polemical and has leading figures of the Kazakh academic community as its opponents.

⁴Boronin (2002, p. 8) characteristically sees contributions by Vladimirov and some other authors to the study of approaches to examining interregional interactions in Central Asia, as falling within the limits of Siberian studies.

peregrinations. Beginning with a critique of the bourgeois historiography of US policy in China during the interwar period (a traditional theme of the Americanologists at Tomsk University, where Barmin did graduate work in the early 1980s), he switched to the study of US policy in the Philippines from 1898 to 1946. This road, however, led to an impasse because of the inaccessibility of sources and literature and the absence of a conducive environment, among other reasons. Moiseev's move to Barnaul solved his problem. Moiseev, sensitive to the choice of themes in relation to the present-day situation, has suggested the theme of Soviet policy in Xinjiang from 1918 to 1949, which even solid scholars and entire institutes in Moscow long ignored for political reasons.

New opportunities to use archival documents have crowned this bet with success: with Moiseev's full support, Barmin prepared two monographs within several years, and has defended a thesis for the *doktor nauk* degree at Tomsk University (Barmin 1998, 1999).⁵ The basic value of Barmin's works resides in his use of a significant quantity of documents from the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other departments playing a key role in implementing policy in Xinjiang. The extreme topicality and complexity of these problems attacked by Barmin in this most laudable initiative in fact requires further efforts not just on his part, but on the part of whole teams of qualified Sinologists, ethnologists, and others, both in the region itself and in Moscow. Barmin's work confirms that modern Xinjiang can no longer remain a blind spot, hidden in Russian scholarly research between Sinology on the one hand, and the complex of disciplines that constitute Central Asian research, on the other.

The theme of Russian-Chinese relations in Xinjiang will probably remain popular in Barnaul in the foreseeable future, given the propinquity of the Xinjiang-Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) to the Altay Territory, through the Altay Republic. Access to archival collections remains a precondition of the analysis of such historical subjects. The Barnaul specialists have such an opportunity in principle, but there is not yet any real cooperation between researchers from Altay and the XUAR. Only incidental visits from the Chinese side

have occurred, and only discussion of possible joint projects has yet been achieved.⁶ So far, only the most popular historical sources have been traced regarding the development of contemporary Xinjiang, including regional interactions between Russia and China.

Research themes are far from exhausted on the historical features of Russian Altay's interregional and frontier relations with transborder areas in Central Asia. Umanskii's analysis of such aspects of Russian-Chinese relations is not the only example. Another is the history of Russian-Mongolian trade and economic relations from the second half of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth. Aleksandr Vladimirovich Startsev, one of the leading experts on the history of Siberia's foreign economic relations with transborder Asia, works on the history of business in Altay (see, e.g., 1999a, 1999b). Startsev is not only a thoroughly knowledgeable expert on the pertinent historical sources, but also a serious analyst. However, he should recognize his membership in the community of researchers on Central Asia in addition to that of the Siberianists; the latter is an old complex of serious local researchers with broad profiles and knowledge of fontology (i.e., the science of evaluating and using primary historical sources).

Another Siberianist who could "objectively" be considered a Central Asian specialist is Tat'iana Kirillovna Shcheglova, who throughout the 1990s has scrupulously researched economic relations between Western Siberia and Northeast Kazakhstan from the second half of the nineteenth century through the beginning of the twentieth. She has particularly examined economic data concerning the basic forms taken by fairs and their historical role as a mechanism of exchange between the adjacent regions (2000, 2001). The serious interest evoked by Shcheglova's work among business circles is indicative of her great expertise and insight. The basic aspect of Shcheglova's scholarly originality lies in her treatment of historical-economic connections, problematizing them through interdisciplinary focus in a way that connects them with studies of Central Asia. Her way of framing the questions to be investigated and her use of primary historical sources especially contribute to that

⁵The current relevance of these themes and richness of the historical sources consulted have allowed Barmin to receive support from the Chiang Ching-kuo Fund (Taiwan), thanks to which his 1999 monograph was published.

⁶The last such visit of scientists from the XUAR was held in autumn 1999, when they participated in a conference devoted to the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. See Guan' Shousin' 1999, pp. 62-64.

problematization. But even this does not encompass all of Shcheglova's activity. There is also an organizational-managerial component to her work relating to the ethnology of Altay and adjacent territories. This is expressed institutionally by and given shape within the Oral History Section of the Barnaul Pedagogical University's Laboratory of Historical Regional Studies, regular ethnographic field trips and an overflowing archive of written, audio and video materials.⁷ Shcheglova coordinates all of this work, based on the activities of students who are performing both educational and scholarly tasks. One such former student, Konstantin Vadimovich Grigorichev, in fact is the initiator, within the Barnaul research community, of the study of modern social-demographic processes in Altay. His interests, as they have developed under the influence of the great Kazakhstani demographer Aleksandr Nikolaevich Alekseenko, have focused more and more on transborder migrations in Central Asia itself.

Mikhail Aleksandrovich Demin is Director of the Laboratory of Historical Regional Studies and Dean of the Historical Faculty in the Barnaul State Pedagogical University. The disciplines he practices have led him to gravitate towards Central Asian studies in recent years as well. The strongest feature of his individual scholarship is his historiographic approach. Indeed, his research is devoted to the historiography of the native peoples of Siberia, and it discusses many problems of a cultural-civilizational nature regarding Russian immigrants to the region, interregional interactions, and so forth (1995). Demin also gives much attention to training scholars, on both the doctoral [*doktor nauk*] and candidate [*kandidat*] levels, as well as to the conducting of archaeological expeditions. He is himself a student of the great Siberian archaeologist Alexei Pavlovich Okladnikov.

One of Demin's most capable students, Arkadii Vasil'evich Kontev, has carried out research on many problems in the recent history of Barnaul. He heads the Altay Regional Studies Association. In recent years Kontev participated in scholarly undertakings on Central Asian themes in tandem with V. B. Borodaev (1999, 2000). These materials are distinguished by their professional maturity and

originality, modern research techniques, and a special taste for the historical document. Borodaev, for his part, displays rare erudition concerning the broadest range of problems in the history, archaeology and ethnology of Central and Inner Asia. However, he has more difficulty making this knowledge available, for in terms of his formal career, he is a skilled editor, publisher and movie-director, as well as an organizer of activities for children and young people.

The Barnaul intellectual community owes a great deal to the remarkable career of Solomon Grigor'evich Livshits (1922-1994), the first scholar in Altay with advanced training ever to teach the history and international relations of the Orient; he inaugurated courses on these subjects in the early 1960s. With a solid university education from Moscow, Livshits found himself compelled by his move to Barnaul to modify the sphere of his earlier research interests (British policy in China in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries), and turned, for example in the 1970s and 1980s, to original research on the Siberian factor in Japanese policy during the years following the First World War (1991). Being the recognized authority in both teaching and research activities, Livshits neither sought nor used the sort of special protection that ministerial officials could grant, and he never obtained professorial rank. Nevertheless, his talent as a lecturer and teacher created great interest in Barnaul about the Orient (and even created illusions about the ease of studying it). As the only, indeed unique, Barnaul authority, and under conditions of almost complete isolation from the academic community even of Soviet Orientalists, his work was distinguished by subjectivity, weaknesses in methodology, and narrowness of subjects. Still, it was due to Livshits that the idea of the opportunity and desirability of deep study of the modern East took root in Barnaul and Altay. Following his death, a small group of former students (Tamara Alekseevna Shemetova, the aforementioned Barmin and Boyko) together with Moiseev, who had arrived from Kazakhstan, founded the Barnaul Pedagogical University Laboratory "Russia and the East," also known as the Center for Regional Studies. On the initiative of this Center the conference series "Russia, Siberia and Central Asia" has been held since 1996, as well as a lecture series in Oriental studies dedicated to Livshits' memory and a series of interdepartmental seminars entitled, "Russia's Asian Frontier."

⁷ Research results from Barnaul ethnologists are discussed at increasingly regular scientific-practical conferences that are more and more becoming international forums, and are being circulated in serious ethnological publications. See, e.g., *Etnografiia Altaia*, 1998 & 2001.

The author of the present article is also to be counted among Livshits' students. The particular features of my scholarly training and subsequent career led to an essentially marginal situation in the Barnaul university environment (with costs exceeding those even of Livshits himself). During the Soviet period, the best road to a scholarly career was a certain social background combined with political activism, personal connections and special arrangements with local officials. I succeeded in overcoming numerous formal obstacles, including a position as teacher in a workers' youth school (which had a branch for the local prison), to do graduate work at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Soviet Academy of Sciences in Moscow, perhaps one of the few establishments that still in those years retained the democratic and meritocratic spirit that permitted competition for scholarly degrees without recommendations from officials. The events and atmosphere of the mid-1980s together with the ambitiousness of my chosen research topic (Afghanistan) has accustomed me, from my first publications, to work with original sources and serious scholarly literature, including that in foreign languages. My principal teachers were two outstanding Russian Orientalists, the political scientist and historian Vladimir Fedorovich Li and the late Iurii Vladimirovich Gankovskii (who was the simultaneous center of several schools, such as those composed of Afghanists on the one hand, and specialists on Pakistan on the other hand).

However, even a degree in Oriental studies from the largest Moscow research center did not guarantee employment, so after returning to Barnaul I continued as a teacher in a workers' youth school (the students were drivers, weavers, even prisoners), and then later I replaced a teacher in one of the Siberian pedagogical institutes. Only by the late 1990s did postdoctoral studies at the same Institute of Oriental Studies in Moscow, along with active scholarship and international contacts, permit me to teach the modern and contemporary history of the East. My research and activities now involve the current history and historiography of Afghanistan and the Afghan diasporas, a history of Chinese and Korean immigration to Western Siberia, the Xinjiang factor in regional politics, the security problems of Asian Russia, directorship of the laboratory "Russia and the East" (Center for Regional Studies), the establishment and maintenance of international contacts and communications of Barnaul Orientalists and specialists in the humanities in general (Siberianists,

etc.), the organization of regional and international conferences, provision of expert services, and editing of scholarship on Central Asia published by the Center for Regional Studies (1998, 2000a, 2000b, 2001a, 2001b).⁸

The basic achievements of the Barnaul community of researchers on Central Asia and adjacent regions in the sphere of archaeology are connected with the names of Iurii Fedorovich Kiriushin (rector of Altay State University, who has motivated many scholarly initiatives, including those focused on Asia), Aleksandr Borisovich Shamshin and others. They and their colleagues analyze key problems of the history of Turks and their neighbors in the ancient period.

