

NEWSLETTER

Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures
University of Kansas

Spring, 1989
Volume VIII, No. 1

Department News

This has been quite a busy and exciting year in the Department. Doubtless the single most striking change is that the University of Kansas was once again awarded an Area Study Center grant, after a three-year hiatus. Although the grant was formally awarded to Soviet and East European Studies, the Slavic Department is responsible for language teaching, which is the major focus of the grant, and so we have gained tremendously from it.

Among the concrete benefits, the grant has provided several extra teaching assistantships, helped us expand our program of visitors from the USSR, and enabled Masha Kipp to teach full-time instead of part-time. Moreover, the Department is conducting a Summer Institute in Proficiency-Based Russian Teaching Methods for graduate teaching assistants.

We had quite a shock last fall: Joe Conrad had a serious heart attack around Thanksgiving. However, after bypass surgery he has recuperated so well that he was back to teaching by the start of the Spring semester.

At the initiative of Joe Conrad and Bill March, the Department has applied to USIA to establish an exchange program in cooperation with several Croatian universities through the Samantha Smith Memorial Fund. The proposal calls for sending five American undergraduates to Croatia and bringing five Yugoslavs to Kansas for the spring semester during the next two academic years.

We had two Soviet guests during the Fall semester under the aegis of the Soviet Writer in Residence program. Tat'jana Tolstaja was here in October, giving a public lecture in English on literature and politics and several seminars on her own prose and other matters.

We also hosted Ol'ga Romanovna Mirošničenko-Trifonova, the widow of Jurij Trifonov and an established writer in her own right, who spent a few days here in November. She gave several talks on Trifonov's work and on the current Soviet literary scene. In early May we expect to have another Soviet guest, the historian Natan Edel'man. The noted novelist Daniil Granin has postponed his visit until next fall.

The Department sponsored or co-sponsored a number of talks throughout the year. In February, Alma Law of Columbia University gave a lecture on current developments in the Soviet theatre, illustrating it by showing video excerpts from current and recent productions. Dr. Richard Rosenthal of UCLA presented a talk, "The Gambler and the Poet: Notes of Dostoevsky, Illness, and Creativity," on April 13.

The Department held two Colloquia during the year. In February, 1989 Masha Kipp gave a lively talk on problems involved in translating Russian. Then on April Fools' Day Maria Carlson hosted a карусельник, a light-hearted evening advertised as an ordinary Colloquium, but where we were met by a talk built around humorous excerpts from literature

Anniversary

The Department has been granting Ph.D.'s for twenty years, and by a pleasant coincidence we have awarded just over twenty doctorates. We plan to celebrate this anniversary at the end of the Spring, 1990 semester with a one-day conference and banquet for all of our Ph.D.'s. Although our alumni represent several different generations of graduate students, they are united by their connection with the Department and several professors of long standing here. This event can be a great success if a considerable number of our former students can return to Lawrence, give talks on their current research, and join us in the festivities.

Sam Anderson Scholarship Fund

The Department is delighted to announce the establishment of the Sam Anderson Scholarship Fund in honor of our colleague and friend and in recognition of his many contributions to the Department and its students over several generations. Monies from the fund will be used for academic merit awards and academic scholarships to students in our programs. Persons wishing to contribute to the fund should make their contributions payable to The Sam Anderson Scholarship, and send them to: Kansas University Endowment Association, West Campus, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045.

papers that students have written for her, complete with numerous malapropisms, redundancies, and gross misreadings or misstatements of texts. A further highlight was a reading of an English translation of a newly "discovered" poem by the "well-known" Russian woman-of-letters Julianna Karlovna Kantemagina.

The Student Union Activities Board scheduled a series of four Soviet films during the Fall semester. On successive Thursdays they screened *The Mirror*, *Rasputin*, *The Scarecrow*, and *My Friend Ivan Lapshin*. To universal delight, this series actually did a little better than break even—quite an accomplishment for uncommercial films shown on weekday evenings. As a result, we are looking forward to a repeat film series next year.

