



Ranking Republic Officials to Attend

Spring Seminar Explores Gateways to Investment Business Strategies and Center-Republic Relations

The climate for political and economic reform in the Soviet Union has become increasingly chilly as conservative forces in the Party, Army, and KGB have stalled economic reforms and cracked down on independence movements in the Baltics and throughout the country.

What does this uncertain scenario mean for Western investors?

Despite its enormous economic problems, the Soviet Union remains an attractive market. Reforms have slowed but will continue. Republics will be economically interdependent whatever the shape of the new union. Investors who have already set up joint ventures or begun operations are unlikely to pull out. First-time investors may not want to invest in the Soviet Union now but should be planning for the future and establishing footholds in the market.

Geonomics will challenge participants to develop viable trade and investment strategies in light of evolving republic relations in its spring seminar, "Gateways to Trade and Investment in the Changing Soviet Landscape," from May 10-13.

"Doing business in the Soviet Union has always required patience," Michael Claudon, Geonomics president, commented. "These are difficult times, but Western investors who think long term can find good markets and marketable Soviet ideas."

Among the participants will be: Zviad Gamsakhourdia, president of Georgia; Ivars Godmanis, prime minister of Latvia; Dainis Ivans, vice president of Latvia; Edgar Savisaar, prime

minister of Estonia; Marju Lauristin, deputy speaker, Supreme Soviet of Estonia; Vakhtang Makharadze, general director of Interferma, a private Soviet firm; Soviet economist Vladimir Popov, a proponent of rapid market reforms. Ruslan Khasbulatov, the first deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Russia, is among the invited guests.

Western participants will include Josef Brada, an American economist and specialist in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union; Paul Goble, special assistant for Soviet Nationalities and Baltic Affairs in the US State Department; Soviet legal specialists, Peter Pettibone, co-chairman,

Legal Committee of the US-USSR Trade Council, and Peter Maggs, professor of law, University of Illinois School of Law; Soviet law and trade consultants, Jenik Radon, Keith Rosten, and Emily Silliman, and several business executives.

As in the past, the seminar will be limited to 40 participants and will include paper presentations and panel discussions. Three working groups will develop practical policy recommendations and business strategies. Papers and panels will address the following

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Can the Soviet Union Feed Its People?

Three views of the economic crisis begin inside with an analysis of the economic impact of disunion by Geonomics president Michael Claudon, an interview with Soviet economist Vladimir Popov, and a Soviet farmer's view of an American family farm. Above, a free market in Rostov-On-Don. Photograph by Marcela Rydlova-Ehrlich.

In Search of the Russian Character: Pushkin or Pravda?

By Thomas R. Beyer, Jr.

Revolution has returned to Russia. But the initial intellectual excitement of *glasnost* and *perestroika* has been tempered now by a fuller realization of the country's enormous social and economic difficulties. In these turbulent times, Russian literature can help us understand some enduring aspects of Russian life: a longing for order, an acceptance of the burden of suffering, and an uncertainty about the limits of individual freedom.

In the nineteenth century, Russians debated whether "boots were better than Pushkin." Utilitarian critics demanded that literature reflect on and prescribe solutions for Russia's social ills. Yet the poetry and prose of Aleksandr Pushkin (1799-1836) that predated this social *engagement* have proven more enduring for the Russian soul and just as necessary as a good pair of boots.

Should we abandon *Pravda* then and read Pushkin to understand today's Soviet Union? We need both. We can no longer ignore a more objective Soviet press. But to appreciate the Russians, their language, and culture, we must also read Pushkin and listen to the music of his poetry, which is so near and dear to the Russian soul. Unfortunately, much of the richness of Pushkin is lost in translation—a rare exception is the short story, "The Queen of Spades," in *From Karamzin to Bunin* (Ed. Carl R. Proffer, Indiana University Press, 1969).

Russian life is best portrayed in the novel. Only the short stories of Anton Chekhov, such as "Misery," "Vanka," and "Sleepy," capture glimpses of life's suffering. (*Anton Chekhov's Short Stories*, ed. Ralph Matlaw, New York: W.W. Norton, 1979.)

Readers in search of Russia must eventually turn to Dostoevsky and his accursed questions about man's relationship to God and his heroic struggle with good and evil. No novel reveals that inner torment as clearly as *The Brothers Karamazov* (Ed. Ralph Matlaw, New York: W.W. Norton, 1976). The best known chapter, "The Grand Inquisitor," expresses the characteristic Russian discomfort when individual freedom conflicts with and challenges authority. Most Americans reject the inquisitor's argument that man is willing to sell his freedom for bread, "Make us your slaves, but feed us." For Russians the answer is not nearly as simple. We can observe today this continuing tension between the desire for order and individual freedom.

Two twentieth-century novels also help unlock the Russian character. Mikhail Bulgakov's (1891-1940) *The Master and Margarita* (Trans. Michael Glenny, New York: Harper and Row, 1967) brings the devil back to Moscow in the 1930s while a novel within the novel presents a fascinating per-

spective on Pontius Pilate and Yeshua (Christ). Bulgakov examines power and submission to authority, good and evil, courage and cowardice, official corruption and petty thievery, all in a satirical and sometimes hilarious look at Stalin's Moscow. Yet the work is profoundly disturbing: Bulgakov did not completely exorcise his own devil (Stalin) and judged himself harshly. Fearful of the consequences of publishing the novel, Bulgakov hid his manuscript. The work was not published until nearly 30 years after his death. His prophetic statement that "Manuscripts don't burn," however, has inspired generations of 20th century Russian writers to hope that their works could one day be published.

Despite Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's personal hell and his literary fame in exile, many Westerners have little knowledge of this true giant of Russian literature. *The First Circle* (Trans. Thomas Whitney, New York: Harper and Row, 1968) captures the tragedy, courage, and ultimate psychological freedom of political prisoners in Stalin's police state. Solzhenitsyn's view, "For a person you've taken *everything* from is no longer in your power. He's free all over again," is a sustaining if ironic vision of life in a police state. Solzhenitsyn's novel is less oppressive and easier going for the reader than his history of the prison camps, *The Gulag Archipelago* (Trans. Thomas Whitney, New York: Harper and Row, 1974). "Yet isn't it even more appalling when there are no horrors? When the horror lies in the gray methodology of years? In forgetting that your one and only life on earth has been shattered?"

Russian literature has always aspired to revelation and a message of endurance and the acceptance of suffering. It has also underscored Russians' traditional search for order. *The Primary Chronicle (The Tale of Bygone Years)* records the official founding of Russia in the ninth century when, amidst discord and intertribal warfare, a plea was sent to the Varangians: "Our whole land is great and rich, but there is no order in it. Come to rule and reign over us." (*Medieval Russia's Epics, Chronicles and Tales*, ed. Serge Zenkovsky, New York: Dutton, 1963).

In the beginning the fear of chaos prevailed over the desire for individual freedom. Current events indicate that for many Russians little has changed in the past 1,000 years.

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