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Denise H. Lajoie

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THE EMERGENCE OF TRANSPERSONAL PSYCHOLOGY IN RUSSIA: AN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE¹

DENISE H. LAJOIE
DIVISION OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I - WEST O'AHU
PEARL CITY, HAWAI'I, U.S.A.

Recent socio-political events are related to the development of transpersonal psychology in Russia. This area of psychology is evolving in Russia very differently than it did in the United States and elsewhere in the West. Transpersonal psychology is traced from the time of the initial contacts with American transpersonal figures. The backgrounds of three Russians important to the emergence of the transpersonal movement are discussed, and an outline of issues about the future course of Russian transpersonal psychology is presented.

ESCAPE

*Ambushed by freedom,
we dove for cover, dug in,
and fought back desperately
until gunsmoke obscured the sun
and foolish dreams were riddled with holes.
At dusk we counter-attacked,
vowing never to surrender to liberation,
and in the darkness we escaped,
fleeing past dazed civilians
to the safety of our prison. (Greening,² 1992b)*

In 1985, under the leadership of Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet Union initiated a program for the reconstruction of the long stagnant Soviet political and economic systems. Two key concepts are described by Edwards (1991)--"*glasnost*, or openness, and *perestroika*, or restructuring" (p. 7). These were radically liberal principles for the Soviet Union which eventually eased global political tensions and were instrumental in the Nobel Peace Prize being awarded to Gorbachev in 1990.

Gorbachev utilized *glasnost* to arouse the Soviet people into action, but this was not the *glasnost* which was interpreted by the West as meaning freedom of speech or of the press. As Smith (1991) states in his book, The New Russians, ". . . even though *glasnost* does not connote the full freedom that American newspapers and television take for granted, it has been a crucial and essential catalyst for Gorbachev's reforms" (p. 97). Gorbachev broke a dam of repressed criticism with *glasnost*, and the deluge caused much discomfort for the Russian political and social systems. A political anecdote summarized the situation:

¹This manuscript was completed in early 1994.

²Written at the Esalen Institute Workshop on Russian Psychology, November, 1992, unpublished (see Esalen Institute, 1992a). Tom Greening is the editor of the Journal of Humanistic Psychology.

FIRST DOG: *How are things different under Gorbachev?*

SECOND DOG: *Well, the chain is still too short and the food dish is still too far away to reach, but they let you bark as loud as you want. (Smith, 1991, p. 100)*

In the former U.S.S.R., the socio-political events of the past eight years have generated an atmosphere of doubt and questioning in the Russian people.³ Russia has been struggling to define its post-totalitarian identity, and the rebirth of consciousness is seen as critical for the process of awakening. As Billington (1992) states in his book, Russia Transformed: Breakthrough to Hope, "The rebirth of individual conscience was the key to breaking free of that web [of repression]" (p. 84). Communism's 70-year experiment with the Russian people had failed, and the Russians were waking up from a long, fearful, and mindless lethargy. Smith (1991) prophetically points out, "This is the second Russian Revolution" (p. 652).

Politically, we can observe a new generation of leadership which could herald a quest for a new beginning, and a search for an indigenously authentic Russian political system. The new Russian democracy does not seek to replicate the American system (Billington, 1992), but rather hopes to create its own unique system " . . . some Russian form of mixed economy and political pluralism" (Smith, 1991, p. 676). This would be a system based upon the values, beliefs, and fundamental assumptions that have secretly prevailed in Russian thought throughout the 70 years of subservience under the Communist system (Berdyayev, 1992).

As mentioned earlier, Gorbachev introduced three important transformative activities into Russian politics: first, *perestroika*, meaning reconstruction or reformation; second, *glasnost*, meaning openness (in the sense of less repression of ideas); and third, democratization. The Russian people have reluctantly accepted these new principles into their lifestyles. Most Russian people have serious reservations about the viability of the new program. Aleksander Solzhenitsyn (1991) expressed the concern of the Russians in his recent book, Rebuilding Russia: "Time has finally run out for communism. But its concrete edifice has not yet crumbled. And we must take care not to be crushed beneath its rubble instead of gaining liberty" (p. 3).

The Coup (*Putsch*)⁴ of August, 1991, demonstrated the courage and intensity of the Russian spirit. Gorbachev lost favor in Russia as citizens became more and more disenchanted with the paradox of his loyalty to the Communist Party while he espoused grandiose economic reforms which did not bring tangible relief to the people. Russians were experiencing Gorbachev's *perestroika* as hardship, chaos, and a lack of supplies. Boris Yeltzin "seized the moment" (Mitchell, 1991) and the Russian people responded vigorously.