The scope and depth of scholarly expertise is a distinguishing feature of research of Barnaul geographers, ecologists and experts of ancillary disciplines, such as Gennadii Iakovlevich Baryshnikov, Boris Nikolaevich Luzgin, Viktor Semenovich Reviakin, Viktor Valentinovich Rudskii, Mikhail Iur'evich Shishin, Iurii Ivanovich Vinokurov, Irina Nikolaevna Rotanova, and others (*Geomorfologiya Tsentral'noi Azii* 2001). These experts have researched problems of extreme urgency, with an emphasis on practical issues and the special responsibility that experts have in this regard, often giving rise to sharp debates not only in the research community but also within the Altay public. One such example arises in connection with the discussion of a civil engineering design of a transport highway connecting Barnaul and Urumchi: Barnaul and general Altay archaeologists, ecologists and philosophers have acted as strong opponents of this project under consideration. Their arguments address how the prospective roadway may infringe upon the cultural-ecological equilibrium in the region, particularly on the Ukok Plateau, which UNESCO has listed as a protected natural site.

Another position on the roadway is found in the Altay government, as well as among business and economic representatives, who advocate developing interregional cooperation in light of existing cultural-ecological factors. Sergei Iur'evich Nozhkin, advisor to the governor of the Altay Territory for foreign trade activities and international

⁸ International support received by Boyko includes grants from the British Academy, CIAC AAS, Fulbright Program, OIS, IATP (Project Harmony), *inter alia* for the creation of the website "Central Asia: View from Siberia," which may be found at: <http://www.bspu.secna.ru/Faculty/History/orient/>.

communications, spends much effort to develop arguments to support such a view. He is directly involved in decision-making on these questions and seeks to adapt the scholarly expertise already available in Altay and in Barnaul so as to improve his own expert standing. Nozhkin is one of the few enthusiasts who shapes and helps to determine the analytical aspect of work on Altay's Central Asian "Near Abroad" (Kazakhstan, Xinjiang, China, Mongolia). He is a proponent of the idea of coordinating all organizational (including institutional) resources, and bringing to bear on Central Asian topics all those intellectual forces that are pertinent and professionally capable. Nozhkin has published many articles, participated in many scholarly conferences and seminars on the geopolitics and economic policies of the region, and participated in international negotiations on these matters.

Nozhkin's idea of collaboration among diverse fields is embraced by the small, qualified and ambitious community of those who associate themselves, or would like to do so, with interdisciplinary research on Central Asia. Barnaul has many objective prerequisites (geographic, geopolitical, not to mention scientific) for the creation of an authoritative regional center for research on Central Asia and related fields (Inner, North and Northeast Asia), that in time would be able to match and cooperate with relevant researchers in adjacent regions (Novosibirsk, Tomsk, etc.) as well as those in Moscow, and finally to define and occupy a niche in the national and international academic community, among those whose will choose to make their careers in the field of Central Asian studies, in its broadest connotation. The first and important step was taken in late 2001, when the Altay Center for Oriental Studies — an umbrella non-profit organization for all those interested in Central Asian studies — was established under Moiseev's directorship. There is no doubt that the history, features and forms of modern cultural, economic and other interstate and interregional interactions of the peoples of Russia and adjacent countries will become a key direction of the work of Barnaul orientologists, foreign affairs specialists, ethnologists and representatives of other subdisciplines within the complex of Central Asian research.

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Research Reports and Briefs

Reports

Conceptions and Uses of “Victimhood” in Contemporary Mongolia

Christopher Kaplonski, Mongolia and Inner Asia Studies Unit, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, United Kingdom, and Department of Anthropology, Rutgers University, New Jersey, USA, danzan@rci.rutgers.edu

For the past five years or so, I have been engaged in research on issues related to the legacy of political repression in Mongolia, the former Mongolian People’s Republic. The project itself grew out of the circumstances surrounding my 1997 fieldwork in the capital of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar. I had returned to Mongolia to study the effects of collectivization and related issues on the formation of a socialist Mongolian identity in the 1950s. But people were not all that interested in the topic. It turned out I had arrived in time for the 60th anniversary of the start of the repressions of the late 1930s, when at least 22,000 people were killed in a period of 18 months (other estimates put the figure as high as 30,000, or higher). This also coincided with the debate on the draft of the law to rehabilitate and compensate victims of political repression that was taking place in the *Ih Hural* (the Mongolian Parliament; see Kaplonski 1999 for this debate). These were the topics people were talking about, and so I began to study them as well.

Since that time, I have been focusing on a number of issues related to the issue of repression, but a central theme to my current research has been the concept of victimhood. I have been seeking to understand how the idea of victimhood is constructed and used in contemporary Mongolia in relation to the repressions of the socialist era (1921-1990). In other words, I want to understand how and why some people choose to identify themselves as victims, while others do not. Given the scope of the repressions throughout the socialist period, the oft-repeated Mongolian assertion that no family was left untouched may be only a slight exaggeration. The

vast majority of people, however, choose not to employ the label of victim.

Many of the issues taken up in my research would be familiar to students of identity and nationalism. Yet the majority of the literature dealing with political repression and its aftermath, and issues of accountability and reconciliation take the identity of victim to be self-evident and unproblematic (among others, see Borneman 1997; Hesse and Post 1999; Minow 1998). There is some recognition that matters in the Soviet bloc at least were more complicated — one thinks of Havel’s observation that all were both victims of the regime and complicit in its maintenance (Havel 1991) — but the concept of victim itself is still relatively unexplored.

The topic is fascinatingly complex. To cite one key example, the relatives of people who were killed in the 1930s often see themselves *more* as victims than people who were actually arrested and sentenced to exile and/or labor camps later in the socialist era. Yet according to the law on rehabilitating and compensating victims (and their relatives), the latter group of people are victims, while the former are not. To make matters even more interesting, while there is a word for “victim” in Mongolian, it is not used in such discussions. My explicit attempts to use it were often met with puzzlement. Rather than the term “victim,” a number of different terms based on the root “to repress” are used. Through this use of language, relatives of those who fit the legal definition of a repressed person place themselves on par with those that the law consider repressed.

These differences highlight the disjuncture between social and legal definitions of a victim of political repression. The different claims of victimhood relate to certain overlapping but competing conceptions of victims within the social sphere itself. In certain contexts, the label of victim is invested with considerable symbolic capital. It seems clear that these competing usages are linked to a struggle over symbolic capital, and who is entitled to use it. It is this tactical use of identity in post-socialist Mongolia that I am most interested in exploring.

In this context there are two aspects of victimhood as identity that I wish to outline briefly. The first point is that these competing versions of victimhood point out the fundamental, but too often overlooked, tactical aspect of identity. Identities exist for a purpose. At the most basic, this is to tell others, and ourselves, who we (think) we are. National identity, for example, identifies us with a fairly large group of people based on certain principles of who and what is thought to be important. It argues that certain markers are more important than others, and we thus are (or should be) bound to people who share these markers. People deploy different concepts of national identity based on what they feel to be important. This is not to say that such tactical uses are necessarily consciously deployed, although at times it seems clear that they are.

In looking at the case of “victim” in Mongolia, we see a similar process taking place. One relative of a victim of the 1930s repression whom I’ll call “Dulmaa,” once told me that “Dorj,” himself arrested in the 1960s as part of an anti-party group, didn’t really understand repression. The implication, of course, was that she did, and, more importantly, her voice should be given greater weight than his. Interestingly, Dulmaa claims to have a broader concept of “victim” than Dorj, although she also seems to guard her own claim more carefully. “His organization is just for 10 people [i.e., the staff] not the 30,000 [repressed],” she told me once, referring to the NGO Dorj had helped establish. And her inclusion of herself and acquaintances who suffered through the repression of parents or relatives of their parents’ generation is, we have seen, a broader concept than that covered by the law. And at this level, it is similar to Dorj’s use of the concept, since he also claims that relatives of the repressed were victims. Yet in her oft-repeated statements that the repressions of the 1930s were completely different from those of later periods, she is clearly

establishing a hierarchy within the category of victim.

It is also clear that various groups and individuals are using the label of “victim” in a tactical sense vis-à-vis non-victims. They have different goals — Dorj takes a more combative stance towards MAHN (the Mongolian People’s Revolution Party, who held power during the socialist period), while Dulmaa seems more interested in issues of commemoration. But this should not disguise the fact that they both claim (demand) for themselves a morally superior position, and that they base this claim on their status as victims. In many contexts, identity is seen as a limited good, a zero-sum game. In other words, the benefit one person or group receives from the use of the label must be balanced by a similar loss by another person or group. This is again clear in Dulmaa’s use of the concept. Underlying her distinction between the “real” repressions of the 1930s and the later ones is the belief that if all were recognized as equally deserving of the label, her own position would somehow be diluted. There is only a certain amount of “morality” to go around, as it were, and the more people share it, the less each person gets.

There are a number of other issues related to the repressions and the conception of victim that I am exploring. For example, it was only after their sweeping victory in the 2000 parliamentary elections that MAHN chose to offer what it called an apology for the repressions of the socialist era. Many people I talked to were singularly unimpressed with MAHN’s acknowledgement that while people had suffered under their watch, ultimately, MAHN itself was also a victim, not a perpetrator. The long delay and reasoning behind the timing of the apology bears further examination, as does the apparent mutual exclusivity of the categories of victim and victimizer. Despite the very real messiness of what actually seems to have taken place, people have been fairly clear-cut in drawing distinctions between the victims and the victimizers. This is a topic that I have begun to explore (see Kaplonski 2000), but that also bears further investigation.

Finally, through a combination of archival work and interviews, I am trying to gather information to present a historical understanding of the Mongolian gulag, through a case study of a particular “re-education camp” in northern Mongolia. Despite having spent over two of the past five years in Mongolia working on this topic, this

remains very much a work in progress. The more work I do on the subject, the more questions I raise. As a result, I would be interested in hearing from others with similar interests.

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Ongoing Archaeological Excavations in the Lower Don Region, Russia

Jeannine Davis-Kimball, Executive Director, Center for the Study of Eurasian Nomads (CSEN), Berkeley, Calif., USA, jkimball@csen.org

In 2000, a preliminary survey was made of the Chastiye [Chastye] Kurgany, a series of burial mounds [kurgans] located in the lower Don Region of southern Russia, between the Severskii Donets River (a tributary of the Don River) and the Bystraia River. The site, located about 65 kilometers northeast of Rostov-on-Don [Rostov-na-Donu], consists of 26 visible mounds as well as an unknown number of additional mounds that may have been razed by plowing (see map in Davis-Kimball 2001). Archaeologists from Rostov State University, Rostov-on-Don, Russia, led by Professor V. Ye. Maksimenko, conducted the 2000 excavations in collaboration with V. V. Kliuchnikov.

