

States was applicable in their local organizations.

Another part of the project was the publication in Uzbek, Russian, Tajik and Turkmen of four brochures for Central Asian NGOs. The editorial board decided to highlight the work of the Tajikistan Association for Scientific and Technical Expertise in a brochure entitled *Microcredit*. The unique women's clubs of Tajikistan were the subject of the brochure *A Woman's Lot*. The brochure *How and Where to Get Money* covered grant writing, with practical tips and a list of donor organizations active in Central Asia. *Using Civic Forums as a Means for Problem Solving* described how to conduct a civic forum as a platform to discuss and solve social problems. The editorial board worked by electronic mail. We circulated, reviewed, and edited the material in that manner. The results of our efforts, as intended, were interesting and useful mini-textbooks.

The contacts made through the Civic Partners program have proven to be so strong that members of various groups from different countries continue to work together after the formal end of the grant. For example, Askana, a group that defends the rights of the handicapped in Kyrgyzstan, and 21st Century Uzbekistan launched four more joint projects in the Fergana Valley of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan to revive the ancient school of ceramics and handiwork found there, to organize a festival of folk costumes, and to establish theaters there. The Peacemakers Group of Kyrgyzstan and Oila in Tajikistan held a joint seminar on women's rights in the border areas of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and establish women's clubs in the border areas. The Peacemakers Group also established a joint project for teachers in the border areas of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan with Tarakkiet Fergana Informational and Educational Center of Uzbekistan on a program focused on tolerance, human rights and interactive teaching methods.

Many members of the Network of Civic Partners met already twice at workshops of the United States Institute of Peace organized in Tashkent, and also at the 18th Meeting of the Centers for Pluralism in Baku in April of this year.

We take enormous pride in observing that the Civic Bridges project will have a lasting effect. Damira Tukhtasinova, head of the Tarakkiet Center put it well: "The project gave great impetus to the founding of zones of cooperation. It helped women in the border areas become acquainted and improve connections between villages in those areas and to find out about organizations that can help them become active in society."

HELP!!!

by Ivlian Haindrava

Ivlian Haindrava is director of the Center for Development and Cooperation in Georgia and a prominent independent journalist. As a member of parliament in the early 1990s, he helped draft Georgia's Constitution.

"Different circumstances require different methods, but not different moralities."

President George W. Bush, West Point, New York, June 1, 2002



The author, Ivlian Haindrava. Credit: IDEE

First of all, thank you!

Heartfelt thanks to the West as a whole and to the United States in particular for the truly invaluable help that has been provided to Georgia and other post-communist countries – political, economic, humanitarian, diplomatic, technical, advisory, and all other aid. I will not speak for anyone else, but I believe that without this aid Georgia could hardly have reached the attainments that it has today as a battered but nonetheless independent, state. The West not only finished off the Evil Empire, it secured the physical survival of the peoples caught beneath its ruins.

The fall of the communist system happened faster than even the most optimistic forecasts, internal or external. It was not carefully dismantled, but crumbled and collapsed. Though some countries were better prepared than others to face such changes, the general level of preparedness was quite low. How well can you prepare for the unknown? The situation at the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s was unprecedented. There were no tried and true formulae to turn to for guidance in the completely new global political reality (for the fall of communism was indeed felt throughout the world). Intuition and improvisation were the call of the day, with corrections only following upon new developments. Naturally under such circumstances, there were tactical and strategic mistakes. Those mistakes were made both by the nations that had just gained independence and freedom as well as by the West as it tried to strengthen their independence and promote democracy.

One would think, thirteen years after the Berlin Wall was torn down, that we could sum up the progress of this transition stage. This is not to say that the transition from totalitarianism to democracy, civil society, and a market economy

A step forward?



In Azerbaijan, Western monitors ignored the use of force against political rallies, as shown top, when assessing the conduct of parliamentary elections in September 2000. The elections were called a "step forward." In June 2002, prior to the presidential elections, police again move to attack demonstrators in Baku demanding free and fair elections (above). Credit: IDEE

has been an undiluted triumph in all countries, but rather that the speed and success of this process in various regions and countries has become steady and, therefore, reasonably predictable.¹ In other words, a reality that was for a while quite new became usual, and in turn was replaced by a newer reality and new priorities after September 11, 2001.