By next year the Department will be complemented with an unofficial "Russian House". Louise Redfern, an undergraduate in our Department who has returned to complete her education after a hiatus of many years, has acquired a house near the campus and is renovating it. Her intention is to rent rooms to our students, encourage the use of Russian in the house, and in general foster a Russian enclave at KU. Louise is herself a native speaker of Russian (and Ukrainian as well), and her enthusiasm for the project is infectious. This year she held lovely parties at Christmas and Easter for members of the Slavic Department.

Chairman's Corner

In recent years there have been several faculty retirements in the Department: Professor Heinrich Stammler (1983), Professor Sam Anderson (1985), Professor Herbert Galton (1988), and Professor George Jerkovich (1989). Professors Stammler and Anderson continue to maintain offices in Wescoe Hall, and Professor Jerkovich maintains his office in Watson Library; Professor Galton now resides in Vienna, Austria. Joining our faculty have been Professors Maria Carlson, George Fowler, and Maia Kipp. Professor Carlson (Ph.D., Indiana) came to the Department in Fall, 1987 to teach courses in Russian literature and culture. Her specialty is the Silver Age, particularly the works of Andrej Belyj. Professor Fowler (Ph.D., Chicago) joined us as a specialist in Slavic linguistics, especially formal syntax, morphology, and phonology of Russian and Bulgarian. Professor Kipp (Ph.D., Kansas) is a visiting faculty member, teaching courses in Russian language and literature. She is a specialist in Russian drama and Russian stylistics. As has been the case for more than a decade, each year we host a Fulbright Lecturer from Yugoslavia. This year Andreja Šuler, of Ljubljana, is teaching courses in Serbo-Croatian and Slovene.

The Department enjoys its highest enrollments ever: several hundred undergraduates studying Russian, thirty-eight declared majors, and twenty-six enrolled graduate students. Of the latter, two hold four-year Graduate School Honors Fellowships, three hold FLAS Fellowships, and ten hold Graduate Teaching Assistantships.

In recognition of the strengths of our programs, the University of Kansas has once again been designated by the Federal government as one of only eleven National Graduate Resource Centers for Soviet and East European Studies. This has allowed the Department to develop extensive curriculum innovations and enter into new joint program initiatives with the professional schools. Moreover, this summer we will offer a unique advanced Russian language institute for graduate teaching assistants in teaching Russian for proficiency.

The Department newsletter is now being revived after a hiatus of several years. We seek to reestablish contact with old friends and welcome new ones. The purpose of the newsletter, which will appear once or twice yearly, is to keep readers apprised of the activities of the Department, its alumni and friends. We thus request and welcome your participation in these pages.

Stephen J. Parker

Faculty Corner

Maria Carlson recently received a prestigious NEH Fellowship for University Teachers to work on a book with the working title *Occultism in Fin-de-siècle Russia*. The grant provides an eight-month block of time for research into the influence of theosophy, spiritualism, and other occult movements on the literature and arts of the Silver Age. She was the principal translator of Wolfgang Kasack's *Dictionary of Russian Literature since 1917*, which was recently published by Columbia University Press. She gave a talk at the Second Nietzsche in Russia Conference at Fordham University in June 1988 on P.D. Uspenskij and Nietzsche, and another talk at AATSEEL in December 1988 in Washington, DC entitled "Commentaries on Belyj's Commentaries".

Carlson administers our Department's role as one of the five core schools in the CIEE Russian study programs at Leningrad State University, and she will go to the USSR this summer to serve as Resident Director for the entire Russian language program. Then in September she will return to the Soviet Union, along with Maia Kipp and Professor Bill Fletcher, the head of Soviet and East European Studies at KU, to serve as "resource persons" for a group of college and university presidents, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and the AASCU, who will be seeking to establish contacts there for the purpose of faculty, student, and research exchanges.

Joseph Conrad has been working on a pair of large-scale projects. On the folklore side, he has been studying magic charms among the Slavs. This research has produced "Bulgarian Magic Charms: Ritual, Form, and Content", in *Slavic and East European Journal*, X(4): 548-62, 1987, and "Russian Ritual Incantations: Tradition, Continuity, and Diversity", to appear in *SEEJ*, no. 3, 1989. He is now working on a third paper on Slovenian magic charms. In connection with this research he spent two weeks in June, 1988 in Belgrade at the Institute for Balkan

Studies of the Serbian Academy of Sciences. On the literary side, Conrad is investigating the relation between Turgenev's and Čexov's prose. He has recently finished an article on Čexov's "Volodja" and Turgenev's "First Love". Yet another paper, on Čexov's "House with a Mezzanine", will appear in *Russian Literature* during 1989.