Yeltzin's Russia, and the events of August, 1991, were likened by the poet Yevtushenko to a fairy tale (Billington, 1992). The Russian people are proud, competent, and ambitious, but three generations of Russians have been reared with a collective

³Although this paper deals with the situation regarding the Russian people, the topics discussed may apply to other populations of the former U.S.S.R.

⁴The term *Putsch* is used in Russia.

mentality. The socio-political events which have occurred in the past eight years may encourage the emergence of the true Russian soul, a phenomenon rarely, if ever, witnessed in Russia. Historically, the Russian people have always been subservient; democracy is new to them. As Solzhenitsyn (1991) predicted, the transition is proving to be difficult.

The Inner Voice of Russia and Psychology

Just because it is light, grace, the source of revelation, [it] cannot remain within us unperceived. We are incapable of not being aware of God, if our nature is in proper spiritual health. Insensibility in the inner life is an abnormal condition. (Lossky, 1990, p. 99)

The years preceding the *Putsch*, during Gorbachev's leadership, were years of turmoil. As Lossky (1990) had pointed out, the Russian people were living with an insensibility to the inner life. With the changes instituted by Gorbachev, Russia was inevitably destined to accept the responsibility for its moral choices (Billington, 1992).

Gorbachev seemed to vacillate between commitment to the well-established Communist Party and reforms toward creating a democratic government; he appeared to contradict himself (Mitchell, 1991). Billington (1992) suggests that the socio-political factors leading to the *Putsch*, combined with Russia "finding its inner voice," led to transformations in Russian thought.

Russian psychology was also finding its inner voice. The field of psychology in Russia during the 70-year era of communism was subservient to the state prior to the advent of *perestroika* and *glasnost* (Loutchkov & Murphy, 1990). Anton S. Makarenko (in Ziferstein, 1977), a Russian psychologist, described pre-reform Soviet personality theory in this way:

1. Personality can most effectively be developed and maintained in, by, and for the collective.
2. The collective is *the* developer of personality.
3. Study the child while teaching him and teach the child while studying him. (p. 335)

Soviet psychology, therefore, was fundamentally a tool for supporting the philosophy of dialectical materialism of Marx, Engels, and Lenin (Ziferstein, 1977). In his book, Human Possibilities, Stanley Krippner (1980) states that Soviet (pre-*Putsch*) psychology closely interfaced with the political system and he suggests that political control may have been responsible for the slow growth of the field of psychology.

Psychology was an embryonic discipline in 1917 at the time of the Russian Revolution, and it was virtually banned in the Soviet Union in the 1930s during the regime of Stalin

(Lattin, 1991). Dulce Murphy⁵ has commented (quoted by Lattin, 1991), "There really is no psychology, as we know it, in the Soviet Union" (p. 35). Psychology as a multi-faceted discipline that studies the entire range of behavior and experience, was not possible until the advent of *glasnost*.⁶

The new (post-*Putsch*) psychology of Russia could, at last, seek openly to acquaint itself with the psychologies of the West. For example, in Washington D.C., at the American Psychological Association Centennial Convention in 1992, a pre-convention meeting was sponsored by the A.P.A. Committee on International Relations specifically devoted to issues in Russia and other former Soviet states (American Psychological Association, 1992). Russian psychologists are hungry for knowledge of Western psychology and the newly emerging open communication between Russian and American psychologists may forward a science of psychology bridging East and West.⁷

The revolutionary social and political events in the former Soviet Union, especially *glasnost*, also may have finally allowed the humanistic and transpersonal perspectives in psychology to emerge in Russia.⁸ Interest in the transpersonal dimension (mysticism, transcendence, meditation, Buddhism, etc.) appears to have been underground in Russia for many years (see Batchelor, 1992; Kervin, 1990; Snelling, 1993; Thompson, 1993). Because the State officially sponsored atheism (Kohan, 1992), for over 70 years the study of spirituality and the practice and exploration of transpersonal states were strictly forbidden in the former U.S.S.R. Now, however, there appears to be an emerging force in Russian psychology that openly acknowledges the transpersonal perspective, although concrete evidence is scarce (see International Transpersonal Association, 1992; Organizing Committee, 1992; Roberts, 1992). Certainly, the transpersonal movement is not a dominant psychological perspective in Russia and represents only a small (but growing) number of Russian psychologists and scholars.⁹

⁵Dulce Murphy is the Executive Director of the Esalen Institute Russian-American Exchange Program. Since 1980, this program has "discreetly brought selected Soviets and Americans together to explore divisive issues and to work on projects of common concern" (Esalen Institute, 1992c, p. 1).