New priorities do not always lead to the abandonment of old ones. More often, it is the other way around: the necessity of methodically limiting real and potential bases for international terrorism almost automatically means widening and strengthening the bases of democracy. With this in mind, the utilization of Western aid to the countries that have gotten stuck in the transitional process and that have fallen behind or fallen away from the development of democracy (or maybe even headed back in the opposite direction), is a question of primary significance. The experience of recent years must be carefully reviewed if this issue is to be successfully resolved.

The Aid

By observing that the West's efforts have been less efficient than might be desired, I do not attempt to shift the blame. We, in our misfortune, are the first to bear that responsibility. If Western humanitarian and economic aid has become a powerful source of corruption, our greedy bureaucrats are the ones to be questioned about it, not their nameless, indifferent Western colleagues. If reforms have come to a halt and budget spending going astray has become the norm, the cause should first be sought in the flaws in our state administrative system and only then in the shortcomings of Western advisors who may not always be fully informed of our situation. If the Georgian (and not just the Georgian) parliament is a shelter for shady businessmen and characters looking for legal immunity, international observers sanctioning our elections are not to blame, but rather the voters who fell for the patently improbable promises of such candidates and did not think to vote carefully or wisely.

We, the citizens of this country, are to blame, and no one else.

But where Western money has been spent and will likely continue to be spent in considerable sums it is natural to hope that it be spent in a way that maximizes its use for achieving desired goals. If Westerners considered it their duty to see to it that the food, medical equipment and money reached their intended recipients instead of thinking their role fulfilled at the moment money tranches are deposited in some bank account or humanitarian aid shipments are sent from their embarkation points, there would be much less opportunity for our bureaucrats to misuse such aid. If foreign experts and investors stopped handing out advances based on the good intentions of those in power here, but instead spoke out about the incompetence and venality of our government ministers, then our reforms might not have degenerated into empty phrases and frightening processes. If international observers at our elections would not call a step backward a step forward, and Western leaders not congratulate our presidents for their success after

totally rigged elections, our political prospects might be a little brighter. Such approaches might be cheaper and more productive for the West as well.

Thomas Weiss, professor of political science at the City University of New York, writes that there is a “dark side to aid.” Foreign aid can lead to a sharp rise in corruption, political conflict, and even military conflict (when governmental and criminal groups both grasp for the same aid). As a result, the country’s problems are not solved, but deepened, while living conditions and the economy remain perilous. Foreign aid becomes nothing but a source of enrichment for the local elite and often a means by which incompetent and illegitimate governments hold onto power. Foreign aid used unwisely draws a state into a vicious circle: the country receives no real support; nor does it try to raise itself from the crisis on its own. Rather, it comes to depend on foreign handouts and to require them endlessly. There are indications that a significant part of the foreign aid sent to the former Soviet Union (\$14 billion in ten years from the United States alone) was used by corrupt officials and their cronies in business and criminal enterprises. World Bank economists David Dollar and Lant Pritchett analyzed international aid to 113 countries and came to the sad conclusion that aid is given more often to countries with bad governments and comparatively few poor people than to countries with good governments and many needy.²

People

I have never understood or accepted the Western penchant for former (or not former) KGB agents, (Communist) party leaders, and Komsomol activists. It is beyond my comprehension what moral or professional advantages these ex-guardians of totalitarianism possess for building a civil society as compared to those who devoted their lives to totalitarianism’s destruction. Why should someone be received with open arms after betraying, imprisoning, and exterminating those who fought for freedom and democratic values just because he now says that the system he devoutly defended for decades turned out to be so vicious? Is it based on a calculation that those who were honest and steadfast in the fight to promote Western values and who were willing to risk their own skins will remain allies no matter what, so each communist turncoat represents a bargain purchase and even more convincing evidence of the advantages of the Western lifestyle over the Soviet one? Believe me, there is no need to worry about communist turncoats, who will not suffer in any case. There is still Party money behind them. And Komsomol money. And the Soviet security services’ old boys’ club. It is better to take care of those who never beg for welfare in spite of their real contribution and abilities.