Since coming to Kansas, **George Fowler** has completed an article, "Word-Internal Case Assignment in Russian", which will appear in *Folia Slavica*, v. 9. He also gave a talk at AATSEEL this year entitled "Neutralization of Voice in Slavic Deverbal Nouns". The grateful recipient of a brand-new Macintosh SE computer from the university administration, he is busy with font development and other related projects, including a computer-generated concordance to the poetry of Sergej Esenin (at least whenever he can tear himself away from all the seductive computer games he unwisely installed on his hard disk).

Maia Kipp has an article entitled "Lunin, or the Death of Jacques: In Search of a Synthesis" to appear in the Summer, 1989 issue of *Studies in Twentieth Century Literature* (v. 13, no. 2). She is working on a large-scale project, the compilation of a dictionary of current idiomatic Russian phraseology. In November, 1988 she went to Monterey, California for a training workshop for Russian language proficiency testing. Her third-year Russian class did a Russian-language production of a one-act play by Alexandr Vampilov, "Incident with a Paginator", on May 1.

William March also got a Macintosh SE computer this year, and is using it to manipulate data for his research into Kajkavian dialectal poetry. He is also doing preliminary work on a large project devoted to the onomastic toponymy of the Adriatic sea islands of Cres and Lošinj.

Jadwiga Maurer has been working on a large-scale investigation of Adam Mickiewicz and the world of the Jews ever since her sabbatical in 1986-87. From this research she has two articles in press in *Oxford Slavonic Papers* and *Polish Review*, and she has a contract with the Polish Cultural Foundation for a book in Polish.

Gerald Mikkelsen was discussant and commentator for a series of talks given by four visiting Soviet writers at an international conference on "Topicality in Contemporary Soviet Literature" at the University of Amsterdam May 31-June 3. In September he presented a paper entitled "Грамотность как фактор, определяющий иерархию персонажей в Борисе Годунове Пушкина" at the 10th International Congress of Slavists in Sofia, Bulgaria. In November he gave a talk "Valentin Rasputin and His Siberia" at AAASS in Honolulu.

On the way to Sofia, Mikkelsen spent two weeks in the USSR doing research for a monograph on Puškin and the Russian nobility. During the Spring, 1989 semester he is on sabbatical leave to complete this project. He also published an article entitled "The Narod as a *Dramatis Personae* in

Pushkin's *Boris Godunov*" in *American Contributions to the Tenth International Congress of Slavists* (Jane Gary Harris, ed., Slavica, 1988, pp. 273-82). He and his wife Margaret Winchell (a Slavic librarian at Watson Library) have recently completed the manuscript of *Siberia on Fire: Stories and Essays of Valentin Rasputin*, to be published in 1989 by Northern Illinois University Press. For this volume they translated Rasputin's latest novella "The Fire", five other short stories, and six essays, and added an introductory article, bibliography, maps, and photographs.

Stephen Parker, now in his second year as Chairman of the Department, is the editor and publisher of *The Nabokovian*, a journal of growing reputation. It celebrated ten years of publication with a jubilee issue (No. 20) in Spring, 1988 and published a cumulative index (No. 21) in Fall, 1988. In November, 1987 his book *Understanding Vladimir Nabokov* appeared from the University of South Carolina Press (in simultaneous hardcover and paperback editions!), and he has also recently published an article, "Nabokov in the Margins: The Montreux Books", in the *Journal of Modern Literature* XIV(1): 5-16.

Tamerlan Salaty has resurrected the KU Chapter of Dobro Slovo, the national Slavic languages honorary society, which will give us another forum to stimulate our undergraduate majors. This month, as an outreach activity, he is speaking to 6th-graders at Quail Run Elementary School in Lawrence about life in the Soviet Union, and, above all, the Russian language.