⁶Special thanks to Stanley Krippner for helpful comments regarding this issue.

⁷In the summer of 1993, the American Psychological Association Committee on International Relations (C.I.R.P) initiated communication between psychologists in the U.S.A. and Russia via an electronic mail network (xsfu@weber.ucsd.edu). Under the direction of Michael Cole at the University of California at San Diego, many psychologists are now on-line via computer and can communicate electronically with any world-wide subscriber to the XSFU list.

⁸Humanistic and transpersonal psychology frequently overlap. Division 32 of the American Psychological Association--Humanistic Psychology--now incorporates Transpersonal Psychology (Lajoie, 1993).

⁹Also see the Spring 1994 issue of *Gnosis* magazine which was devoted to the broader subject of spirituality in Russia and Eastern Europe, with articles by Smoley (1994), Hoeller (1994), Kungurtsev and Luchakova (1994), Ivakhiv (1994), Houston (1994), Tomberg (1994), Bogdanov (1994), and Tice (1994).

Initial Contacts

To transform the world, to re-create it afresh, men must turn into another path, psychologically. Until you have become really, in actual fact, a brother to everyone, brotherhood will not come to pass. (Dostoevski, 1952, p. 158)

The initial exchanges between Russian and American psychologists interested in humanistic and transpersonal perspectives occurred when two individuals made pioneering visits to the U.S.S.R. Stanley Krippner, of the Saybrook Institute, visited Moscow at the invitation of the Russian Academy of Pedagogical Sciences in 1971 to investigate parapsychological research (Krippner, 1980). Also in 1971, as reported by U.S. News and World Report (1992), Michael Murphy, co-founder of Esalen,¹⁰ traveled to Russia intrigued by reports of research on parapsychology.

Krippner made a number of subsequent trips to the Soviet Union after 1971. In his book, Human Possibilities, Krippner (1980) recounts his trips to the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe and the psychologists and researchers he met who were engaged (and many continue to be engaged) in what Americans would call "mind research" or "consciousness studies" (also see Krippner, 1986). Krippner was a prime organizer of two conferences on humanistic and transpersonal psychology in the former Soviet Union which helped to bridge communication between former Soviet psychologists and Western psychologists. At present, he continues his efforts to connect Russian and American psychologists (personal communication, March, 1993).

In January, 1980, Michael Murphy initiated the Soviet-American Exchange Program (now called the Russian-American Exchange Center) which introduced new forms of international cooperation between Russia and the United States (Esalen Institute, 1992c). The term "track-two diplomacy" was coined by career diplomat, Joseph Montville, during a symposium sponsored by the Exchange Program.¹¹ Esalen's Russian-American Exchange Center is active in supporting Russia's social and economic transformation.

Specifically, Esalen's Psychology Project has a stated goal "to help organize and structure the process of transferral, exchange, and assimilation of essential psychological information in the former Soviet Union, to facilitate the transition to a psychologically and socially healthy society" (Esalen Institute, 1992b, unpaginated). Both Dulce Murphy, Executive Director of the Exchange Program, and Slava Loutchkov, Project Director (a Russian psychologist now working in the United States), continue to coordinate teams of American and Russian psychologists on a series of projects: workshops are held; psychological reviews are being prepared; a periodical is scheduled to be published; and a Russian-English, English-Russian encyclopedic dictionary of

¹⁰Esalen Institute is a center devoted to encouraging work in the humanities and sciences that promotes human values and potential. Its activities consist of public seminars, residential work-study programs, invitational conferences, research, and semi-autonomous projects" (Esalen Catalog, May/October, 1993, p. 72).