Kurgan 1, considered a ritual locale, was excavated in 2000. It revealed a rare burial type, dating to the early 4th century BCE. Among the artifacts recovered were a bronze cauldron, a brazier, various arrowheads, and pottery. Horse harness accoutrements in typical Scythian animal style included uniquely stylized cast-bronze images of fantastic animals. It is not clear, however, if these were created by Scythians or Sarmatians.

In 2001, the collaborative expedition continued, organized by Rostov State University; CSEN; and the journal *Donskaia arkheologiia*, published in Rostov-on-Don. Six mounds were excavated: Kurgans 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, and 11. One kurgan belonged to the 4th century BCE Early Iron Age nomadic period; three kurgans are attributed to the 8th century CE Khazar culture; and two to the Polovtsy culture from the end of the 12th century-beginning of the 13th century CE.

The earliest of the kurgans, number 4, dating to the 4th century BCE, revealed a male skeleton, aged 40-45, in supine position, oriented to the south. An iron arrowhead was found in his hip and a second was recovered near the femur. In addition, several dozen arrowheads of various types and the remains of an iron sword were recovered from the burial. Horse and sheep bones were also mortuary offerings. The orientation and artifacts indicate this to be an Early Sarmatian burial. Arrowheads found in the skeleton reveal that skirmishes or warfare took place between nomadic groups in the region, and could well have caused the death of this personage.

Next in the time frame at Chastiye Kurgany were three Kurgans, 2, 3, and 9, attributed to the Khazars. Khazar history is obscure prior to the middle of the 6th century, but it is known they were Turkic nomads originating in Central Asia. From ca. 550-630 CE they were part of the Western Turkish Empire, ruled by the Celestial Blue [Kök] Turks. In the middle of 7th century they asserted independence but still maintained many aspects of the Kök Turks' political systems. Originally the Khazars spoke a Turkic language and their primary belief system was Tengri shamanism. As they migrated north of the Black and Caspian Seas, ultimately forming the Khazar Empire, they became sedentary and with the aid of their strong trading partner, Byzantium, they established a number of fortified cities, including Sarkel, the remains of which are found north of Rostov-on-Don. Over time, the learned became skilled in Hebrew and Slavic. Some Khazar *khagans* [rulers] and nobility adopted Judaism, although subsequent khagans embraced Islam as well as Christianity and all three religions were practiced (Brook 1996 [2000]; Grousset 1970: 180-182).

The three excavated Khazar Kurgans (2, 3, and 9), dating to the first half of the 8th century, are the most northerly burials of this culture discovered to date. A ritual ditch surrounded Kurgans 2 and 3. Although they had been robbed, the skeletal remains indicate that both were males ranging from 25 to 40 years old at the time of death. Remaining artifacts included silver and bronze belt accoutrements, bone plaques belonging to a bow, and a number of unidentified iron objects. Kurgan 9, also robbed in antiquity, yielded two arrowheads, a gold earring, and ceramic sherds; this may have been a female burial.

The two remaining excavated burial mounds belonged to a people whom the Russians referred to as Polovtsy, but who were also referred to as the Qipchaqs in Turkic languages, as Komanoi in Byzantium; and as Cumans by the Arab geographer Idrisi. Originally the Polovtsy were one of the nomadic tribes making up the Kimak Turks who lived along the Irtysh and/or Ob rivers in Southern Siberia. Around the middle of the 11th century, the Polovtsy split from the Kimaks and began their migrations toward Europe. Russian chronicles first noted their presence in 1054 north of the Black Sea, where they soon became sole masters of the steppes until Chinggis Khan's troops invaded the region in 1222 (Grousset 1970:184-186).

The two Polovtsy kurgans excavated at Chastiye Kurgany, numbers 8 and 11, were distinctively covered with a layer of large stones. In Kurgan 8, a horse skeleton lay on the floor of the entrance shaft (*dromos*); the area that held the human burial in a wooden sarcophagus was separated from the dromos by a wooden partition. Mortuary artifacts included a bow, quiver, and arrows; the extant arrow shafts revealed evidence of having once been painted. Other remains indicated that a saddle and stirrups had been placed on top of the sarcophagus. Kurgan 11 was also the site of a similar ritual. Again separated by a wooden partition, the skeleton of a horse lay in the dromos, but in this case two burials, a male and female both in wooden sarcophagi, were in the central mound. A quiver and arrowheads were found within the male's coffin while a saddle and stirrups had been placed alongside. Artifacts in the female burial included an iron knife fragment and fragments of rolled birch bark. These are unique Polovtsy burials in the lower Severskii Donets.

Brief archaeological reports on the Chastiye Kurgany excavations for 2000 and 2001, with illustrations, are available on the CSEN website (see below).

In addition to the contingent of Russian students participating in the Chastiye excavations, anthropology and archaeology students as well as interested lay people from diverse countries including the United States, England, Ireland, and France have gained knowledge about the diverse populations that inhabited the steppes in this region. They have also participated in educational programs that include lectures on the history of the Don region as well as a series of excursions. Among the destinations of these excursions were: the excavations of the antique city, Tanais, and its associated museum, located in the Don River delta; Starocherkassk, the old capital of the Don Cossacks; the Rostov-on-Don Historical Museum; and locales of natural beauty.

Excavations continue at Chastiye Kurgany between July 16 and August 24, 2002. Information on the participatory programs is available on the CSEN website at: <http://csen.org>.

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Negotiating Inside/Outside in Post-Soviet Kazakhstan: Footnotes from Field Research

Cengiz Surucu, Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Central Eurasian Studies, Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind., USA, csurucu@indiana.edu

In this research note, I will follow a slightly unconventional path and relate individual instances without advancing a coherent story. I believe that in contrast to finished papers, research notebooks contain unexplored paths, surprising anomalies, and unruly footnotes, many of which are destined to die away somewhere between the field and the final product. Such unexpected encounters constitute silent testimonies to the incoherent, fragmented nature of the social subject. While they do not completely defy what we set off to see in the field, they at least resist pretensions of smooth and admissive research sites. Anyway, field research is a complex process and involves many unique contextual instances, discontinuities, exceptions, negotiations, and compromises all the way from the start to the end.

Case in point: at the beginning of my field research in May 2001, I had to spend fifteen days in the registration and immigration offices and three days in the halls of a courtroom in Almatī as a result of a legal controversy.¹ Immigration rules in Kazakhstan require foreigners to register in their locality of destination within three days of arrival. I violated that rule and became a subject of the ensuing legal-administrative proceeding. Naturally, being involved in a legal case in a post-Soviet country has psychological effects; researchers are

human beings and they do experience humiliation, deprivation, helplessness and withdrawal in the field. (How did I cope? Almost every night during that period I watched the only DVD I had with me, "All the President's Men."). I also developed small tactics to avoid the police on the streets, although many of them proved to be of little help. Since a radical Islamic insurgency is underway in some regions of Central Asia, Kazakhstani law enforcement authorities seem to have developed a handy definition of terrorist suspects: Middle Easterners.² I am originally from Eastern Anatolia and I have a facial appearance of a Middle Easterner, so almost every time I came across a police officer on the street, my appearance made me a suspect. Once I was detained on the Uzbek border by three counter-terrorism agents of Kazakhstan and had a two-hour long no-destination interrogation ride along cotton fields.

Modern states have an undeniable interest in imposing overarching national identities in the formalization, proceduralization, and institutionalization of interpersonal relations. However, there is a whole set of subnational and transnational social, economic and political forces penetrating into this seemingly simple relationship between the state and individuals. Different forces create hybrids: incoherent and fragmented identities and identity practices. In a country like Kazakhstan,

¹ These observations derive from my field research in Kazakhstan in May-December 2001. During this period, I conducted interviews with the cultural and political elite of Kazakhstan as part of my dissertation on ethnic politics and political transition in Kazakhstan.

² It was interesting to observe that a similar practice was *de facto* implemented in the United States after September 11th.

where informal practices play a much larger and more burdensome role than laws in individuals' lives, registration (OVIR) and immigration offices become good sites to observe and participate in the practices of inclusion and exclusion.

OVIR not only handles visa and registration proceedings for foreigners; they also deal with the internal movements of Kazakhstani citizens across provinces. As a remnant of Soviet-era internal monitoring, every Kazakhstani citizen who decides to change his/her permanent residence has to obtain advance permission from his/her oblast of departure and re-register at the destination point. Thus both foreigners and Kazakhstani citizens from other provinces meet in the same building for a brief period and become subject to similar administrative practices.

On one of the days when I was pacing back and forth on the third floor of the OVIR building on Baytürsinov Street, I met an elderly Tajik from Bukhara, Abdulrahim, who was brought there because he did not have a visa stamp on his passport. He was in Almatī on the occasion of his son Suleiman's marriage to a local Uyghur girl. For Suleiman, Almatī was a city of many opportunities that they did not have in Bukhara; for Abdulrahim, it was a destination of trouble with the police. Askhat, the migration officer handling our cases, was particularly upset with Abdulrahim and Suleiman because, in Askhat's words, "Kazakhs do not like Uzbeks." He said this in their presence. However, Abdulrahim was not an ethnic Uzbek, though he was a citizen of Uzbekistan. He did not use his ethnicity as a defense, probably knowing that being a Tajik implies no better status in Kazakhstan.

Abdulrahim was denying the fact that he needed a visa for only a short stay in Kazakhstan, but he acknowledged that he had crossed a border since he had his passport with him. Kazakhstan was surely a foreign country for him, but not so foreign that he would bother to get a visa for a month's stay. When Askhat reminded him that he would be charged over a hundred dollar fine in court, Abdulrahim laughed, the ignorance of a wise old man on his face: "Give me my passport, I will return this afternoon." Askhat declined. Abdulrahim did not insist and walked out of the building. He possessed the power of the powerless: no money in his pockets, no influential acquaintance in the country, but he did have cultural capital accumulated over decades of living in the region. "They will leave me alone after a couple of days," he told me at

the door, smiling. Abdulrahim's external passport was an affirmation of the post-Soviet reality, his lack of visa a conscious denial. Abdulrahim's behavior raises some interesting questions: Would he set off for Russia without a visa? Where do the borders start for him and where do they end? He seemed to draw comfort from what he knew from his countless interactions with an arbitrary state: to the degree that the state's practices deviate from formal rules, he has a fair chance of negotiating a suboptimal outcome.

