Central Slavic Conference

KU hosted the annual Central Slavic Conference on November 2-3, organized by Professor William C. Fletcher, director of SEES. The Slavic Department and its Alumni were represented by the following participants: Puškin panel (Chair: Professor Gerald Mikkelson); Laura Wilhelm “Style and Substance in Boris Godunov”; Harley Wagler, “Puškin and Čaadaev: Poet and Philosopher”; Russian Theater of the 19th-20th cc. (Chair: Professor Mala Kipp); Jeanine Rodgers “Pismenskij’s Bitter Fate,” Holly Stephens, “Blok’s Autobiographical Doubles,” 19th c. Literature and Art (Chair: Michael Biggins) Professor Joseph L. Conrad, “Čexov’s His Wife: Studies in Deception”; Karen Bapst, “The Denial of Death: Archetype in Prestuplenie i nakazanie”; Historical Linguistics panel (Chair: Marc L. Greenberg): Mark R. Lauersdorf “The Balto-Slavic Question: A Discussion of Issues,” Professor Marc L. Greenberg “Stratifying Prekmurje: The Shifting Alliances of a Slovene Dialect”; Nov 3: Panel on Politics and Language Change in Eastern Europe (Chair: Professor Robert Rankin): Professor William J. March “Reflections of Politics in Language in Croatia,” Professor Mila Sašková-Pierce (PhD KU 1985; University of Nebraska, Lincoln) “Sociolinguistic Variables in Spoken Czech.” Also, Harley Wagler chaired the panel on “The Emerging Society in the USSR.”

Chairman’s Corner

The Department is enjoying a period of significant enrichment. Joining our faculty this year are Marc L. Greenberg and Krešimir Brusar. Professor Greenberg (PhD UCLA) is teaching a wide array of Slavic linguistics courses. His present area of research concerns issues in the reconstruction of Central Common Slavic. Mr. Brusar is a visiting Fulbright Lecturer, teaching courses in Croatian/Serbian languages and cultures. We are also pleased to announce that William Comer will be joining our faculty next year. Professor Comer (PhD Berkeley) will direct our Russian language pedagogy.

This year we have thirty-one enrolled graduate students, twenty-four on campus, with approximately two thirds receiving fellowship or teaching assistantship support. This is our largest graduate enrollment ever. Moreover, this year we have twenty-one declared senior undergraduate majors, which is also our largest number ever. We continue to maintain active bilateral and Federally funded exchange programs in the USSR and Yugoslavia, and continue as a core school in the CIEE Russian Language Program in Leningrad.

As news elsewhere in this issue will indicate, the academic year is replete with visiting speakers, colloquia, Slavic Club activities, and Area Studies activities. Moreover, the Russian House is active, as is our theatrical group and the newly revived Russian Choral Ensemble. In short, our program is lively and thriving.

The purpose of this chronicle is to keep our readers apprised of the activities of the Department, it alumni and friends. I take this occasion to repeat the invitation to our friends and alumni to keep us informed of their activities and accomplishments.

Stephen J. Parker, Chair

Faculty News

Professor Maria Carlson spent July 7-13 in Leningrad as Chairman of the CIEE CRLP Methodology Commission, in which capacity she made a site visit to the CIEE USSR Leningrad programs. There she observed KU students making progress at
our new program at the Gornyy Institut, a program that she initiated and developed. During the fall semester she gave several papers. On October 12, 1990 she delivered "Ironic Legacy: The Moscow and Leningrad Art Worlds, 1965-1990" at the Columbus Museum of Art Symposium "The Russian Front: Perspectives on the Currents Shaping Contemporary Art," held in conjunction with the exhibit "Russian Painting 1965-1990: The Quest for Self Expression." She was honored with being the First-Day Keynote Speaker at this symposium. A week later she gave the paper "Rural Prose and Russian Symbolism: Andrej Belyj's Silver Dome" at the AAASS meeting in Washington, D.C. After serving as discussant on a panel on Trancendentalism in Modern Russian Art at the Conference on the Avant Garde in Art in Los Angeles on December 1, she gave the paper "Conquering Chaos: The Theosophical Subtext of Belyj's Petersburg" at the AATSEEL meeting in Chicago. All this after spending a semester and summer off completing a manuscript of the Russian Theosophical movement (supported by an NEH Grant): "No Religion Higher than Truth: The Theosophical Society in Russia 1875-1922" (350 pp.). Searching for the Truth took her researching to Moscow, Leningrad, London, Helsinki and Geneva. Her paper "Aleksandr Blok and the Myth of the Great National Poet" was published in Indiana Slavic Studies 5 (1990).