¹¹The symposium was part of a series entitled "Erik Erikson Symposia on the Political Psychology of Soviet-American Relations," the first of which was held in 1983 (Esalen Institute, 1992c).

psychological terms is in progress. The Exchange Center also encourages and facilitates the donation of professional journals and books to institutions in Russia (Buchanan, 1993).¹²

Beginning in 1983, the Association for Humanistic Psychology initiated a number of visits to Russia. Jack Hassard (1990), Director of the Association for Humanistic Psychology (A.H.P.) Soviet Exchange Project since 1987, writes that "without official invitation, they sought ways to establish ties to prestigious institutes, universities, and schools in the Soviet Union. With each new encounter came the hope that this might lead to more lasting, satisfying, and in-depth relationships" (p. 7). The A.H.P. Soviet Exchange Project is still active in Russia. As of 1990, Hassard reported that 13 delegations from A.H.P. had visited the former Soviet Union (pp. 15-17). The A.H.P. delegations met with psychologists and educators in Russia and other former Soviet states to discuss organizational development, psychology, psychotherapy, psychodrama, humanistic education, educational psychology, and teacher training. The A.H.P. Project continues to bridge the gap in understanding between Russian and American professionals.

The humanistic perspective was further introduced to Russians in September, 1986, when Carl Rogers first visited the Institute of Psychology in Moscow as part of the A.H.P. Soviet Exchange Project (Rogers, 1987a; 1987b). Rogers' visit engendered a revolutionary change in thinking for the psychologists who participated in his workshops.¹³ Russian psychologists had never before been exposed to the client-centered approach to psychotherapy.¹⁴

Conferences Bringing Russians and Americans Together

Once contact was made, the mind researchers and I discovered more connecting us than dividing us. We spoke a common language--that of human beings, their nature, their needs, and their potentials. (Krippner, 1980, p. ix)

¹²The present economic situation in Russia often prevents scientists from obtaining information that is critical for their research. Readers interested in donating materials to Russian colleagues are urged to contact the American Psychological Association, 750 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002, Attention: Joan Buchanan.

¹³Russian psychology was almost exclusively devoted to research before 1986. Psychotherapy was rarely practiced and was limited to psychiatrists trained in psychoanalytic methods (Loutchkov & Murphy, 1990). Also, see the recent survey of clinical psychology and psychotherapy in Russia (Gilbert & Shiryaev, 1992).

¹⁴A bit of intrigue was reported to me concerning the occasion when Professor Julia Gippenreiter of Moscow State University invited Carl Rogers to her home for dinner while he was in Moscow. Rogers had to elude his interpreter (probably a KGB agent) in order to leave his hotel room and be clandestinely whisked by car to Gippenreiter's home in a Moscow suburb. Even in 1986, it was strictly forbidden for a visitor to be invited to a Moscow resident's home (personal communication, 1992).

The 1991 Moscow Seminar

In 1991, a conference entitled The First Soviet-American Seminar on Humanistic Psychology and Human Sciences was sponsored by the Saybrook Institute in San Francisco (U.S.A.), the Center of Psychology and Psychotherapy (Moscow), the Association of Humanistic Psychology (U.S.S.R.), and the National Center for Human Studies of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences. Ilene Serlin (1992) of the Saybrook Institute characterized the spirit of the conference as reflecting:

. . . an enthusiasm for exchange, demonstrated by much good spirit, toasting, and story-telling. Soviet hospitality lived up to its reputation. We were showered with gifts and attention.

Similarities and differences with American humanistic psychology were apparent from that of the Soviet humanistic psychology. Slava Tsapkin pointed out that Soviet humanistic psychology did not begin in opposition to Freudian and behavioral psychology but had a more spiritual and religious dimension. Father Boris [Nichiporov], a Russian Orthodox priest, spoke of the unity of spirit, body and mind within the Orthodox tradition, and emphasized the importance of tradition in a psychospiritual search. Father Boris' participation was historic. He was the first Church member allowed to attend a scientific event. (p. 7)

Serlin (1992) went on to suggest that the continuing exchange of psychological knowledge between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. would be a step in the direction of important scientific communication.

The 1992 Prague Conference

In June of 1992, the International Transpersonal Association sponsored a conference in Prague, Czechoslovakia. This conference, which I had the pleasure of attending, the Twelfth International Transpersonal Association Conference, was entitled Science, Spirituality, and the Global Crisis: Toward a World with a Future.¹⁵ One of the founders of transpersonal psychology in the U.S.A., and also the founder of the International Transpersonal Association (I.T.A.), Stanislav Grof, was born in Czechoslovakia--returning to his homeland for the conference was especially significant for him (Grof, 1992). The choice of Prague as the site of the conference was symbolic of a newly developing openness (*glasnost*) in all of Eastern Europe. The President of Czechoslovakia, Václav Havel, had done much to encourage a more humanistic and transpersonal view in his country (Billington, 1992). Unfortunately, during the conference the country of Czechoslovakia voted to split apart, casting a cloud of deep concern over our optimism for the future.