On no account have I forgotten that Western aid to the emerging Third Sector in post-Soviet countries enabled many intellectuals who were no longer needed in their own countries to survive physically and professionally. But what happens to public morality when what people see are Soviet big shots prospering on Western aid and not honorable dissidents?

Well, enough about “our” people. Let’s turn to the Westerners, whom we have seen quite a bit of since the lifting of the Iron Curtain. Frequently they are specialists trying to do what they can (or can’t) to help us. Some specialists, however, come without the slightest knowledge of the countries they are advising. The latter generously share the American experience in organizing election campaigns and fundraising for candidates for state legislatures, or perhaps the Indian experience of community-building in traditionally caste-bound villages. I do not deny that all that information may be of some theoretical interest to some local specialists, but I will say that in Georgia the practical use of all those lectures, seminars, and training sessions was pretty much nonexistent. Expert knowledge of India, combined with complete ignorance of Georgia (such as not knowing that Georgians have their own spoken and written language that is more distant from Russian than Hindi is to English) was both insulting and humorous, neither facilitating the learning process nor contributing to the reputation of the international experts.

Elections

It is with regret that I must say that Western elections observers in the South Caucasus have, knowingly or not, contributed only to the legitimization of shamelessly falsified elections. In 1997, Thomas Carothers commented,

In elections in countries with little history of democracy, particularly in Africa and the former Soviet Union, foreign observers sometimes take the attitude, ‘Well, what can you expect?’ The notion that it is important to offer at least some encouragement to societies that are struggling with the basics leads them to downplay serious problems.³

Two years later, Irena Lasota, President of IDEE, put it more succinctly: “One of the worst ideas was sending unprepared Western electoral “observer brigades” to unfamiliar countries. These untrained observers would spend the night before the election dining at the Sheraton, proceed the following day to a polling booth where a local notable would often be stuffing the boxes with phony ballots before their very eyes, and then return to the Sheraton to declare: “I wish such well-run elections took place in my country.”⁴

Surprisingly, such observations and warnings were ignored. Things continued the same way, as Petruška Šustrová attested to when she served as an independent international observer for IDEE in the fall 1999 parliamentary elections in Georgia. Here is a part of what she wrote about the experience:

So, why do OSCE observers claim that the elections in Georgia were a step forward? Something is explained also by Mr. Michael Ochs who had monitored many elections as an observer for the OSCE. He told us even before the event that there would be cheating in the elections but that in Georgia the situation was better than, for example, in Kazakhstan.

He is surely right, but I believe that the honesty and regularity of the Georgian elections can be judged solely by Georgian laws. The United States welcomed Shevardnadze's victory. This is understandable; his drive towards Europe is definitely closer to the advanced world than Aslan Abashidze's orientation towards Russia which could bring even further problems to the region which is already full of turbulence. But what about the citizens of Georgia? What about the voters who saw the rigging of the elections with their own eyes, and are now told that the world regards this as "occasional excesses" which are beside the point? After all, democracy in the country is created neither by Shevardnadze nor by some other prominent politician but by the participation of people in public events: and many Georgian citizens feel deceived and sold out to "higher political interests."⁵

As a result of all this, we got the excesses of the April 2000 Georgian presidential election and the August 2002 referendum in Azerbaijan. It is even embarrassing to call them an "election" or a "referendum." It seems that just using these words for such events in the countries of the former Soviet Union can stir such wild enthusiasm in the West that flagrant distortions of the people's will are simply ignored. This attitude, besides distorting the very idea of elections, is deeply insulting. We are looked upon as uncivilized savages, for whom the conduct of just an election-like process is reason for exultation among our more civilized brethren. However, Irena Lasota points out that, "In the Republic of Georgia, the elections of October 1990 were free and pluralistic and attracted a turnout of over 70 percent, despite Soviet laws, Soviet pressure, and a lack of money, both local and foreign. Thus the first round of elections in countries emerging from communism required neither substantial foreign investment nor extensive voter-education initiatives. Voters in the region knew what real elections were all about. They knew that they had to vote to change their lives, and in most cases they even knew exactly whom they wanted to vote for or against."⁶