Adding to his analyses of South Slavic ritual healing charms, Professor Joseph L. Conrad published "Slovene Oral Incantations: Topics, Texts, and Rituals" in Slovene Studies 12/1. In the same issue his review of Fred Bahovec's Ljubljanska na Aljaski appears—this is a book of memoirs by a Slovene adventurer in the New World. Reviews include Senderovich and Sendich, Anton Chekhov Rediscovered: A Collection of New Studies with a Comprehensive Bibliography (Canadian-American Slavic Studies 22 [1990]). He has a number of articles and reviews in press—a sampling includes: "Anton Chekhov's View of the Ainu and Giljak Minorities on Sakhalin" (in Opera Slavica, a special collection of papers read at the International Chekhov Symposium in Badenweiler, Oct., 1985), "South Slavic Terms for Conjurers and Sorcerers" (in Festschrift for Rudolf Filipović, Zagreb University). He is back charming his students after a sabbatical (fall 1990) to work on his book on South Slavic Folklore.

Prior to joining the KU faculty in August 1990, Professor Marc L. Greenberg spent a summer teaching Intensive Beginning and Intermediate Slovene at the Summer Workshop in Slavic and East European Languages at Indiana University with this wife, Marta (formerly a lecturer in Slovene at Ljubljana University). He is currently working chapters of the thesis into a series of articles to be published in the U.S. and Slovenia. Two of the papers were given at conferences: "Stratifying Prekmurje: The Shifting Alliances of a Slovene Dialect" at the AAASS Central Slavic Conference and "Circumflex Advancement in Prekmurje, Kajkavian and Slovene" at the AATSEEL meeting in Chicago. His pre-publication criticism of a dialect dictionary (V. Novak's Dictionary of Old Literary Prekmurje Slovene) appeared in Slavistična revija; these are remarks that he presented at a round-table discussion at the Slovene Academy of Arts and Sciences, Ljubljana, Sept. 1989. In the same issue he reviewed the first Albanian dictionary and grammar in Slovene.

Professor Maia Kipp presented a paper at the Mid-America Theater Conference on March 16. The conference was devoted to "Issues of Power in Drama and Theater." Her paper will appear in Theater History Studies. She is presently directing a play in Russian ("Феноменъ," by Gorin) to premiere at the end of the Spring semester. The actors and assistant director are students of 3rd year Russian. Professor Kipp is also acting in a KU production of L. Petroşevskaja's "Činzano and Smirnova's Birthday," directed by E. Krejndlina of GITIS (Moscow). The play will premiere at the Inge Theater on April 17th.
Professor William March is currently working on an analysis of the language of Miroslav Krleža’s Balade Petračke Kerempuha. Along with this analysis he is developing a concordance of the work.


Since mid-1990 Professor Gerald Mikkelsen has read four conference papers—two on Valentin Raspuzin (at the IV World Congress for Soviet and East European Studies, Harrogate, England, and at the AATSEEL Meeting in Chicago), one on Puškin’s Boris Godunov (Puškin Symposium, Seoul, Korea), and one on “Glasnost in Russian Literature Since 1985” (at a conference on Perestroika: The Restructuring of the Soviet Union, Tulsa, Oklahoma). Professor Mikkelsen is one of four American Puškin specialist invited to participate in an international conference on “Puškin’s Significance in World Culture” to be held on May 26-31 in Mixailovskoe and Leningrad. His paper will be titled “Пушкин и образ Петербурга в русской поэзии.” Mikkelsen and his wife continue their work on a second volume of translations of Valentin Raspuzin’s recent writings, scheduled to be published in 1992 as a companion to their highly successful Siberia on Fire: Stories and Essays of Valentin Raspuzin, Selected, Translated, and with an Introduction by Gerald Mikkelsen and Margaret Winchell (De Kalb: Northern Illinois Univ. Press, 1989).

Professor Stephen J. Parker was one of fourteen invited participants at the first international conference on Vladimir Nabokov, held in the USSR in May-June 1990. He delivered a paper on the Nabokov library and archives at the conference proper in Moscow, and was a participant in the four-hour “Nabokov evening” held in the Nikolaevskij Palace in Leningrad. On the occasion of this first official contact with Nabokov scholars in the USSR, Professor Parker was interviewed on Moscow radio and took part in preliminary discussions concerning the establishment of a Nabokov museum and research center near Leningrad. His recent publications include two essays on Il’ja Repin, a review in SEEJ, and the spring and fall issues of his journal, The Nabokovian.

Хожение профессора Мikkельсона за три моря

In December 1990, the Korean Slavic Studies Association, supported by a large grant from the Daewoo Foundation, sponsored an International Puškin Symposium in Seoul. In addition to several Korean Slavic scholars, three foreign Puškin specialists read papers at this symposium—Sergej Fomtšev (USSR), Petr Palievskij (USSR) and Gerald Mikkelsen. Professor Mikkelsen gave a paper on Puškin’s Boris Godunov. The proceedings of this symposium will be published in Korean and Russian in a forthcoming issue of one of two Korean Slavic journals—either Russian Language and Literature or Zurnal slavjanovedenija.