In contrast, neither Dinara (a pseudonym) nor her sister had passports or visas (or any other identification paper, for that matter). They were in their twenties and reportedly doing temporary business in Kazakhstan that they were reluctant to disclose. As Askhat needed further information for court proceedings, they registered themselves as Tatars from Tatarstan. I had lengthy conversations with them outside the immigration office in the following days. After I made an effort at confidence building, they confided in me that they had been living in Kazakhstan for several years. Since they claimed to be Tatar, a couple of times I asked them to converse in Tatar — a part of my plan to build trust and goodwill. At last they did, but when they spoke I was unable to understand a single word. I also noticed that they had an apparent hostility towards Russians. So, the third day of our meeting, they disclosed that they were not Tatars. They were in fact Ingush from Chechnya. "Why do you hide your ethnic origin?" I asked. "Because we are at war with the Russians and nobody likes Chechens here," they replied. They were living in one of the Chechen suburbs of Almatī. In their neighborhood they enjoyed the patronage and protection of their close-knit community, but when they crossed the boundaries of that neighborhood, they had to adopt a strategy of denial. Being deprived of collective independence in their homeland, their refuge was forcing them to a similar deprivation at the individual level.

However clear, well articulated, and strong they may seem to the bearer, identities are incoherent, disorganized, and they retain a gray area for compromise and adaptation. A particular identity does not necessarily prompt a certain course of action; it is up to political entrepreneurs to craft *praxis* out of them. Ali was herding horses when I met him outside his village. He was born in Kazakhstan long after the deportation of his family from Caucasia in the Second World War. When I

told him that I was a Turkish citizen, he began to speak in a fluent Anatolian Turkish.

“Are you a Turk from Ahiska?” I asked.

“No, I am a Kurd.”

“How come you speak such a pure Anatolian Turkish?”

“I worked for a Turkish businessman in Almatī.”

“Do you know Kurdish?”

“No, I know Russian.”

Apparently, in the midst of the Kurdish insurgence in Anatolia, he became subject to a rather successful personal assimilation project implemented by a nationalist Turk.

Borderlines are also gray zones witnessing micro-level cohabitation of incoherent and fragmented identities. On the one hand, there are nationalizing states trying to erect borders and impose border restrictions; on the other hand, there is an enormous amount of micro-level variation defying the *raison d'être* and legitimacy of these formal procedures. While there is an observable trend that movement from South to North is becoming harder and harder as time goes on, still, the reality of borders poses a puzzling problem for an outsider. The Uzbek-Kazakh border and the

accompanying practices surrounding it constitute a silent reenactment of a belief from the colonial past that modernity moves North to South and traditionalism, vice-versa. For many Kazakh intellectuals, Kazakhstan is qualitatively different from other Central Asian states in that Russian modernization left a deeper imprint on the social fabric of the country. In that sense, the magnificent gate between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan is meant to celebrate the demarcation of these two realms. The border contains the traditionalism of the South. At the micro-level, however, there is much room for negotiation and compromise. A lively trade route from Tashkent to Shīmkent and Almatī presents a wide gray area open to different interpretations. On one hand it is a denial of the borders and their impermeability, on the other it owes its existence to those borders and disparate economic spaces contained within them. For the foot soldiers of this dynamic trade zone, borders and regulations are a matter of beseeching the goodwill of the enforcement officials along the 14-hour trip. Crossing back and forth is a daily activity, a matter of sharing some portion of their profits with the police on checkpoints. Boundaries are not sites of exclusion yet; they represent one of those moments when local people encounter the ordering principles of states, which they subtly evade by various strategies of co-optation and compromise.

Shifting Social Networks in Post-Socialist Kazan

Helen Faller, Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Anthropology, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich., USA, hmfaller@umich.edu

While inculcating in Soviet people of all nationalities the notion that they have the right to education in their “own” language and the blossoming of their particular national culture, Soviet nationalities ideologies also put pressure on them to russify, both linguistically and culturally, by punishing and provincializing people who wanted to remain national. The tensions between russification pressures, on the one hand, and the rights of national cadres to local, albeit limited rule, on the other, contributed to both the civil wars and small-scale inter-ethnic violence that occurred during the Soviet Union’s demise. These have not, however, happened

in Tatarstan, where there has been almost no hostility based on ethnicity. Peace in Tatarstan is no accident, as my research reveals, but rather the result of linguistic negotiations between Tatars, Russians, and others at the level of both policy and practice. Indeed, Tatarstan’s political, social, and relative economic stability may perhaps provide a model for the kind of federalism that may sustain Russia.

This report represents a summary of some preliminary findings from my dissertation research. The research was conducted mostly in Kazan, Tatarstan between September 1999 and July 2001. It concerned the social effects of Tatarstan’s political

movement for sovereignty focusing locationally on language politics in the implementation of bilingual education in Tatarstan's schools. However, because participant observation means that anthropologists do research in all the domains through which they move, ideationally the findings presented here have almost nothing to do with schooling. Instead, they address the relations between linguistic knowledge and larger processes of social differentiation in Tatarstan through the differentiation of symbolic worlds based on language community, and through the link between group affiliation and language choice.

Tatarstan society is developing into something different from what surrounds it in Russia. In effect, a new Tatarstan nation is being formed as the result of the relative prosperity Tatarstan sovereignty has brought the region, the official promotion of bilingualism, and a consequent pride of place. Society within Tatarstan is diversifying such that divisions between communities are occurring primarily along linguistic lines. That is, people who live only in Russian language and bilinguals (usually in Russian and Tatar) inhabit different symbolic worlds. Linguistic, and implied cultural, differentiation from a russophone world is the most salient barometer of social change in Tatarstan.

In my dissertation I demonstrate how bilingual Tatar-Russian speakers' lived worlds are different from those inhabited by people who live their lives solely in Russian. I provide evidence of difference from various sources, including observations of quotidian interactions, purportedly equivalent television programs in each language, and letters to the editor published in each of Tatarstan's two Communist Party newspapers between 1990-1993. Letters to the editor reveal the non-equivalence of the worlds inhabited by Russian and Tatar-writers, as well as how peace is maintained in Tatarstan. Differences in how writers make their cases in letters to the editor in each language arise in the devices used to legitimate their opinions as somehow representative of other people; in how they imagine homeland and its relationship to the polity in which they live; and in whether they use alarmist tactics or selective memory to represent their concerns.

While letters printed in different languages depict sometimes irreconcilably different worlds, those published in the Russian-language newspaper seem to accept the terms of a single debate, no matter what the ascribed nationality of their writers. Indeed, the claim can be made that by maintaining

an inter-national dialogue, the letters to the editor printed in the Russian-language *Respublika Tatarstan* encourage peaceful social relations in Tatarstan. For, even if readers disagree with letter-writers' ideas, the government sees to it that they are made aware of them: those ideas thus have been made part of the public sphere. Moreover, the anti-Soviet and anti-Russian opinions expressed in *Respublika Tatarstan* are more mild than some of those printed in the Tatar-language *Vatanım Tatarstan*; they do not exist outside of an ideological framework recognizable to Russians. Moreover, although many of the letters published by *Vatanım Tatarstan* represent an extreme departure from received political institutions, Russians do not have the linguistic ability or desire to read them. Additionally, people trained in Tatar linguistic practices are trained not to give in to expressions of anger, but rather to keep the peace through persuasion. Thus, I would argue that, while the maintenance of a dialogue in the Russian-language newspaper encourages feelings of inclusive nationalism among Tatarstan's inhabitants, the pressure to use persuasion, as opposed to alarmism, among Tatarstan's Tatar-speakers helps the monophone Russian population to feel included in and rewarded for participating in nation-building processes.

Another result of the social differentiation occurring in Tatarstan is that people view the recent war in Chechnya differently, depending upon the language in which they primarily live. Apparently reproducing opinions expressed by their parents, Russian-speaking children say that the war is a just struggle against terrorists and any criticism of Russian troops, including articles in the foreign press that are critical of Russia's actions, is an insult to the young men who are losing their lives in Chechnya. Tatar-speakers in Tatarstan, by contrast, express no surprise that Russian soldiers should be committing acts that violate decency; these adolescents, like their parents, consider the war in Chechnya and general discrimination against Chechens to be acts of violence by Russia against its own people. However, not only linguistic ability, but also contexts and patterns of language use, influence people's attitudes. For example, Tatar-speakers I talked to in Moscow and St. Petersburg, who do not share Tatarstan Tatars' fear of military invasion, express little sympathy for the plight of Chechens. Their statements fundamentally differ from those of one Tatarstan intellectual I know who explained: "Before we felt like one Soviet people; now

Chechnya has made us realize that we are different. We continue to live with Russians not because we want to, but because we have to.”

The other thread of my research traces the ways in which post-Soviet linguistic, ethnic, and religious communities are diversifying according to changing identity markers and with respect to different internal and external political-economic forces. If, for example, knowledge of languages other than Russian during the Soviet period was potentially dangerous, now knowledge of other languages has become essential to economic survival. As a result of the ways particular individuals are seeking affiliation with alternate organizations and ideologies, social relations between members of strengthened or newly emergent communities are being reconfigured. Indeed, as post-socialist space becomes increasingly exposed to divergent political economic forces, the potential subject positions people can occupy are multiplied in unexpected and seemingly incompatible ways.

For example, although a great many people seek out opportunities to acquire foreign languages, as well as the freedom to travel, different affiliatory inclinations mean that their efforts take different concrete forms. So, religious Tatars may want to acquire Arabic so they can read the Quran, or study

in the Middle East, or travel to Mecca for the *Hajj*. People of Volga German ancestry, by contrast, need to acquire German in order to qualify for immigration to Germany, while knowledge of Hebrew is not required for Jews to emigrate to Israel. In the latter case, being able to demonstrate Jewish ancestry is key. All the types of people listed above, and others who may not feel especially strong ethnic or religious affiliations, may nonetheless be inclined to want to learn English, especially if they engage in any kind of business; hope to travel abroad for pleasure or schooling; listen to Britney Spears’ songs; or want to surf the internet. Because of Tatarstan’s close business, cultural, and linguistic ties with the Republic of Turkey, a lot of people, including Russians, are likewise interested in studying Turkish language; in this regard, Tatars have a definite advantage, but Russian students nevertheless make a valiant effort to train themselves to work as translators. Although processes of language acquisition related to fundamental shifts in people’s positionality are occurring all across post-Soviet space, Tatarstan’s official bilingualism creates a situation that encourages people to inhabit lived worlds in more than one language. This model presents intriguing possibilities for other potential problems of Russian federalism.

Brief

Network Community Creation in Kazakhstan

Elena G. Gayevskaya, Internet Access and Training Program (IATP) Coordinator for Kazakhstan, Almatī, Kazakhstan, iatpkzcc@freenet.kz

The internet is a social phenomenon. Research on a social aspect of the internet known as Network Communities is one of the newest trends in Western sociology. Though the CIS countries have yet to enter the era of widespread internet use, this research brief gives preliminary evidence of interest in Network Communities development in Kazakhstan. During an internship in the USA in 2000, I put together a presentation on “Distance Learning in Kazakhstan” (<http://www.elenag.freenet.kz/>). My professional activities are now closely connected with the creation and development of Network Communities in Kazakhstan as Coordinator of Internet Access and Training Program (IATP) in Kazakhstan.