Nine Russians presented papers at the I.T.A. conference in 1992.¹⁶ Two of the presenters (Dimitri Spivak and Vladimir Maikov) were in the process of being certified

¹⁵Some of the presentations were published in two consecutive issues of ReVision, a journal devoted to consciousness and change (Tarnas & Tarnas, 1993).

¹⁶F. Assadulina, M.D.; I. Charkovsky, M.D.; E. Krupitsky, M.D.; V. Maikov, Ph.D.; V. Nalimov, Ph.D.; T. Soidla, D. Sc., Ph.D.; D. Spivak, Ph.D.; L. Spivak, M.D.; V. Zinchenko, Ph.D.

as practitioners of Holotropic Breathwork.¹⁷ Although none of the presenters labeled themselves as transpersonal psychologists, it was obvious that the transpersonal perspective was beginning to have an impact on Russian psychology.

Three of the Russian scholars who presented papers at the conference deserve special mention: Vladimir Maikov, Vasily Nalimov, and Tõnu Soidla.

Vladimir Maikov

I first met Vladimir Maikov in October of 1991. We were participating in a workshop and retreat offered by Stanislav Grof, Jack Kornfield, and Christina Grof on "Holotropic Breathwork and Vipassana Meditation" in California. Maikov was in the process of being trained as a certified Holotropic Breathwork facilitator. We met again in 1992 in Prague at the Twelfth International Transpersonal Association Conference, where he gave a paper entitled "Visual Design for Human Evolution." During the Moscow conference in 1992--The 1992 Meeting on Humanistic and Transpersonal Psychology--Maikov gave a workshop on Holotropic Breathwork.

Maikov is also senior research associate at the Institute of Philosophy, Russian Academy of Sciences. He is vice-president of the Russian Association of Humanistic Psychology and he has authored many papers on transpersonal psychology and philosophy (International Transpersonal Association, 1992). The staff of the Association for Transpersonal Psychology (1993) announced that a new Russian-American transpersonal educational program was being organized in Moscow. A subsequent announcement (Association for Transpersonal Psychology, 1993) by the Faculty of Transpersonal Psychology and Psychotherapy at the Higher Psychological College, Russian Academy of Sciences, presented Maikov as Chairman of the Board of the newly established graduate school in Moscow offering courses in the Fall of 1994.

Vasily Nalimov

The conference program (International Transpersonal Association, 1992) for the twelfth I.T.A. conference describes the second important Russian transpersonal scholar, Vasily Nalimov, as follows:

. . . born in Moscow in 1910 and educated as a mathematician. . . his mother was a surgeon, his father an anthropologist, and his grandfather a sorcerer-witch-doctor. He has had spiritual teachers from the esoteric tradition of Mystical Anarchism in Russia and spent years in GULAG. He has also worked with the academician A. N. Kolmogorov, who is known world-wide as a genius in mathematics. Dr. Nalimov's theory of 'probabilistic way of mind' has been presented as a series of books published in Russia and abroad (p. 30)

Nalimov's paper in Prague was presented by his wife and colleague, Zhanna Drogalina Nalimov, and was entitled "A Human Being as an Existential Integrity: A Look into the Future." Two leading American psychological journals, ReVision (Nalimov, 1990) and the Journal of Humanistic Psychology (Thompson, 1993), have published articles about Nalimov's philosophy of human consciousness (also see Nalimov, 1990). Thompson (1993) believes that "Nalimov's concepts of meaning and consciousness, which will

¹⁷Holotropic Breathwork is a therapeutic process developed by Stanislav Grof.

probably not be fully realized until well into the next century, encompass topics as varied as language, mathematics, and philosophy" (pp. 82-83).

Thompson calls Nalimov a "Russian visionary" and quotes Stanislav Grof as stating that Nalimov's work is the first significant contribution of Soviet science to the field of transpersonal psychology. Zhanna Nalimov has stated that he is not in good health (personal communication, 1992), but he hopes to complete the manuscript of his account of Mystical Anarchism in Russia and his experiences with his spiritual teachers.^{18,19}

Tõnu Soidla

Tõnu Soidla is a molecular geneticist and Senior Scientist at the Institute of Cytology in St. Petersburg, Russia. He presented a paper at the Twelfth International Transpersonal Association Conference entitled "Schroedinger's Cat in Pandora's Box" (Soidla, 1992). I immediately recognized his name in the conference guide because he had corresponded since the 1980s with S. I. Shapiro, my graduate advisor. Soidla and I have been communicating regularly since the conference. He has also made available to me a series of manuscripts, some of which have been or will be published in the International Journal of Transpersonal Studies (Soidla, 1993, 1995a, 1995b).

