

## The PRAXIS Center & Victor Serge Library

Since 1996 the PRAXIS Education & Research Center and the Victor Serge Library have been making a strong impact on the modern Left in Russia. The aim of PRAXIS is to encourage democratic and libertarian socialism.

- The Library is operated by PRAXIS as an independent resource for activists, scholars, and the public. With more than 5,000 international publications in several languages, it contains material unavailable elsewhere in Russia. The Library also serves as a meeting hall for seminars, discussions, and conferences.
- PRAXIS unites scholars in studies of political and social movements around the world. We translate and publish Left authors - many globally well known, but previously unknown in Russia.
- PRAXIS organizes conferences in the post-Soviet area, bringing together activists on the Russian and International Left.
- PRAXIS publishes a newspaper, RADICAL THOUGHT. We participate in forums and protests, and sponsor support networks bringing material aid to secular democrats in Chechnya.

The glue that holds these activities together is the belief that a new world is possible and that it can be reached through democratic, libertarian and socialist principles. We invite you to join in this discussion. Please visit our website at [www.praxiscenter.ru](http://www.praxiscenter.ru). You also are welcome to visit our libraries and participate in our international conferences.



PRAXIS newspaper, RADICAL THOUGHT

## History & Background

The PRAXIS collective is an association of libertarian socialists, Marxists, syndicalists, and progressive democrats. It grew out of the *perestroika* and *glasnost* period of the late 1980s, when activists began to organize openly for democratic change in the USSR. They were on the barricades during the 1991 revolt by Soviet conservatives and, after the defeat of the *coup d'etat*, began meeting with international activists.



Praxis Conference at the Victor Serge Library, Moscow, 2003

The roots of PRAXIS reach back in time to the early socialist, anarchist, and communist opposition that resisted the totalitarian tendencies of the Bolshevik Revolution. This tradition is epitomized by the revolutionary Victor Serge (1890-1947), around whose ideas and example PRAXIS crystallized. Serge's works were banned in 1928, then he was imprisoned and exiled. In 1996 an international study group formed, the 'Friends of Serge' collective, which included Alexei Gusev (a Marxist historian at Moscow State University), Julia Guseva (a libertarian militant & French translator), and Richard Greeman (Serge's biographer & U.S. translator). Their original project was to recover Serge's lost manuscripts, confiscated by the Soviet Secret Police in 1935, as well as to publish Serge's works in Russia.

*I can feel myself to be a stranger to no land, but in unity with the world and humankind -Victor Serge*

However, with the collapse of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union and the rise of neo-liberalism parading as its only alternative, the group saw a need to make available not only Serge's works, but a whole range of alternative ideas and experiences that had been outlawed in the USSR. In 1997 they established the Victor Serge Library in Moscow. Efforts brought together thousands of volumes about Left, Labor, and Progressive movements, including a U.S. 'Books for Struggle' collection-drive. The Library continues to expand and has established branches in other cities.

The Victor Serge Library is the only place in Russia where readers can find works on subjects as varied as socialism, human rights, syndicalism, feminism, peace activism, anarchism, and ecological movements, along with literature about history, philosophy, and the social and political sciences. The Library continues to be a unique and invaluable resource for Russian students, academics, activists, and all people who are trying to develop a critical view of the world and to imagine how to change it.

The Praxis Research and Education Center was chartered in 1999, undertaking a program of research, translation, publication, and conference organization. Publications include the first Russian edition of Victor Serge's *Memoirs of a Revolutionary* (2001) and the first Russian translation of Maximilian Rublev's *Marx, Critic of Marxism* (2006). Among current publishing projects is Raya Dunayevskaya's *Marxism and Freedom*. PRAXIS also has sponsored annual conferences since 2001 on subjects like "The Anti-Totalitarian Left in the 21st Century" and "The Working Class." These events have been co-sponsored with others, including the Russian Academy of Sciences.

## BECOME A FRIEND OF PRAXIS & THE VICTOR SERGE LIBRARY!

Praxis needs money to continue publishing translations of critical Marxist and libertarian socialist books. We also need support to staff and maintain the libraries. Tax deductible checks can be sent to the International Victor Serge Foundation, 16 rue de la Teinturerie, 34000 Montpellier, FRANCE. This is a U.S. non-profit 501(c) (3) corporation.

Shipping 'Red' books to Russia might appear to be like sending "coals to Newcastle!" However, for 70 years the Bolsheviks blocked outside information about social struggles around the world; even works by dissidents within the Communist Party were buried with their authors. Thus, the equation of "socialism = Stalinism" remained uncontested - even after the USSR's collapse. Today, with dictatorial capitalism flourishing under an increasingly repressive government, the claim of right-wing nationalists to speak for the Russian Left (sometimes in anti-Semitic overtones) goes virtually unchallenged. Progressive ideas in the ex-Soviet lands are all the more urgently needed!

### WHAT TO SEND

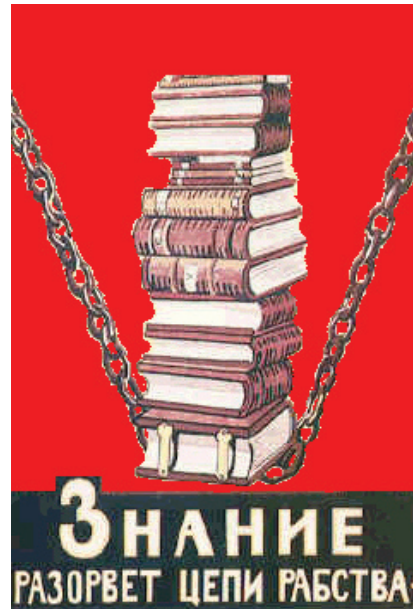
\***Academics & other readers:** Please donate cartons of those wonderful used books that you can't bear to throw away but don't really have room for. Ask friends and colleagues to do likewise.

\***Book publishers:** Please donate your returns and overruns. Duplicates are not a problem! - We have more than one library!

\***Magazine editors:** Please donate a subscription and send us back issues of your periodical.

### You can send the literature directly to Praxis.

In the United States, you may send materials through the Post Office's International "M" Bag. For Russia, send to Dr. Alexei Gusev, Victor Serge Library, Center Praxis, 109443, Russia, Moscow, Box 7. For Ukraine, send to Professor Igor Paniuta, Victor Serge Library, Center Praxis, 99011, Ukraine, Sebastopol, Nakhimova prospekt, 7-1. Alternatively, you may send items in North America (with \$5 per pound) to Dr. Barry Rodrigue at ISOLA, University of Southern Maine, 51 Westminster Street, Lewiston, Maine 04240 USA. For more information, you may telephone Dr. Rodrigue at (207) 753-6574.



KNOWLEDGE WILL BREAK THE  
CHAINS OF SLAVERY

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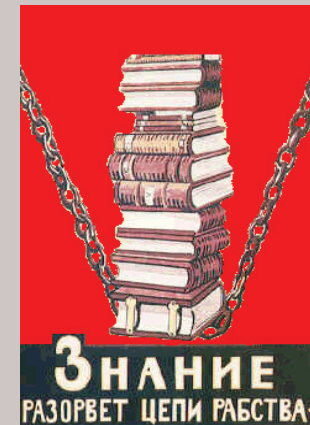
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