As part of the research on distance learning, IATP organized educational events for school

students (Summer Internet Camp) and alumni of the US government programs (First Kazakhstani Virtual Conference). One example of an IATP project related to Network Communities is the “Girls Leading Our World” (GLOW) Camp in the city of Qaraghandī (known as Karaganda in Russian). The camp endeavored to teach the girls many different life skills, with internet skills being among those emphasized. After receiving training from IATP, the campers created their own website (<http://www.geocities.com/glowcamp>) which highlighted Camp GLOW’s activities. If you are interested in information about IATP Community activities, please find it at the following addresses: <http://www.iatp.kz/> and <http://www.freenet.kz/>

Reviews and Abstracts

Book Review

Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics and the Rise of the Taliban.* Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2001. 264pp., maps, tables, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. ISBN: 0-295-98050-8. \$22.50 paper.

Reviewed by: **Resul Yalcin**, London School of Economics and Political Science, London, United Kingdom, r.m.yalcin@lse.ac.uk

A country shaped and molded by its experience with more than two decades of war, Afghanistan has been in the news for sometime now and will probably remain so for a long time to come.

The Afghan War from 1978 to the 1990s was one of the deadliest and most persistent conflicts of the second half of the twentieth century. Millions of Afghanistan's indigenous population became casualties — they were either killed, wounded, driven into refugee status outside of Afghanistan or internally displaced. Every region of the country has been touched by the war. The countryside was ravaged, with widespread destruction of villages, fields, orchards and irrigation systems. Large sections of major cities were reduced to rubble, roads turned into dirt tracks and farms made unsafe after being sown with mines instead of seed. The economy collapsed. The education system and other modernizing sectors of Afghan society were completely disrupted. The country became home to deepening ethnic tensions, drug traffickers, international terrorists and bloody warlords. The struggle for control of Afghanistan not only delayed efforts to improve the situation, but also deepened the crisis.

Afghanistan's strategic position, sandwiched between the Middle East, Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent along the ancient silk route, means that it has long been fought over despite its rugged and forbidding terrain. It was at the center of the so-called "Great Game" in the nineteenth century when Imperial Russia and the British Empire in India strived for influence. It became a key Cold War battleground after thousands of Soviet troops invaded in 1979 to prop up a pro-Communist regime, leading to a major confrontation that drew in the United States and Afghanistan's neighbors.

However, the outside world eventually lost interest after the withdrawal of Soviet forces while the country's prolonged civil war dragged on.

The emergence of the Taliban in 1994, the so-called group of "Islamic students," formed a new elite with limited governing capabilities and with qualifications often derived from their gun barrels and misunderstanding and misapplication of Islamic Law. They brought a temporary measure of stability after two decades of conflict, but their extreme version of Islam attracted widespread criticism. Even those who supported them soon recognized that the Taliban were incapable of governing the country. Their leaders were too inexperienced and uneducated in government and politics to rule effectively and they were too committed to their ideology to compromise. Until recently in control of about 97 percent of the country, they were initially supported and assisted by several countries including the U.S. However, they had been in dispute with the international community over the presence on their soil of Osama bin Laden, who has been accused by the U.S. of masterminding the bombings of American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 and the attacks on the U.S. on September 11, 2001. After the Taliban's refusal to hand over bin Laden, the United States initiated intensive aerial attacks on Afghanistan in October 2001, paving the way for opposition groups to drive the Taliban from power in December 2001. The tragic events of September 11, 2001 in the U.S. and the American government's response to these have complicated the situation further in Afghanistan, probably leading to another major confrontation involving yet another superpower. It is as if history is repeating itself in Afghanistan. What is wrong with Afghanistan today is what was not right

yesterday and what is happening today seems to be a repetition of the past. Although Larry P. Goodson's book *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics and the Rise of the Taliban*, provides us with little information about the involvement of the U.S. with the victorious Mujahidin, and disputes the United States' initial involvement with the Taliban, the book is an excellent study of Afghanistan and its society in the last twenty years. It remains an outstanding work on the range of transformations that more than two decades of the enormously destructive Afghan war have produced in that country.

Larry P. Goodson, a US scholar and an associate professor of International Studies at Bentley College in Waltham, Massachusetts, has set forth to examine and explain what has been happening in Afghanistan in the last twenty years. Goodson sees much of the recent scholarship on Afghanistan's modern period, which focuses on one or a few factors at a time, as falling short in helping us to understand Afghanistan. He thus views his book as an attempt to provide readers with a comprehensive understanding of how various factors intersect and combine to shape that country today. Approaching the topic from theoretical and empirical perspectives, Goodson focuses his work from the 1980s to early 2001 with references often made to the history of Afghanistan. In his opinion, the Afghan war against the Soviets increased some powerful centrifugal forces within Afghan society, even as it discredited and destroyed the country's governing institutions. The seeds of Afghanistan's state failure had been well planted by then. He believes that the deepening of ethnic tensions, the rising of Islamist ideology and the entrenching of a narcotics economy were all becoming the defining characteristics of the country, and that all the features that were emerging as problems during the 1980s caused the collapse of the country in the 1990s.

According to Goodson, in order to understand Afghanistan and the region it anchors, we must focus attention on six critical factors: Afghanistan's ethnic-linguistic cleavages, its social structures, its religious ideology, its long and devastating conflict, its geopolitical position and its limited economic development. He then spells out how the relative weight of each factor in understanding the country shifts with time, making it impossible and invalid to suggest that one or several of them are sufficient to explain the situation there.

Afghanistan's Endless War is divided into six chapters. The first chapter focuses, in some depth, on two of these six factors, the ethnic-linguistic cleavages and the social structures, and examines Afghanistan's early history of inadequate state and nation building. Chapter 2 is devoted to the historical factors that shaped modern Afghanistan, namely the enormous social and demographic transformations because of its geographical location. The chapter gives an outline of Afghan history from the Anglo-Russian competition in Central Asia in the nineteenth century to the Soviet invasion of that country in 1979. In Chapter 2 Goodson also puts in plain words that there developed an increased ethnic consciousness in Afghanistan from the nineteenth century period of anarchy, which laid the foundation for ethnic relationships in the country today, but it was not an ideology of nationalism. The social changes did not occur in a vacuum; there were tremendous political pressures from outside sources. The Anglo-Russian competition in Central Asia ultimately fostered the creation of the modern state of Afghanistan, causing the demarcation of its ethnically divisive borders and beginning the process that has culminated in the Afghan war. In Goodson's view the combination of nineteenth century foreign infringement and simultaneous internal anarchy created a state structure without the concomitant development of an Afghan state.

The core of the study, Chapters 3 and 4, examines in detail how the local, low-intensity rebellions of late 1978 evolved into a war of national destruction that changed the course of world history. Goodson analyzes the Afghan War in eight stages in Chapter 3, starting from the coup d'état in April 1978, which overthrew Mohammad Daoud's nationalist regime and installed the Communist Party in power, the rebellions against this and the Soviet invasion in December 1979, leading to heavy fighting in all parts of the country between the Soviet Army and the Mujahidin. This chapter also deals with the emergence of the Taliban movement and its rule over the country. In Chapter 4 Goodson explores the widespread destruction of Afghanistan's physical infrastructure and human resources as well as the profound alteration of its ethnic-religious balance, socio-economic system and sociocultural framework. It also gives special attention to the ideological struggle within Afghanistan which gave rise to the Taliban. His analysis tells us that it is the physical destruction that underlies the rest of the changes wrought by the war in Afghanistan. The physical destruction in that

country took two forms: destruction of population and destruction of property. More than 50 percent of Afghanistan's population has been directly harmed by the war through death, injury or displacement, and the destruction of property has been multifaceted. Since 1978, virtually everything has been a target: cities, towns, villages, houses, mosques and minarets, schools, hospitals, industrial structures, other buildings, roads, bridges, orchards and fields have all been damaged or destroyed during the fighting. The war has destroyed the pre-war elites and the social system that supported them, leading to the development of new political elites — the Mujahidin and the Taliban — that are founded on a newly prominent role for youth and Islamist ideologues. The collapse of a functioning government and social institutions made violence a more common means of settling disputes, and the rise of the Taliban has sharpened the ethnic, linguistic, religious and tribal divisions in Afghanistan.

In Chapter 5 Goodson analyzes Afghanistan's multifaceted role in regional affairs, a role that on the eve of the twenty-first century has altered Afghanistan's geostrategic significance. Goodson describes how, as a linchpin country, Afghanistan connects Central Asia with South and West Asia in the new geopolitics of the 1990s; how its geographical location and cross-border ethnic ties can play a critical role in trade between South Asia, Southwest Asia and Central Asia; and how outside actors influenced Afghanistan during the war years of 1980s and continued to do so in various ways during 1990s. He also reminds us that numerous outside actors have shaped previously isolated Afghanistan over the past twenty years, and without them the Afghan War could never have occurred and been maintained at such high intensity for so long. He stresses that the overlapping of ethnolinguistic and religious identity groups, permeable national borders, and weak state governments throughout the region make possible ongoing ethnic conflicts. Afghanistan has been and remains today a country

that is significantly affected by its neighbors, while affecting them significantly, as well.

In the final chapter, acknowledging the difficulties of predicting any positive future for Afghanistan, Goodson foresees a range of possible scenarios: continued fragmentation, national disintegration, state reconstruction under a Pushtun-led government and national reintegration under a broad-based government. The state cannot reassert itself, nor can there begin to be a reintegration of the Afghan nation, so long as various ethnic militias refuse to cede control over their local areas to a national government run by members of another ethnolinguistic, religious or ideological group. An alternative arrangement in his view would be for local communities to govern themselves, which would require at least the willingness of opposing ethnic-based militias to adopt a tolerant attitude toward the customs and culture of other groups. Leaving aside for a moment the motivations of regional actors, Goodson concludes that for the vast majority of Afghans there is no longer any acceptable reason for the fighting to continue. The reality is that the battle is increasingly over ethnic identity and the regional aspirations of neighboring states. Since significant political fragmentation along ethnic-linguistic-religious lines has already occurred, this will provide the foundation for long-term dominance of the periphery over the center. Afghanistan's current international borders might or might not remain unchanged in the short run, but the reality would be a state divided. However, in the long run, a broad-based government that includes all the major groups and actors, adequately represented and with sufficient guarantees of local authority, is probably the only solution to Afghanistan's problems.

Afghanistan's Endless War is certainly a welcome addition to the study of Afghanistan as well as the study of state formation and nation building. It is also a concise analysis of what state failure means both for failed states themselves and for the stability of the regions in which they are located.