Fareed Zakaria writes that "If a country holds elections, Washington and the world will tolerate a great deal from the resulting government, as they have with Yeltsin, Akaev, and Menem. In an age of images and symbols, elections are easy to capture on film. (How do you televise the rule of law?) But there is life after elections, especially for the people who live there."⁷

Occasionally we are told that free and fair elections, while being quite important, hardly represent the single defining element in a democracy. Naturally they don't. A nearly mathematical equation has been formulated in this regard: free and fair elections are a necessary but not sufficient condition for democracy. Necessary! Meaning that if the necessary condition is not met, what we have is something other than democracy. Just what this something represents is not our concern here. What must be said is that the permissiveness of some Western institutions in aiding democracy is cultivating something other than democracy in several post-Soviet states. One of the principal jobs of Western institutions is

to observe elections and give strict, impartial assessments of their conduct. Such assessments should be followed by appropriate reactions of international organizations and governments of democratic states. But when such aid results in Georgia moving from the ranks of "electoral democracies" (in 1997-99) to that of "parasitical authoritarian states" (in 2000-02), a question arises about its usefulness: Was this really the West's strategic aim?

Strategic Aims

The proper question is: What is the West's strategy? The goal has been clearly stated as assistance in building and developing democracy and civil society. The issue of strategy is more complex, however.

Any strategy requires long-term programs, clearly defined priorities, and intermediate goals. In the South Caucasus, all genuine NGOs are wholly and fully dependent on Western sponsors; there is simply no local money for civil society. How can an NGO plan educational and other long-term programs with specific groups if only short-term projects are funded? Otherwise, these are just one-time events, the most expensive of which turn into NGO tourism and a good time for all. Western organizations do have long-term projects, but the local implementers of those projects, as a rule, are not given long-term projects of their own to run. In addition, there is a lack of coordination among Western organizations that allows strange overlaps to occur. Several NGOs have been known to do the same thing. However, they have done it not only independently, but without knowledge of each other's achievements and failures. In other words, they are all reinventing the wheel. Various sponsors offer seminars and training sessions that are identical to each other not only in content (which is not surprising), but also participants (which is surprising). For example, the U.S.-based International Republican Institute began operating in Georgia in the second half of the 1990s with the same type of program that the National Democratic Institute had begun several years earlier.

Regulars on the seminar circuit raise other questions too. Chekhov said that if you beat it enough you can teach a rabbit to light matches. That may be true, but what is the use of a match-lighting rabbit? It would probably just burn something down. The International Foundation for Electoral Systems, with remarkable obstinacy, holds annual training sessions for members of the Azerbaijani Central Elections Committee. The effectiveness of this training became apparent in the referendum of August 24, 2002, when the CEC declared completely falsely that a majority of voters had turned out and a communist-era 80 percent had voted in favor of amendments enhancing the president's powers. Furthermore, it is not clear why years of training are necessary for even the most complex details of (lawful) elections – it's not quantum physics after all.

Finally, Western donors and sponsors have literally scared to death some NGOs in the South Caucasus by saying that if they are discovered to be connected with political parties, they will be deprived of their grants. Now, no two

parties are alike. An NGO that collaborates with communists, Nazis, and similar fundamentalists is one thing, but isolating NGOs from democratic parties is a senseless and harmful strategy. The real democratic forces in post-Soviet countries are limited to democratic political groups, genuine non-governmental organizations, the truly independent media, and individual, unorganized intellectuals. These democrats have practically no funds of their own and they vie with the Soviet nomenklatura and Komsomol activists, who have the resources of the Communist Party, the Komsomol, and manifold antidemocratic, backward-looking forces, including some abroad who have no qualms about offering assistance. So why should a Georgian think tank *not* provide intellectual support to a like-minded political group? Doesn't the prohibition against such collaboration go against the stated strategic goal?

From a strategic point of view, Western aid should be rational, stable, and bold. Yes, bold, as it was in Croatia, Slovakia, and Serbia, where broad civil-democratic coalitions played decisive roles in the transition to democracy. Hesitation is shortsighted. If Milosevic could be bombed and then hauled before a tribunal, Shevardnadze and Aliyev at least can be made to hold fair elections.