Soidla states that ". . . after being silent for 20 years or so, I just cannot stop writing everything down" (personal communication, December 2, 1992). A broad-ranging thinker and scientist, he is currently applying his transpersonal insights to theoretical work in the molecular genetics of human memory, as well as beginning to teach courses in transpersonal psychology. This special supplement of the International Journal of Transpersonal Studies includes the first two parts of a transpersonal and autobiographical essay by Soidla.

The 1992 Moscow Meeting

From Prague, I traveled to Moscow to attend the 1992 Meeting on Humanistic and Transpersonal Psychology held at Golitsino, Russia--a suburb about 30 km. from Moscow. The title and theme of the meeting was: When Time is Out of Joint: Coping with Critical Changes in Personal, Social, and Global Life. The conference was sponsored by the Saybrook Institute (U.S.A.), the Moscow Center of Psychology and Psychotherapy (Russia), and the Association of Humanistic Psychology (Russia and Great Britain). From July 2 to July 10, 1992, American, British, Russian, and other Eastern European professionals stayed at the Conference Center at Golitsino. We ate together, listened to one another's ideas, and celebrated in a way only the Russians can inspire.

Almost a year had passed since the 1991 *Putsch* and Gorbachev was no longer in power. This was Yeltzin's Russia, and times were hard. The economy was staggering

¹⁸I met Zhanna Drogalina Nalimov in Moscow in the summer of 1992 and she graciously invited me to their home after I expressed interest and admiration for their work. Unfortunately, my travel schedule precluded such a visit at the time.

¹⁹Stanley Krippner and Erin Neill were kind enough to review this manuscript; V. V. Nalimov and Zhanna Drogalina Nalimov also contributed an extensive and invaluable set of comments which appear following this paper.

under the strain; shopping lines were long; shelves were empty; the leaders of Russia and the former U.S.S.R. were floundering for direction. The psychologists with whom we met expressed great concern for the psychological health of the people undergoing such stress.

The theme of the conference was expressed by the opening speakers; Slava Tsapkin (Russia) said that sometimes there is regression before transformation; Stanley Krippner (U.S.A.), of the Saybrook Institute, spoke about humanistic and transpersonal psychology, and pointed out that Gorbachev was a hero to Americans but not to Russians; Fyodor Vasiluk (Russia) expressed deep gratitude that we could come together for such a meaningful exchange; and Boris Bratus (Russia) spoke about the cultural and language difficulties that prevent Russian people from experiencing individualism. He also expressed concern that there was still a "coffin in the heart of Moscow" (see Organizing Committee, 1992).

Leonid Gozman (1992), of Russia, gave a presentation at the plenary session entitled "Swallowing a Bitter Pill: Post Communist Crises and Psychology." He also stated that formerly the task of psychology in the Soviet Union was to control, fool, and cheat the people, that the people knew this and they remembered it. He pointed out that the Russian people do not trust psychology. He went on to elaborate that psychology's new task was to assist the Russian people to understand and uncover the meaning of what is really going on in their country.

Charles Webel (1992), of the U.S.A., presented a paper entitled "Social Change and Personal Growth: A Dialectical Relationship." He stressed that during times of social change and personal growth, certain questions must be answered in order to establish the dialectical relationship between growth and change: Who am I to be? What am I to value? What is my vision for the future? These are, indeed, questions with which the Russians seemed to be grappling.²⁰

It is somewhat of a miracle that this conference ever managed to get organized and take place during such a difficult time in Russia. The problems that the Russian people were encountering were overwhelming. We came away from the conference with enormous respect for the Russians--especially the psychologists in Russia who are working under such chaotic conditions. Many of the Westerners at the conference expressed concern that they were not certain what Western psychology had to offer to Russia during this time of crisis. The psychological needs of the Russian people are vastly different than the clients we see in the West. Mechanically applying the traditional Western approach to counselling Russians would not be appropriate. We learned that Americans can be thoughtless and arrogant in their attitudes about the situation in Russia. We did, however, also learn that it is possible to teach each other, share methods, grope for a

²⁰At the conference I had the privilege of presenting two workshops entitled The Illuminated Life, based upon a forthcoming book of the same name by Abe Arkoff (1995), an American psychologist and Professor Emeritus at the University of Hawai'i, in which, coincidentally, these very questions were addressed. The Russians who participated in the workshops were visibly concerned about these deeply existential questions.

more authentic understanding, and enrich each other's perspective.²¹

Another conference was tentatively planned for 1993 by the 1992 Organizing Committee. In October, 1992, I received a letter from Stanley Krippner of the Saybrook Institute stating that the 1992 conference had been perceived as a very positive experience by the Russians (although a considerable amount of money was lost on the conference because of the very small number of people who attended from the U.S.A.), and that the 1993 conference had been cancelled.