Abstract

Transitions Online Annual Survey 2001 CD-ROM. Prague: Transitions Online, Inc., 2002. \$100.

Abstract prepared by: **Rafis Abazov**, Visiting Scholar, Harriman Institute, Columbia University, New York, USA, ra2044@columbia.edu

Annual surveys on Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union published by the organization Transitions Online [TOL] (formerly OMRI) have traditionally provided a brief, comprehensive and authoritative review of political, economic and foreign policy developments in this region. Unfortunately, the East-West Institute and M. E. Sharpe stopped publishing hard copy editions in 1998, but the annual surveys did not disappear. TOL began publishing them on its website (<http://www.tol.cz>) in 1999, and in 2002 it introduced the annual surveys on CD-ROM.

The *TOL Annual Survey 2001 CD-ROM* is a one-stop guide to the former Communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and the former Soviet Union. The annual surveys cover the most important political, economic and foreign policy events in post-Communist societies. The reviews of individual countries (28 of them) also include maps, useful links and statistics. The 2001 edition made important changes from previous

online annual reports: the publisher added background analysis by including the most important and interesting articles contributed by field correspondents from the region.

The *TOL Annual Survey 2001 CD-ROM* is an invaluable resource for all institutional and personal libraries. It is also a very useful tool for undergraduate and post-graduate students who would like to get quick and comprehensive comparative references to recent developments in several former Communist countries. The CD-ROM seems to be designed to compete with other sources available on the internet, such as the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), and Business Eastern Europe (BEE).

The CD-ROM costs \$100 plus shipping. More information can be accessed at the newly launched TOL Store at: <http://www.tol.cz>.

Conferences and Lecture Series

The Ninth Annual Central Eurasian Studies Conference

Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, USA, April 13, 2002

Reported by: **Kerry Cosby**, Graduate Student, Department of Central Eurasian Studies, Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind., USA, kcosby@indiana.edu.

The Association of Central Eurasian Students (ACES) at Indiana University hosted the Ninth Annual Central Eurasian Studies Conference. Through the years this event has served as a forum for scholars to introduce new research and for students to gain experience in presenting academic papers. Participants came from all across the United States and abroad for the full-day event, giving presentations on topical subjects as diverse as political Islam in Central Asia and the Mongolian *Estrada* as a part of national identity. The organizers of the conference attempted to accommodate the diversity of topics in nine panels split into morning, afternoon and evening sessions. Presentations by noted scholars Dr. Thomas Allsen from Trenton State College and Dr. David Sneath from the University of Cambridge separated each of the sessions. Allsen presented the lecture “Skilled Hands in Motion: Technician Transfers in the Mongol Empire” and Sneath spoke on “Reciprocity, Corruption and the State in Contemporary Mongolia.”

Allsen discussed the dynamics of the massive mobilization of artisans under Pax Mongolica. According to Allsen, the Mongolian period of Eurasian history witnessed systematic and large-scale transfers of scientists, ritual experts, merchants, administrators, technologists and artists across the empire. From Chinese artisans to Muslim engineers and architects, significant numbers of technicians were relocated and employed by Mongolian rulers for military, cultural and economic reasons. These long-distance cultural transactions challenge widely-held assumptions that the nomads were passive recipients in their dealings with neighboring sedentary peoples. In contrast, Allsen argued that they were active and selective appropriators of sedentary culture.

Sneath examined Mongolian perceptions of corruption in the past and present and related this to the political and economic transformations in what he termed “the age of market.” He demonstrated that throughout the pre-communist, state socialist and post-communist periods the common perception of officials’ rights and duties went through serious transformations. The boundary between gift giving and bribery changed along with this perception, contributing to the notion that corruption has become more rampant in recent years. Thus he suggests that Mongolian notions of legitimate and illegitimate gifts and payments can only be understood through the changes in the networks of obligation and mutual aid.

The conference sessions accompanying Allsen and Sneath’s lectures were organized in thematic panels. The three morning panels covered “Post-Mongol Central Eurasian History,” “Politics” and “Finance and Economic Transformations.” In the discussion on politics, Cengiz Surucu (Indiana University), in his paper “Modernity, Nationalism and Resistance: Identity Politics in Post-Soviet Kazakhstan,” discussed contemporary Kazakh “ethnonationalist” and “cosmopolitan” political perspectives. He argued that nationalism and cosmopolitanism can be understood as idioms that elites utilize in their struggles for political and cultural power. These idioms help intellectuals organize diverse political positions in two broad alliances. Blending Eurasianist political thought and the Soviet version of modernization, the cosmopolitan perspective perceives modernization and nationalism as opposing categories of practice. Thus cosmopolitanism crosscuts interethnic boundaries and provides a common stance against the ethnonationalist policies of the government.

The afternoon panels were devoted to discussions on “Political Behavior,” “Pre-Mongol

Central Eurasian History” and “Geopolitics.” The panel on political behavior held a number of lively discussions — among them Islamism in Tajikistan, neopatrimonialism in Central Asia and national identity in Uzbekistan. Shah Ahmad Mutalov (Institute of Averaged Languages and Language Ortaturk in Uzbekistan), presenting his lecture “Two Ways of Developing National Identity in Uzbekistan,” brought out the problem of defining the Uzbek nation. Dr. Mutalov focused on the development of a campaign begun on April 6, 2000 in the meeting of President Karimov with representatives from Uzbekistan’s intelligentsia. The purpose of the gathering, Mutalov explained, was to discuss the president’s book on the “national ideology,” and the meaning of that term. The crux of Mutalov’s argument rested on the lack of a clear definition of the Uzbek word *milliy* (national), which can imply a relation to an ethnic group or citizenship. Consequently, he explained that the terms nation and national tend to become muddled in Uzbek speeches and writings. In the end, he offered two possible reasons why this confusion might have come about: 1) the terms are deliberately mixed in order to conduct “ethnic cleansing;” or 2) the terms are used inaccurately and are in need of clarification for Uzbek and international audiences.

Dr. Kamoludin Abdullaev, a visiting scholar at Yale University, discussed post-civil war reconstruction in Tajikistan in his paper, “Including

Islamists in Legal Politics: Assessment of the Tajik Model.” He summarized the painful yet promising process of integrating the Islamic Tajik opposition into mainstream politics. According to Abdullaev, the entire peace process has been marked by lack of trust and determined efforts to overcome it through various institutional channels.

The last three panels of the day featured presentations on “Mongolia and Buriatia: Then and Now,” “Language and Linguistics” and “Representations of Identity.” One of the most interesting presentations in the panel on “Representations of Identity” came from two Indiana University students, Peter Marsh and Tristra Newyear. The pair offered a multi-media presentation “Beyond Estrada: Why Do We Need a National Sound?” As the title of the presentation would suggest, Marsh and Newyear looked at the new pop-rock music in Mongolia and Buriatia to examine the relationship of music and national political parties. They argued that a close relationship exists between popular music and the powerful economic and political institutions in the nations, which, Marsh and Newyear believe, raise questions about both Buriatia and Mongolia’s contemporary nationalisms.

The conference schedule and other ACES events can be viewed online at: <http://php.indiana.edu/~aces/>

Middle East Studies Association 2001 Annual Meeting

San Francisco, USA, November 17-20, 2001

Reported by: **Marianne Kamp**, Assistant Professor, Department of History, University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyo., USA, mkamp@uwyo.edu

The Middle East Studies Association annual meeting, which was held in San Francisco November 17-20, 2001, featured much that was of interest to Central Eurasian Studies Society members, including a number of papers on Central Asia and the Caucasus, a roundtable on Afghanistan, and many panels on Iran and Turkey.

Perhaps most significantly, the Social Sciences Research Council arranged a thematic conversation entitled, “Imagining Central Asia and the Caucasus at the Nexus of World History and Area Studies.” Seteney Shami of SSRC moderated a

discussion among panelists Adeb Khalid (Carleton College), Nayereh Tohidi (California State University, Northridge), Sean Pollock (Harvard University), Roberta Micallef (University of Utah), and Dru Gladney (East-West Center). This thematic conversation was well attended and generated thoughtful discussion of the state of our field and its future. Should Middle East studies try to integrate Central Asian/Caucasus studies more fully? What can be done to create more support for the field? How can or should Central Asia and the Caucasus become part of university curricula? Vernon Schubel pointed out that many scholars in these areas of

study find employment at liberal arts colleges, and that this is a potential area of growth.

Participation in the MESA conference by scholars of Central Eurasia varies; in 2001, overall attendance at the conference fell, following the September 11 events. In response to those events, MESA organized a round-table on Afghanistan, with Eden Naby, M Siddieq Noorzoy, Nazif Shahrani, and other scholars. A panel devoted to Azerbaijani politics and society was sponsored by the International Society of Azerbaijani Studies. Another panel featured comparisons of shock modernization in Uzbekistan and Turkey. However, at MESA, full panels on Central Eurasia often

guarantee that panelists are speaking only to an audience of scholars of Central Eurasia. Thematic panels where Central Eurasia scholars and Middle East scholars present papers may be more effective for reaching a broad audience (in MESA terms) and in making our field relevant to Middle Eastern studies. Papers concerning Central Asia and the Caucasus appeared in panels on migration and refugees, Persian and Turkish cultural elites, diplomatic relations, and architecture. For a full list of panels and available papers, see the Middle East Studies Association website at: <http://www.mesa.arizona.edu/>

“Abseits der Seidenstrasse”: The Silk Road and Beyond — Art & Culture from Central Asia in Berlin

Berlin, Germany, March & April, 2002

Reported by **Beate Eschment**, Senior Researcher, Institut für Orientalistik, Martin-Luther-Universität, Halle, Germany, beschment@aol.com; translated by **Ildikó Bellér-Hann**, Senior Researcher, Orientwissenschaftliches Zentrum, Martin-Luther-Universität, Halle, Germany, beller-hann@owz.uni-halle.de

The “Haus der Kulturen der Welt” (The House of World Cultures) in Berlin was founded in 1989 as a center for the contemporary cultures of Africa, Asia and Latin America. It organizes exhibitions, concerts, cinema and theatrical performances, lectures and small scholarly events. The aim of these activities is to establish a dialogue between the people of Berlin and the visitors, artists and performers: the participants learn about other cultures, and the foreign artists may be inspired in their work by their visit to Berlin. All this is realized through identifying two or three central themes annually, around which the events are organized.

In March and April 2002 a series of events were organized focusing on Central Asia. Plans and preparations had started well before September 11th, and the aim was to capture the artistic expression of the contradictions and tensions inherent in the various developments in Central Asia: the Soviet heritage, the interest in Western modernity and attempts to return to local traditions.