Everything Else⁹

It is curious that there exists such a thing as fashion in the broad sweep that is called the building and development of democracy in the post-Soviet Union. I do not know who the trendsetter is, but suddenly, and without any obvious cause, funders have made demands for very specific projects. Local partners are quickly chosen who are clearly incapable, competent only in making a mess of even the best of ideas. It is hard to see why gender-studies programs were more needed in Georgia in 2000 than in 1998 or 2002. Who decided that that was a vital priority for Georgia in 2000?

At other times, we have seen donors' haste and lack of preparedness in critical situations. For instance, desperately needed humanitarian aid delivered for Chechen refugees in Georgia's Pankisi Gorge resulted in the rise of tension in the area. Living conditions for many residents of that mountain district were, and still are, difficult, and the convoys of trucks that passed them by did nothing to strengthen ties of trust, respect, and sympathy for the refugees from the neighboring country.

Disdain and tactlessness toward the local residents appears in other forms, too. A skilled worker in an international mission or delegation, say a driver, if he has a Western passport, will receive a salary ten times greater than his colleague with a post-Soviet passport and five times more than that of a local specialist working in the same place. A Western chauffeur hardly drives ten times better on Georgian roads than a local chauffeur, while the local specialists are much more expert in the topics of specialized delegations than any Western driver. I do not reject that a driver or a specialist in human rights from safe, calm Norway should receive more for working in Georgia ("risk pay") than he or she would

for working in Norway. But payment should be handled more tactfully, so as not to belittle the people who are their reason for being there.

Continuing on the same topic, I have some additional questions. Has even one project financed by the West been openly declared a failure? In what donor organization's annual report is it written that a project was unsuccessful because it was poorly conceived and carried out? Is all the activity of every national and international foundation, institute, mission, delegation and so on a brilliant achievement and success and that the only thing needed is a continuation of such brilliant achievement and success? Is that how everything looks from Washington (Strasbourg, Brussels, Vienna)? Things look somewhat different from Tbilisi (Baku, Yerevan, Kyiv, Chisinau, Minsk).

Let me restate: we are the ones who must solve our many problems. But Western aid (or, God forbid, the lack of it) can significantly determine the success or failure of democratic development in the post-Soviet countries. Strengthening democracy and broadening its impact are the cornerstones of Western policy. In those parts of the world where people's fates are uncertain, those who wish them well should hold to clear, sensible, conscientious and transparent plans of action to achieve their stated goals.

• • •

In conclusion, I present a few brief observations of the Center for Development and Cooperation-CfP from its six years working with the Centers for Pluralism network.

Participants: In the last few years, a steady, cooperative network has been maintained among NGOs and individuals *who have a clear awareness of common problems and regional differences, who share experiences and information, and who maintain clear channels of communication.* Naturally, there were people just passing through who quickly disappeared. But their places were taken by those who were better able to appreciate the atmosphere, principles and methods of the Centers for Pluralism.

Organization: One remarkable distinction of the CfP network is its absence of structured organization. It is the situation of no "leaders" and no "subordinates." The IDEE office in Washington does not command, but facilitates activities within the network. It suggests rather than assigns and supports rather than demands. Hence every national CfP has its own identity and defines and prioritizes its own activities. As a result, the Centers for Pluralism never fail to be useful and interesting to each other.

Meetings. Recently, we have struck upon a means to maintain regular communication: one general meeting and three regional meetings (Southwestern, Southeastern and Eastern regions) per year. This provides a forum where regional problems can be tied to more general problems. There is a natural eastward drift as Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and other countries are integrated into European and Euro-Atlantic organizations and civil society in those coun-

tries takes on new priorities. New NGOs are appearing on the CfP map in Central Asia and Mongolia at the same time.

Finances: IDEE's support of NGOs in post-Soviet countries is a model for obtaining big results from relatively small outlays. Events sponsored by IDEE attract their audiences not by the promise of luxury, but by their timeliness and interest. Modest IDEE "institutional" grants have gotten NGOs in many regions up and moving. The regrettable affair concerning the IDEE Warsaw office, in which a long-standing member of the Centers for Pluralism was discovered to have descended into a morass of impropriety and debt, confirms that there are no rules without exceptions. Any organization can fall into the trap. But the broad number of truly effective organizations supported by the IDEE and the wide range of work performed by the small number of staff at its Washington office can only call forth amazement and gratitude.

