

FROM THE EDITOR

A recent review, in *The New Yorker*, of Lewis S. Coser's *Men of Ideas: A Sociologist's View* cites Mr. Coser as saying: "Lip service may be paid to 'cross-fertilization,' but in actual fact young scholars are generally advised to stay within the boundaries of the 'field.'" This statement inevitably gave rise to editorial musings on our part. On the one hand, such terms as "cross-fertilization" and "interdisciplinary approach" have long been household terms—by now ancient retainers—in Soviet and East European studies. Indeed, the regional programs, centers, and institutes formed shortly after the Second World War were their nurseries. On the other hand, we do persist in the notion that we represent a "field"—another very popular term. Is this simply a delusion?

Admittedly we have had troubles defining our "field," as the almost Habsburgian full title of this journal indicates: *Slavic Review: American Quarterly of Soviet and East European Studies (Formerly the American Slavic and East European Review)*. It proved impossible to find a simple label that encompassed non-Slavic as well as Slavic, non-Soviet and pre-Soviet as well as Soviet, themes. Yet a purely geographical definition would not do: students of communism, comparative government, and planned economies (whom we consider our brethren) must range across the globe. Even historians and students of language and literature, whose range of interests is more frequently described territorially, may find Eastern Europe unduly heterogeneous for their purposes.

It would probably be well to admit that ours is a singularly disheveled field, comprising partially overlapping but by no means congruent interests. Indeed, this may be its salient feature. The best symbol that I have been able to provide for our "field" is the Ballantine beer ad: three interlocking rings (but also used by Dante to express the mystery at the climax of the *Divine Comedy*).

It may be that the very looseness of our "field," a congeries, has reduced the sharpness of the distinction between the disciplines. Still, we do have the question: How fruitful has cross-fertilization been, how productive, of new insights, new syntheses? The answer lies not in programs or intent but in the outcome. It would be interesting to ascertain—and with about twenty years' experience it should be possible—the scope and the significance of the achievements that can be claimed.

More modestly, it so happens that the present issue of *Slavic Review* contains two pairs of articles of a more or less interdisciplinary nature, and the reader may wish to reflect on cross-fertilization as he reads them. Professors Joravsky and Mikulak are both professional historians who have elected to study the natural sciences in the Soviet Union—a strenuous and probably controversy-ridden endeavor, since the historian and the natural scientist are quite far apart in the spectrum of the various intellectual disciplines.

Slavic Review

Attempting less of a straddle, Professors Lonsdale and Mieczkowski, both geographers, are nonetheless cutting across a boundary, that of economics.

A word about our illustration in Professor Terras' article. We felt it would be helpful to provide a picture of Sviatoslav's famous meeting with the Byzantine emperor, showing, if possible, the all-important shaved head and scalp lock. Our efforts with early representations were unavailing, but we did run across three nineteenth-century portrayals of the event, one of which—as yet unidentified—we adapted to a line drawing. We were also interested to find, in the course of our searches, that a 1959 edition of a novel about Sviatoslav, published in Kiev, pictured him in a very Viking-looking dragon boat. The 1960 edition had him more safely on horseback. We should welcome from our readers identification of the painting or any other iconographic information about this meeting. By now it has become something of a hobby.

H. L. R.