A comprehensive exhibition was organized under the motto: “No-Mad’s Land” — the work of twenty-six artists from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan,

Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. These works of art represented not the traditional motifs normally associated with Central Asia, but the forms and structures, videos and photos which give expression to disjuncture, lack of orientation, destruction and at the same time to new expressive modes inspired by Western arts. In the musical programs traditional and modern styles were introduced, which included, among others, the music of Bukharan Jews and Monajat Yulicheva (Uzbekistan), but also “shaman-rock” from Kazakhstan and the Central Asian pop queen Yulduz Usmanova. The films shown featured among others, the recent products of Kazakh studios. Modern Central Asian literature was introduced in the course of four sessions, during which Central Asian authors hitherto little known in the West (Uchqun Nazarov and Shamshad Abdullaev from Uzbekistan, Sherboto Tokombaev from Kyrgyzstan, Didar Amantay from Kazakhstan) read and discussed their works.

In addition to these artistic and literary events five workshops were also organized to provide information about the present situation in the five Central Asian republics. During these events guests

from Central Asia talked to German regional specialists.

The first of these events, held on March 8, 2002, focused on geopolitics. The discussion took place in two parts, concentrating first on the global level, and then on the level of the European Union. The initial lecture was given by Sultan Akimbekov (Editor of the newspaper *Kontinent*, Almatı), and it was then further discussed by Murad Esenov (*Central Asia and the Caucasus* journal and information center, Sweden), Uwe Halbach (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Berlin), Alexander Rahr (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik, Berlin) Dodojon Atovulloev (Editor of the Tajik exile journal *Charoghi röz* and head of the Forum of the Democratic Forces of Central Asia, now in Germany). Akimbekov questioned the “axiom” of the geopolitical significance of Central Asia and the role of the USA in the region. He considers all explanations usually given for the great geopolitical importance of the region to be insufficient. In his opinion these explanations are used as justification for the power struggle for influence over the region. September 11th has provided the USA with an excuse to establish a permanent presence in the region, with the long-term aim of promoting democracy and human rights, but also to ensure free access to Caspian oil and gas. This was followed by a talk by Cees Wittebrood (head of the Department for Relations with the Caucasus, Central Asia and Mongolia of the EU Commission, Brussels) focusing on relations between the European Union and Central Asia. He asserted that in spite of official meetings, financial help, etc., the interests of the EU in the region remain limited.

On the 16th of March a workshop entitled “Islamic Renewal and Religious Diversity — Religion and Nation Building in Central Asia” was held. The workshop opened with an introductory lecture by Anara Tabyshalieva (Institute for Regional Studies, Bishkek) on “Local Traditions and Modern Missionaries — on the Religious Diversity of Central Asia.” The lecture gave a historical overview, reviewing the situation of religion during Soviet times when religious politics directed against public forms of worship enhanced the central importance of *mazar* [saintly tomb/shrine] worship. Tabyshalieva reported on the importance of tradition in post-Soviet society, and analyzed the emergence and changing character of various missionary movements, both Islamic and Christian. She pointed out the weakness of both pan-Islamic movements and of local religious organizations in the region,

also paying careful attention to the role played by external political forces. Annette Krämer (Orientalist, Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, Samarqand) followed with a statement emphasizing the centrality of folk beliefs, the importance of indigenous channels in transmitting Islamic knowledge throughout the Soviet period, and women’s role in this transmission. The roundtable discussion that followed was introduced by Arne Seifert (Center for OSCE Research, Botschafter a.D. Hamburg/Berlin), explaining what significance Islamic movements in Central Asia have for Europe. He was then joined by Uwe Halbach (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Berlin), Udo Steinbach (Director, Deutsches Orient Institut, Hamburg). The discussion covered a number of important topics, including security issues, the role of Islam in shaping post-Soviet and post-colonial local identities, development and many others.

A further roundtable discussion was held in the evening of March 19, 2002, organized in cooperation with Deutsche Welle broadcasting and led by Miodrag Soric (head of the Central and Eastern European Department, DW). The discussion, entitled “Democratic Developments in Central Asia,” was introduced by Erlan Karin (Central Asian Agency for Political Research, Almatı) who elaborated on the specific features of the democratization process in Central Asia. Among these were the difficult conditions of the transition period, the simultaneous transformation of the political and economic systems, and above all the force of local traditions and mentalities. These have given rise to novel forms of conflict, the confrontation of democracy and the state, and a weak legal system. The Central Asian states are said to have attempted to imitate only the external features of the Western democratic model, adopting democracy merely as an ideology rather than a political system, and the bearers of democratic ideals remain the ruling elites. Beate Eschment (Martin-Luther-Universität, Halle) emphasized the great differences within the region in the degree of democratization, and the presence of “democracy deficits” not only in Central Asia but also in the post-Soviet world in general. In the concluding discussion Marie-Carin von Gumppenberg (independent scholar) spoke critically about NGO activities, with special reference to Kyrgyzstan. Her talk was complemented by the critical but constructive remarks of the journalist Igor Grebenshchikov from Bishkek.

The general tone of the discussion tended to the view that the state of democratization processes in Central Asia is in need of and is worthy of improvement, while Western financial support provided so far was criticized. In a final remark it was pointed out that in spite of all criticism democratization in the region can be characterized as a series of positive developments and there are good reasons to be optimistic. This conclusion has since that time lost some of its force, after the organizers of the event heard that in mid-April the Kyrgyz guest Igor Grebenshchikov judged his position in his homeland untenable, and having left Kyrgyzstan has applied for political asylum in Germany.

A further roundtable discussion took place on April 13, 2002, devoted to the theme "Women in Central Asia." Three women from the region gave talks about the general position of women in their countries, and three women scholars from Berlin acted as discussants. Marfua Tokhtakhodjaeva (Women's Resource Center, Tashkent) reported on the difficulties faced by Uzbek women in daily life, emphasizing the force of tradition in their lives. Her insider's report was complemented by Brigitte Heuer (Freie Universität, Berlin). Elvira Pak (representative of a women's NGO, Kazakhstan) reported on the work of NGOs active in her country, and demonstrated the work of women's NGOs with video-clips. Her talk was complemented by Andrea Berg (Ruhr-Universität, Bochum), who summed up her own research on women's NGOs in Uzbekistan and made some critical remarks on Western financial support for Central Asian NGOs. The third topic, introduced by Shatkul Kudabaeva, (head of the Women's Committee in the Kyrgyz Republic), concerned women in leading positions. As someone simultaneously holding a leading position in a

Kyrgyz bank, she herself provided a good example of the general topic. She explained that although a number of women in her country occupy leading positions, there remained many deficiencies, pointing out, for example, the underrepresentation of women in Parliament. Beate Eschment (Martin-Luther-Universität, Halle) added that although in Kyrgyzstan women are conspicuously represented in important positions in the public sphere, this is likely to change for the worse following consolidation and stabilization.

A final event took place on the April 19, 2002, again led by Miodrag Soric (Deutsche Welle), focusing this time on "Journalism and the Mass Media." Three Central Asian journalists, Galima Bukharbaeva, (IWPR, Tashkent), Kabai Karabekov, (MP and head of the Committee of Information Politics, Bishkek) and Dodojon Atovulloev (Editor of the Tajik exile journal *Charoghi röz*, Hamburg) gave a critical description of the present situation of the mass media and the politics regulating it in their countries. They reported on censorship, on the closing down of journals, TV and radio stations, on financial problems and on the bad working conditions of many of their colleagues. Since the event was also attended by both German and other Central Asian journalists, their contributions raised further important issues. Wolfgang Schreiber, representative of the German Konrad Adenauer Foundation (presently based in Tashkent), initiated a heated discussion when he reproached both the speakers and other participants for presenting the situation "far too critically."

Altogether, the program series proved to be successful in introducing the modern arts and cultures of Central Asia, although not all the events were as well attended as they could have been.

Educational Resources and Developments

“Legal Systems of Islamic Countries” at Sofia University

Vladimir Chukov, Associate Professor, Bulgarian Center for Middle East Studies, P.O. Box 86, Sofia 1113, Bulgaria, vlachu@nat.bg

The Faculty of Humanities of Sofia University approved a new course, “Legal Systems of Islamic Countries,” which was taught by Associate Professor Vladimir Chukov, Ph.D., for the first time in Spring 2001. It is a post-graduate course within the “Knowledge of Islamic Societies” program, which is open to students in the Department of Arab and Semitic Studies. According to the Bulgarian university system, only graduates from the above mentioned department may take the course, because it demands a good command of Arabic and some knowledge of other Middle Eastern and Central Asian languages, as well as preliminary information about Islamic philosophy, art, political thought, policy, etc. The group of eight M.A. students facilitated the teaching process and the ensuing discussions.

In general, the course explored symbioses of medieval and modern Islamic thought in comparison with international legal systems (Roman and Common law) and contemporary national jurisprudence. The students, who were not legal specialists, had the opportunity to delve into how Islamic legal systems were founded on Semite legal logic and Arabic pre-Islamic (*Jahiliyah*) legal notions.

The first part of the course outlined a retrospective historical background that encompassed the main stages of medieval and pre-modern legal Islamic thought (Quranic, Pious, Umayyad, pre-Sunni, Sunni and other legal philosophies). This section also reviewed the complex development of the roots of Islamic legal logic, such as “imitation” (*taqlid*), from the Quranic period (570-632) to the present era of modern legislative techniques.

The second part of the course dealt with the main theoretical notions and institutions, including subjects, sources, qualifications, consequences, jurists approaches to the classification of *fatwas*

(legal opinions), hermeneutics and linguistics. A comparative approach was implemented so that diverse types of Islamic legal systems could be analyzed. Indeed, after the former Soviet Central Asian republics obtained political independence in 1991, and acceded to the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), modern Islamic legal systems appear in three main forms: 1) Middle East Shari’a (Arab countries); 2) Indian Shari’a (Sunni-Hanafi, non-Arab states and communities like Pakistan, Indian Muslims, Indonesia, Malaysia and post-Taliban Afghanistan); and 3) Central Asian Shari’a (post-Soviet legal practices).

The third part of the course encompassed a review of developments in the post September 11th Islamic world and the latest shifts in local legislatures. For example, the students learned about steps made in Central Asian law towards improving legal procedures inherited from the Soviet system and the claims of local lawmakers for the supremacy of civil (secularized) law in the new, post-Soviet constitutions. Here, a comparative analysis of human rights law revealed that on the whole, the Arab Middle Eastern states are moving slyly towards fundamental human rights improvement (predominantly in the civil and penal codes of private law), while the ex-Soviet (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan) republics pretend to democratize public law standards such as political liberties. Thus, Arab and Central Asian legal systems represent two antipodes within multiplex and many-sided Islamic law.