Transpersonal Psychology in Russia

There is no training in transpersonal psychology in Russia, and there is no institution doing research in this field. The attitude towards transpersonal psychology and those who are doing it, however, is really good in academic circles, in universities and institutes where there are students. It is quite good, but Russians tend to make a cult of everything, so to some extent they are making a cult.
(Fedotova, quoted in Vich, 1992, p. 7)

Transpersonal psychology is in its infancy in Russia. As Fedotova pointed out in 1992 (Vich, 1992), there was no research or training for transpersonal psychology in Russia. Without training, we can hardly expect Russian psychologists to understand the transpersonal perspective in the field.

In 1993, the Association for Transpersonal Psychology announced that Dwight Judy, A.T.P. Board Member, had arranged a series of meetings between a delegation from the Omega Club of Moscow and the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology (I.T.P.), a California graduate school.²² Vladimir Maikov, Co-director of the I.T.P. Program in Moscow, explained that a wide range of psycho-spiritual practices and religious-esoteric philosophies had their origins in Russia. He stated that although much of this creative energy was suspended during the Communist regime, it had sometimes continued underground. The spiritual hiatus of 70 years suppressed the expression of the "Russian soul"--a soul that is now reawakening. The Institute of Transpersonal Psychology in cooperation with the Omega Club announced that it may receive a \$50,000 challenge grant toward creating an External Degree Program in Moscow (Association for Transpersonal Psychology, 1993).

Perhaps the I.T.P. External Degree Program will help provide a living future for transpersonal psychology in Russia. As Maikov (Association for Transpersonal

²¹Michael Murphy, co-founder of Esalen Institute, recently confirmed this concern. When describing Esalen's Project on Economic Growth in Russia, he specifically stated that "An essential concept of this project is that we must not attempt to impose an American model on these Russian enterprises. We know from long years of experience that this does not work" (Esalen Institute, 1992d).

²²The delegation was comprised of Omega President Farida Asadullina, Ph.D.; Vladimir Maikov, Ph.D.; Alexander Neklessa, Ph.D. (all from Moscow); Evgeny M. Krupitsky, M.D. (St. Petersburg); Khristina Klovaite (Vilnius, Lithuania) (Association for Transpersonal Psychology, 1993, p. 10).

Psychology, 1993) remarked, "Rebuilding the links between the person, the earthly practicalities, and the spiritual realms, is an urgent necessity if the individual and society are not to be lost in chaos and cultural collapse" (p. 11).

We can perhaps view the future of transpersonal psychology in Russia with cautious optimism. Although there are deep religious undercurrents in Russian society, it should not be assumed, therefore, that transpersonal psychology is suddenly an "in" field. Indeed, some Russians view transpersonal psychology with suspicion. In an article appearing in Common Boundary, entitled "Manna from Heaven," Susan Roberts (1992) reports that after a half-century of atheistic Communism, spiritual books and workshops are beginning to feed Eastern Europe's soul. Still, Roberts advises caution. She comments that Americans bearing new age messages are often perceived by Eastern Europeans as self-indulgent rich people who can afford to sit around navel-gazing while they must attend to more pressing realities.

Conclusion: More Questions than Answers

BECOMING

*Stuffed in a poorly lighted museum,
guarded by bored pensioners,
Homo Sovieticus gathers dust and scorn,
while at the bloodless Institute of Psychology
the ghost of comrade Lomov
disapprovingly prowls the corridors,
predicting chaos, degeneracy.
Below, in the renovated basement,
ignoring his footsteps,
a young psychotherapist and her client
search for the keys to rusty
seventy-year-old locks
and dare to become human. (Tom Greening, 1992c)*

Tom Greening, the longstanding Editor of the Journal of Humanistic Psychology, and 16 others also interested in Russian psychology, gathered at Esalen in November of 1992 for a workshop entitled Russian Psychology Today: Its Effects on Global Thinking and the Helping Professions. The group discussed Russia's "surrender to liberation," explored the Stalinist legacy, and discussed the historical patterns that may persist in post-*Putsch* Russia.²³ Slava Loutchkov commented that the socio-political view of human beings in the Soviet Union had seen the individual as the servant of the collective. He pointed out that there is no room for psychology or the helping professions in this view because the welfare of the individual is not a political concern.