Potential reserves: Limited finances prevent IDEE from undertaking a number of interesting projects with the CfPs either on the national or regional levels. I will mention just one: if elections observation in post-Soviet countries were made a priority for IDEE and the CfPs, we would be able to mobilize a significant number of experienced observers who are thoroughly familiar with the post-Soviet countries and election legislation, as well as methods of election falsification and pressuring voters. Such a potential use of the Centers for Pluralism is just one of many to consider when reviewing the other uses of Western aid.

¹ See, for example, Thomas Carothers. "The End of the Transition Paradigm," *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 13, no. 1, 2002, pps. 5-21.

² Washington ProFile, October 10, 2002, no. 70 (204). www.washprofile.org

³ Thomas Carothers. "The Observers Observed," *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 8, no. 3, 1997, pps. 17-31.

⁴ Irena Lasota. "Sometimes Less Is More," *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 10, no. 4, 1999, pp. 125-128.

⁵ Network of Independent Journalists *Weekly Service* no. 149, published by STINA News Agency.

⁶ Lasota, *ibid.*

⁷ Fareed Zakaria. "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy," *Foreign Affairs*, no. 6, Nov.-Dec. 1997.

⁸ *Nations in Transition*, 2001, A. Karatnycky, A. Motyl, and A. Schnitzer, eds., Freedom House.

⁹ The author is grateful to Dubravka Velat for articulating a number of ideas on this topic during her presentation at a meeting of the Centers for Pluralism in Belgrade in November 2002.

Remembering Jakub

by Eric Chenoweth

Eric Chenoweth is co-Director of the Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe.

I met Jakub Karpiński for the first time in August 1980, in the middle of the strikes that would give birth to Solidarity in Poland. He and his partner and, later, wife, Irena Lasota, had come to meet with the director of the League for Industrial Democracy, an organization begun by Upton Sinclair and Jack London that had for 75 years provided an intellectual defense for the American labor movement. Just as importantly, the LID and its sister organization Social Democrats USA, had gained a reputation as fierce opponents of communism and proponents of democratic change in the Soviet Bloc. It was a natural place to come, then, for two Poles in the West seeking support for the pro-democratic workers movement in communist Poland. They had earlier gotten support from the LID for the Workers Defense Committee (KOR). I, a student activist at the time, told them of my youth group's plans to organize support for the Polish workers on college campuses. It began my relationship with Jakub that would last 23 years, until his untimely death March 22 of this year at the age of 62.

At our first meeting, Jakub and Irena told me that they would be happy to speak on campuses about Poland. I quickly took advantage of the offer, seeing an opportunity to bring two dynamic individuals to the campuses to teach a new generation of students about the struggle against communism from the new standpoint of the Polish workers movement. They spoke for me dozens of times, without ever receiving a cent in honoraria but knowing they were doing something extraordinarily valuable. Each conveyed a different charisma. Irena's was vital, to-the-point, and emotional, Jakub's was measured, deliberate, and quietly powerful.



Jakub Karpiński

Jakub's voice was so distinctive it could never be mistaken for another and I think I will never forget it no matter how distant his physical presence. He modulated his pitch from the highest decibel to a low-mid-range octave, providing emphasis to exactly the right word and syllable. The style of his speech was complemented by a slight speech impediment, which he had clearly fought through in order to take a place in a profession requiring public speaking. One could not help but admire his total self-assuredness. He made his impediment a

Credit: Witold Jaroslaw Szulecki, Courtesy of Arma-Multi-Agency

strength, rather than a weakness. (It was a strength I remember vividly from an evening recital of Stanislaw Baranczak's poetry at the Public Theater, where Jakub's performance next to well-known actors was nothing short of spectacular.)