Student Corner

Many of our graduate students have been teaching, some have given or are about to give their first conference papers, and others are preparing for exciting travel or projects related to their graduate careers. All this is in addition to their regular duties: taking courses, writing term papers, getting degrees, and so forth.

Kansas was well represented at the Slavic Forum Graduate Student Russian Literature Conference held at the University of Chicago in April, 1989. Four of our students gave papers: **Bill Griffiths**, "The Poet and His Lady"; **Julie Hill**, "Magical Realism and Bulgakov's *Master and Margarita*"; **Howard Solomon**, "Gnostic Theology in *Master and Margarita*"; and **Gisela Zimmerman**, "The Faust Motif in *Master and Margarita*". These Bulgakov papers all originated from a seminar in Bulgakov's *Master and Margarita* given by Maria Carlson during the Fall, 1988 semester. The organizers of the Chicago conference hope to make it an annual affair, and since it continues to be dirt cheap to travel from Kansas City to Chicago, our students may come to rely on it as a splendid forum for getting started on their professional activity. **Sue Novak** gave a paper entitled "Vera Inber's *Pulkovskii Meridian: The Fires of Survival and Victory*" at the

Central States Slavic Conference in Lincoln, Nebraska in October, 1988.

Howard and **Karla Solomon** will interrupt their graduate studies to take positions next year as exhibit guides for a traveling USIA exhibit on US architecture. They hit the jackpot in their itinerary: they will divide the 1989–90 academic year among Moscow, Leningrad, and Odessa, after first heading to Washington, DC in July for preliminary training. **Bill Griffiths** has received a fellowship from IREX to attend the Slavonic Studies Seminar at Kliment Ohridski University in Sofia Bulgaria in August.

Beware, Bill, of what can happen there! The editor of this newsletter first met his wife at the same seminar in 1979. **Gisela Zimmerman** will be the group leader for the Kansas contingent at the CIEE summer program at Leningrad State University. **Sue Novak** will be on the same program as a student. **Harley Wagler** will be the program director of the summer language and culture institute the Department organizes in Zagreb, Yugoslavia. His assistants will be **Quinci Coates** and **Laura Wilhelm**.

About the Newsletter

This newsletter is a long-standing tradition of our Department (note the volume number!), but one which was defunct for the last few years. We now intend to resume publication on a regular, once-a-semester schedule, distributing it to present, past, and potential friends of the Department. As editor of the newsletter, I need help from its readers. Although I keep my ear to the ground, I am not omniscient—I do not necessarily know that you have received a whopping big grant, had dinner with with Mikhail and Raissa, or that your definitive article on notable cleaning ladies in 19th-century Russian literature finally came out. Please keep me posted, even (especially) alumni of the Department who have never heard of the editor! If I can get some meaty information on alumni, I will establish an “Alumni Corner”. So, you folks out there, why don’t you take a few minutes to fill out the attached information form. I’d also love to have brief (200–300 word) first-person pieces on items of interest to our readers, such as reports on foreign travel or participation in conferences, symposia, and the like. I will, however, reluctantly refrain from publishing abstracts of papers and dissertations.

For this issue, I am especially grateful to Paula Malone of the Wesco Word Processing Center, who put the newsletter copy into professional shape with Aldus PageMaker.

George Fowler
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Name This Newsletter!

Newsletter... what a mild-mannered and uninformative title this journal bears! You find this in your mailbox, you’ve got no idea what the postman has dragged in. We really need something that’ll get the blood flowing, something with verve, something with class, something that captures our self-image... something that has no connection whatsoever with the dreaded Jayhawk icon! In short, we want **suggestions**, fruitful or fruity, for an appropriate name, one that immediately suggests our Slavic concerns, yet still carresses the tongue and tickles the imagination. Send bushel baskets of names to the editor. The winning entry will be rewarded with something fitting, either a free vacation for two to Hawaii or a free subscription to the Newsletter.



ALUMNI NEWS

Please fill out below and return to:

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Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

KU Major: _____

Year of Graduation: _____

Degrees at Other Universities: _____

Present Occupation: _____

News for 1989 Newsletter:

May we release your address and phone number to other alumni?

Yes _____

No _____

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