The course ended with a seminar exercise that aimed at dissecting the Taliban regime and Al Qaida organization as public legal subjects and initiators of legal acts with legal consequences according to Shari’a jurisprudence. The students discussed the character of this Taliban-Al Qaida collaboration, with the Taliban being the real holders of sovereignty and Al Qaida being holders of ethnic legitimacy as Arabs according to Salafi/Hanbali

doctrine. They also evaluated their respective *al fatwas* (legal opinions) in terms of their conformity with Islamic legal consensus (*ijma al umma*).

Perhaps the most dynamic discussion centered on an analysis of legal arguments by both presumptive opponents and proponents of the Taliban's political legitimacy. The students were asked to find them from among articles, press releases and conference papers published in Islamic, international-legal and international relations bibliographic sources. The participants were asked to either support or reject the following thesis: the former Taliban regime imitated or perhaps copied the regimes of the Pious Caliphs and especially the ruling logic and legitimacy of the Second Pious Caliph, Omar ben Khatab (634-644). In short, students had to compare the public legal contributions and legislative processes of Omar ben Khatab to the institutions and legal framework of the regime of the Taliban leader Mullah Omar.

Another topic that attracted student interest was the international recognition of the Taliban. The students were requested to look for appropriate legal (Shari'a) arguments for the establishment of

diplomatic relations of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Pakistan with Taliban-ruled Kabul, and to differentiate between positional-tactical and Shari'a issues in the foreign policy decisions of those governments. Inversely, the students had to prove why other Islamic states boycotted the Taliban.

A corresponding textbook published in 1998 (Chukov 1998) facilitated students' work. Meanwhile, the events of September 11th triggered a dynamic process of redefining Islamic legal formulas. Thus, one of the long-term objectives of Bulgarian Islamic and legal studies is a new book (monograph or textbook) that offers a comparative analysis of the constitutions of the main Islamic states: Iran, Turkey, Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and probably Afghanistan.

Reference

Chukov, Vladimir

1998 *Filosofia i teoria na islamkoto pravo*
[Philosophy and Theory of Islamic Law].
Sofia: Lik.

CESS Award for Best Graduate Paper

In 2002, the Central Eurasian Studies Society establishes the CESS Award for Best Graduate Paper to give special recognition to a paper to be read by a graduate student at the CESS Annual Conference. The prize is meant to encourage high quality scholarship among young scholars and to promote this as a part of the active exchange of ideas and information, toward which the CESS Annual Conference is intended to contribute. The winner of the annual prize will receive \$500 on attendance of the Annual Conference to help defray travel and accommodation costs (the prize is awarded only to a conference attendee, though there is no obligation to use the money for conference related costs). Those eligible will include any graduate student enrolled in a program towards a degree beyond the B.A. or first university diploma.

The paper submission should be consistent with framework of those presented at the CESS Annual Conference, addressing any topic in the humanities or social science study of Central Eurasia. The papers will be evaluated by a three-member jury representing a range of disciplinary approaches. The evaluation criteria will include originality of ideas, appropriate use of information sources, and quality of writing. Papers may be submitted electronically, or as a typed or computer-printed text; it is the responsibility of the paper writer to ensure that it is delivered in good order and on time. Papers should be delivered to the Chair of the Award Committee, as follows; any questions may be addressed to the same:

Prof. Gregory Gleason
Dept. of Political Science
Univ. of New Mexico
Albuquerque, NM 87131
USA
E-mail: gleasong@unm.edu

The submission deadline is Friday, September 6, 2002, 5:00 pm Eastern Daylight Time (i.e., GMT -4:00). Submissions received after the deadline may be considered in the next year's competition.

The winner of the CESS Best Graduate Paper Prize will be honored at the Annual Conference.

About the

Central Eurasian Studies Society



The CENTRAL EURASIAN STUDIES SOCIETY (CESS) is a private, non-political, non-profit, North America-based organization of scholars who are interested in the study of Central Eurasia, and its history, languages, cultures, and modern states and societies. We define the Central Eurasian region broadly to include Turkic, Mongolian, Iranian, Caucasian, Tibetan and other peoples. Geographically, Central Eurasia extends from the Black Sea region, the Crimea, and the Caucasus in the west, through the Middle Volga region, Central Asia and Afghanistan, and on to Siberia, Mongolia and Tibet in the east.

The CENTRAL EURASIAN STUDIES SOCIETY's purpose is to promote high standards of research and teaching, and to foster communication among scholars through meetings and publications. The Society works to facilitate interaction among senior, established scholars, junior scholars, graduate students, and independent scholars in North America and throughout the world. We hold an Annual Conference, and coordinate panels at various conferences relevant to Central Eurasian studies. The Society also works to promote the publication of peer-reviewed scholarship and other information essential to the building of the field.

The CENTRAL EURASIAN STUDIES SOCIETY is a not-for-profit organization incorporated in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Full information about CESS, including Articles and Bylaws, are available from the CESS website.

We invite anyone who shares these interests to become a member and participate in our activities.

To become a member of CESS or join the mailing list for occasional announcements concerning CESS activities, visit the website or contact the address below. Annual dues range from gratis to \$30, depending on income. CESS publications, the Membership Directory, conference paper abstracts and other information are available online at: <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~cess/>.

All inquiries may be directed to:

CENTRAL EURASIAN STUDIES SOCIETY
John Schoeberlein, President
c/o Harvard Program on Central Asia and the Caucasus
1737 Cambridge St.
Cambridge, MA 02138 USA
Fax: +1/617-495-8319
E-mail: CESS@fas.harvard.edu
<http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~cess/>

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Central Eurasian Studies Review

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Vol. 1, No. 3 (Fall 2002) & Vol. 2, No. 1 (Winter 2003)

CESR offers scholars, researchers and educators engaged in the study of Central Eurasia a “review” of current research, recent publications, scholarly meetings and new educational resources. We encourage contributions which reflect the regional and disciplinary breadth of the field.

Brief descriptions of each section follow. For more complete descriptions and submission instructions, please access the Publications page at the CESS website: http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~cess/CESS_Review.html. Contributors are urged to read CESR’s format guidelines and transliteration tables carefully before submitting articles.

Perspectives: interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary considerations of Central Eurasian studies, including expository and analytic views of how such studies are currently “constituted” and “practiced” in different parts of the world. Contact: Robert Cutler, rmc@alum.mit.edu.

Research Reports and Briefs: reports (up to 1500 words) on a) research findings or b) research conditions, with the aim of presenting preliminary conclusions and elaborating processes by which results were reached (e.g., archival research, interviews, collaborations, etc.). Brief notices (up to 250 words) about ongoing or recently published research in the field of Central Eurasian studies. Contact: Jamilya Ukudeeva, jamilya@citrus.ucr.edu.

Reviews and Abstracts: reviews (800-1000 words) and abstracts (150-250 words) of books and other media (e.g., films, websites, CD ROM encyclopedias) of scholarship in all social science and humanities disciplines in Central Eurasian studies. Contact: Resul Yalcin, r.m.yalcin@lse.ac.uk or Shoshana Keller, skeller@hamilton.edu.

Conferences and Lecture Series: summary reports (500-750 words) of conferences and lecture series devoted to the field of Central Eurasian studies as well as reports about selected panels on Central Eurasian studies at conferences held by professional societies in the humanities or social sciences. Contact: Cengiz Surucu, csurucu@indiana.edu.

Educational Resources and Developments: materials which will help develop an informed public awareness of the Central Eurasian region, such as ideas on curriculum development; discussions of teaching methodology; descriptions of specific courses (with links to their syllabi); reviews of textbooks, films, electronic resources; discussion of public education undertakings. Contact: Daniel Waugh, dwaugh@u.washington.edu.

Deadlines for submissions: Fall 2002 issue - July 15, 2002; Winter 2003 issue - November 15, 2002.

Other editorial correspondence should be directed to Dr. Virginia Martin, Editor-in-Chief of CESR, University of Alabama in Huntsville, Dept. of History RH402, Huntsville, AL 35899, USA, Fax: +1/256-824-6477, martinvi@email.uah.edu

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Second Call For Papers (Extended Deadline)

Third Annual Conference of the Central Eurasian Studies Society

October 17-20, 2002

University of Wisconsin-Madison



The **Central Eurasian Studies Society (CESS)** in conjunction with the Department of Languages and Cultures of Asia, the Central Asian Studies Program, and the Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia (CREECA) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison is pleased to announce the convening of the Third CESS Annual Conference.

We would like to request submission of paper proposals that concern Central Eurasian studies. These include: history, languages, cultures, and modern states and societies of the Turkic, Mongolian, Iranian, Caucasian, Tibetan and other peoples of the Black Sea region, the Crimea, the Caucasus, the Middle Volga region, Central and Inner Asia and Siberia, and teaching and research about these topics and areas. We would like to strongly encourage proposals for pre-organized panels including a discussant. Pre-organized panels may be sponsored by scholarly organizations related to any part of Central Eurasia. CESS does not have funds available to support travel to or expenses incurred at the 2002 conference, though we will be glad to provide letters to support your applications to funding organizations to cover your participation.

Submission of Abstracts

Participants wishing to present a paper are asked to submit an abstract of 150 words maximum, and conference registration by the extended deadline of August 1, 2002, using the form and response information below. Confirmation of paper or panel acceptance submitted by August 1, 2002 will be available August 15, 2002. We will do our best to respond to proposals for papers after that date, but we do wish to encourage early submissions.

Participant Information

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 1. Name | 5. Educational background (highest degree, year, institution, major subject) |
| 2. Address | 6. Current institutional affiliation |
| 3. Telephone & fax | 7. Title of Presentation |
| 4. E-mail | 8. Abstract (150 words maximum) |

Submission of Abstracts/On-line Registration

On-line conference registration is available at: <http://www.wisc.edu/creeca/conferences/caworkshop.html>

Or submit abstracts to: Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia, Univ. of Wisconsin, 210 Ingraham Hall, Madison, WI 53706, USA; tel. +1/608-262-3379; fax +1/608-265-3062, e-mail: creeca@intl-institute.wisc.edu

Additional information about past and forthcoming CESS Annual Conferences is available at the CESS website: http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~cess/CESS_Conference.html

CESS Conference Committee

The CESS Conference Committee is co-chaired by Gregory Gleason (U. New Mexico) and Uli Schamiloglu (U. Wisconsin-Madison). For further information on submission of abstracts or other aspects of the CESS Annual Conference contact:

Prof. Uli Schamiloglu

Department of Languages and Cultures of Asia

1254 Van Hise, 1220 Linden Drive

Madison, WI 53706 USA

tel. +1/608-262-7141 (office), +1/608-262-3012 (department)

fax +1/608-265-3538

e-mail: uschamil@facstaff.wisc.edu