Psychology is beginning to emerge as a helping profession, but in step with other sectors of Russian society, it is emerging in chaos. There is no psychological infrastructure to support its growth. Fortunately, in the 1990s, academic psychology in Russia has begun to shift its focus to more practical uses as more psychologists are

²³Certainly, the burning of the White House in Moscow in October of 1993 bears witness to the difficulties confronting the Russians as they transform their social, economic, and political structures.

becoming clinically trained for counselling, psychotherapy, and direct services.

Tom Greening (1992a) came to the Esalen workshop with a list of questions²⁴ for psychologists concerned with the changes in the former Soviet Union to reflect upon:

1. What types of new citizens are emerging in the republics as a result of the changes from *glasnost*, *perestroika*, the coup, the breakup of the U.S.S.R., etc.?
2. If, as psychologists, we could create a new ideal person who would be best able to help his or her country develop positively from the present situation, what would the qualities of this new person be?
3. What natural and arranged processes would help create such persons? Self-help and consciousness-raising groups? Training in democratic responsibility?
4. What special institutions and organizations can psychologists help create to support such processes and development of such new people?
5. What are the new (or old) negative personality characteristics that must be confronted and overcome in order to free people to develop in new ways?
6. How can psychologists help people confront in themselves these negative personality characteristics and develop their positive potential? What are the roles of atonement, confession, confrontation, forgiveness, transformation, redemption? What aspects of earlier Russian, Slavic, or other cultures, support such processes? Is the church, religion, and spirituality relevant?
7. What can U.S. psychologists learn from the experiences of colleagues in Russia and the other republics about the liberation and transformation of human beings?

These questions remain to be answered.

To Greening's perceptive list of questions, I would add the following as well:

1. There appears to have been an underground esoteric spiritual movement (e.g., Nalimov, Soidla) in Russia. How extensive is it and who are its members? How does this movement relate to transpersonal psychology?
2. How will the Russian people accept Western psychology's individualistic (see Bratus, 1992; Serlin, 1992) approach to psychotherapy and increased awareness?
3. Will comprehensive and scholarly training be available for Russian psychologists in humanistic and transpersonal psychology?

²⁴These questions were adapted from a list based upon the Esalen Institute Conference held in November of 1991 (Greening, 1992a).

4. Slava Tsapkin (Serlin, 1992) states that Soviet humanistic psychology has a more spiritual and religious dimension than humanistic psychology in the West. How can transpersonal psychology complement this position?
5. A spiritual path often includes taking personal responsibility for one's actions. How will this fit into the consciousness of the "collective"?
6. How will the Orthodox Church in Russia view transpersonal psychology? Based upon the attitude expressed by Father Boris Nichiporov at the 1992 Moscow Meeting, it seems that the Orthodox Church is somewhat skeptical about psychology's role in spirituality.
7. Will the current socio-political atmosphere detract or encourage the exploration of transpersonal psychology in Russia?
8. Can transpersonal psychology help the Russian people examine their values during this time of critical change?

The communication initiated between the Soviet Union and the United States in the 1970s and 1980s has had an important impact on Russian psychology. As *glasnost* allowed channels of communication to open between scholars and professionals of the two countries, a new appreciation for the challenge of understanding different world views emerged. Open communication has helped us to better understand our Russian friends. *Glasnost* has finally come to psychology--openness and communication can now lead toward deeper understanding between the psychologists in both countries.

In the spring of 1994, the newsletter of the Association for Transpersonal Psychology (Association for Transpersonal Psychology, 1994) printed an announcement of the exciting news about the "Marriage of Transpersonal and Academic Psychology in Russia" (p. 9). The first semester of training transpersonal psychology graduate students was scheduled to begin in August, 1994. Vladimir Maikov was named Chairman of the Board and Andrei Gostev was listed as Dean of Faculty.

Notwithstanding the increasing opportunities for ties with our Russian transpersonal colleagues, it is important to remember that transpersonal psychology is emerging in Russia within a completely different milieu than it did in the United States in the late 1960s. The future course of transpersonal psychology in Russia is impossible to predict at present. The greatest contribution we can perhaps make at this point is simply to offer our unqualified support and friendship.

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