Mostly though, I remember Jakub's mixture of deliberately styled speech with his precisely formulated ideas and thought. Jakub always delivered his speeches in an academic way: he was always teaching. But he never spoke from above: everyone was brought to his level simply by his organization of his ideas. Whatever the topic, he spoke about its most complex elements in an elemental and understandable way. For Jakub, every speech or lecture was an opportunity to make clear a new idea or formulation, not to create an opaque theory or to constantly repeat some long-ago digested epiphany. No matter how many times he had spoken on a topic, he prepared for the presentation as if it were completely new. Or, in turn, he would use it as an opportunity to hone even further an already precise line of thought. Regardless, whoever listened to Jakub give a presentation knew he was listening to an extraordinary intellect – and at least for a moment you could be on his level.

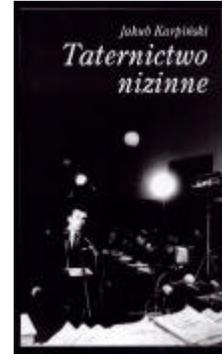
His specialties were sociology and history, a combination he used especially to examine modern Polish history, both under communism and after 1989. In his writings for *Uncaptive Minds*, the journal of the Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe, *Transitions*, and other publications, he extended his examination to both the period of late communism and the transition from it. He developed in the early 1990s an *ABCs of Democracy*, a primer that was translated into nearly a dozen languages, along with many of his other texts, such as "Democracy and Conflict" and "Postcommunism."

Jakub was both one of the most personable of men and one of the most remote. He eagerly engaged in conversation with friends and colleagues about anything, but once he was no longer needed in a conversation, he would take out one of the projects he was working on from his pack, which he could restart at any moment. On such occasions, he might be interrupted, yet always return to the task at hand. But when fully absorbed, such as in his nocturnal working hours, he could not be interrupted at all. That is when he was fully in his world.



Jakub Karpiński's texts were widely translated into other languages, including the pamphlets above, in Serbian, "Communism and Postcommunism" and "The Democratic Political System."

Jakub was a founder and member of the Board of Directors of the Committee in Support of Solidarity, begun on December 13, 1981, and of the Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe, begun in May 1985, both of which I directed. Most of his Polish colleagues knew him as an associate professor at Warsaw University, a key leader of the Warsaw University protest in 1968, a former political prisoner whose defense oration at the trial sentencing him to 3 years became a source of inspiration for future generations, as the author in the early 1970s of the petition against constitutional amendments that further enslaved Poland to the Soviet Union, and as the authors Marek Tarniewski and Jan Nowicki (two of the pseudonyms he used for the underground and for the émigré Kultura publishing house, among other places).



Jakub Karpiński's peroration at his 1968 trial was among the most well known texts in Poland's opposition movement. It was recently republished in Poland.

For myself, who never knew Polish but for a spare few words, I knew Jakub differently. He was an exile from his homeland, a child of World War II who grew up under Nazism and Communism, who nevertheless felt completely at ease in New York, or London, or Paris. He was always at home in an atmosphere of freedom without ever losing his knowledge and intimate understanding of communist dictatorship. Jakub was also an important guide through the complexities of Polish and East European history, which admittedly I was learning for the first time. While many people wondered what I, a non-Pole, was doing directing a Committee in Support of Solidarity, Jakub welcomed my interest and commitment and never tired of answering my questions and recommending to me what to read. He (along with Irena, Jerzy Warman, and others involved in those early days) took part in helping me edit texts translated from Polish into English. I learned from Jakub never to use the shorthand "martial law" to describe the crackdown on Solidarity in December 1981. Only "stan wojenny," or state of war, the constitutional provision used by Polish General Jaruzelski to destroy Solidarity, could possibly describe accurately the actions of the Jaruzelski regime — its war against the nation. As Jakub always taught, one should be precise in all descriptions.

Jakub was a constant source of support whose important projects could always be interrupted to take on some new task — including stuffing envelopes if that was necessary. He remained over 23 years a partner with me and Irena in all of our endeavors. (Although they divorced in 1997, Jakub and Irena maintained a close personal and organizational relationship and Irena was a constant source of support for Jakub throughout his illness and until his death.)

In the last ten years, he was a guiding spirit and intellectual force for the Centers for Pluralism program of IDEE, which gathers democrats from more than twenty postcommunist countries in a democratic and civic alliance. This was a natural alliance and partnership for Jakub, who believed that the struggle for democracy and against communism was not national or even regional but international. As an analyst, he understood also that democracy was not a natural emanation out of communism but a system that needed to be instituted and, more importantly, a set of ideas that needed to be understood and taught in society. His analysis of postcommunism – as a new political system resulting from communism that could lead to various political outcomes – was elaborated at CfP Meetings, in articles for *Uncaptive Minds* and for the Network of Independent Journalists, for which he was a frequent contributor, and briefly as an analyst for OMRI.

In addition to his texts being translated into more than a dozen languages, he lectured in nearly all of the 20 countries represented in the Centers for Pluralism, always responding to requests from new members in the network with great pleasure as an opportunity to visit a new country, region, or city – or to visit again, since places, things, history, and ideas always carried with them interest and meanings. Mostly though, Jakub enjoyed helping colleagues in promoting the cause of democracy, whether it was Miljenko Dereta and Dubravka Velat in Serbia, Smaranda Enache and Luminita Petrescu in Romania, or Vahid Gazi and Novella Jafarova-Applebaum in Azerbaijan.

For me, Jakub was a friend, a teacher, and a model of a true intellectual in the highest sense of the term. Devoted to his joint disciplines, he was also a man of worldly interests and wide knowledge who had an abiding commitment to use his intellectual skills in the rational pursuit of freedom and democracy. Until I met Jakub and Irena, my world had been rather closed. It always struck me how excited Jakub was about many disparate things and ideas, having a coherency of interests without being constrained (like many of my friends on the left) by an ideological straightjacket. I will always be grateful for having been introduced to Jakub's encyclopedia of knowledge and his clarity of mind.

I, and all of us associated with the Committee in Support of Solidarity, IDEE, and the Centers for Pluralism, will miss him dearly.



Jakub Karpiński speaking with Estonian MP Mart Nutt and Smaranda Enache of Romania at the Kyiv conference on "The Rise of Nationalism in the Former Soviet Union," organized in November 1996 by IDEE and the Institute of Statehood and Democracy.

Credit: IDEE

Centers for Pluralism

Armenia National Committee of the Helsinki Citizens (Assembly – Armenia)
 Center for Civic Initiatives (CCI) – Macedonia
 Center for Democracy and Human Rights (CEDEM) – Montenegro
 Center for Development and Cooperation (CDC) – Georgia
 Center for Pluralism Bulgaria (formerly Free and Democratic Bulgaria Foundation) – Bulgaria
 Civic Development International Center (CDIC) – Georgia
 Civic Initiatives – Serbia
 Civil Society Against Corruption – Kyrgyzstan
 Crimean Teachers Council – Ukraine
 D. Aliyeva Society for the Protection of Women(s) Rights – Azerbaijan
 Democracy After Communism Foundation – Hungary
 Forum for Tuzla Citizens – Bosnia and Hercegovina
 Foundation for Pluralism (formerly Humanitas Foundation) – Romania
 IDP Association of Women – Georgia
 Inam Center for Pluralism – Azerbaijan
 Jaan Tonisson Institute – Estonia
 Karta-Memorial (Ryazan) Russia
 Kosova Action for Civic Initiatives (formerly Koha Foundation) – Kosova
 Latta Center for Pluralism – Chechnya
 Liga Pro Europa – Romania
 Milan Simecka Foundation – Slovakia
 Rebirth of Crimea Foundation – Ukraine
 STINA Press Agency – Croatia
 Supolnasc Civil Society Center – Belarus

Centers for Pluralism Partners

APADOR-CH (Association for Defense of Human Rights in Romania-Helsinki Committee) – Romania
 “Aydin” Center of Public Initiatives – Ukraine
 Azerbaijan National Democracy Foundation (ANDF) – Azerbaijan
 Center for Civic Education – Mongolia
 Center for Information and Documentation of Crimean Tatars – Ukraine
 Center for Political Research “Democrat” (CPRD) – Azerbaijan
 Citizens United to Monitor Elections (GONG) – Croatia
 Democracy Education Center – Mongolia