The Kansas-Korean Slavic Connection

On September 27, 1990, Hyun Taek Kim successfully defended his doctoral dissertation, which was titled “Three Soviet Writers and the New Testament: Jurij Dombrovskij, Vladimir Tendrjakov and Čingiz Ajmatov.” Mr. Kim thus became the second young Slavist from the Republic of Korea to receive his Ph.D. in our department. The first was Dr. Chol Kun Kwon, who finished in 1986 after writing a Ph. D. dissertation titled “Siberian Mythology, Folklore, and Tradition in Valentin Raspuzin’s Novellas.” Dr. Kwon is now an Assistant Professor and Chairman of the Department of Russian Literature at Seoul National University. Dr. Kim expects also to receive appointment in the near future at one of Korea’s most prestigious universities.

Slavic Studies in Korea have undergone spectacular growth in recent years, especially since the Summer Olympic
Games were held there in 1988 and relations between the Republic of Korea and the USSR have warmed up. New exchanges of all kinds—diplomatic, commercial, cultural, educational—are being arranged between the two countries. For example, Soviet citizens of Korean descent are now able to study the Korean language and culture in the USSR and to travel to their ancestral homeland. All of the above developments were the subject of a Slavic Graduate Studies Colloquium conducted by Dr. Kim in Professor Mikkelsen’s home on November 27, 1990—on the eve of Dr. Kim’s departure with his family for Korea.

Publishing activities are an important aspect of the growth of Slavic Studies in Korea. In addition to the two journals mentioned above, to which three of our Kansas Ph.D.’s have contributed—Chol Kun Kwon, Hyun Taek Kim, and Anatoly Vishevsky, Korean Slavists have recently published 30 handsome volumes in Korean in a series called “Contemporary Literature of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.” The chief editor of this series, and one of its principal contributing translators, was “our own” Chol Kun Kwon. We can be justly proud of the scholarly accomplishments of our former Ph.D. students who are now playing a crucial role in the development of Slavic Studies in Korea. The Kansas-Korean Connection has been a productive one.

Gerald Mikkelsen

Croatian lecturer

The Department has received a Fulbright Serbo-Croatian lecturer, Krešimir Brusar of Zagreb. Mr. Brusar, who has an M.A. in English from Zagreb University, is teaching elementary and advanced Serbo-Croatian during the 1990-91 academic year. While here he is working on his doctoral thesis (Reader-Response Criticism in the Work of the American Critic Stanley Fish) and taking a respite from teaching at a high school in Zagreb. Having earned an M.A. in English from the University of Zagreb, he has published articles on Ken Kesey in Književna smotra (1988) and on Bernard Malamud in Republica.

Alumni News

Mike Biggins (PhD 1985) was invited by the Society of Slovene Writers to attend the annual Central European literary event, Vilenica. Vilenica is an annual gathering of (primarily) Central European writers that has taken place each fall since the mid-1980’s under the auspices of the Society of Slovene Writers. The name Vilenica derives from the cave in the Slovene karst where the main event takes place each year—the presentation of an award to honor an outstanding Central European writer. This year’s recipient was Tomas Venclova, poet and professor of Slavic literature at Yale University.

Dr. Biggins’ translations of Slovene poetry are well known in intellectual circles in Slovenia and elsewhere. His most recent work includes several Slovene poems in Child of Europe, an anthology of Central European poetry, ed. by Michael March; poems of Tomaž Šalamun, in Ploughshares (Boston), Jan. 1991; anthologies of Yugoslav poetry in English that will appear in the near future in Delos, Literary Review and Manhattan Review; and a book-length anthology of Slovene poets of the 1980s. Two sets of translations appear in the most recent issue of Slovene Studies: three poems each by Gregor Strniša and Edvard Kocbek. He has also completed, with Anatoly Vishevsky (PhD 1985), an anthology of contemporary Russian short ironic fiction in English translation.

Geoff Husic (MA 1985), who holds an additional MA in Library Science and works in East European serials at Watson Library, has received an agreement from the Tajik Academy of Arts and Sciences to publish his Tajik Grammar. The actual date of publication is unknown, due to the present turmoil in the region. He has also produced a handbook of Albanian verbs, for which he is now looking for a publisher. His next project is a book of Serbo-Croatian noun phrases.

Professor Timothy Pogačar (PhD 1985), now in his sixth year at Bowling Green State University, holds the post of Director of the International Studies Program in the College of Arts and Sciences and was recently re-elected Secretary of the Society for Slovene Studies. His recent activity includes three articles: “Skladnja kot slogovna prvina v Tavčerjevi Visoški kroniki” in Obdobja 12: V počastilev stoletnice rojstva Franca Ramovša, “The Journal Youth in Soviet Russian Literature” and, “The Journal Youth in the Period of Glasnost’,” both in The History of Russian Literary Journals The Post-Revolutionary Period; and two translations: Leonid Šoroxov’s “Volod’ka Osvod” in Glasnost’: An Anthology of Russian Literature under Gorbachev, vol. 2 and Chapter 1 of Ivan Tavčar’s novel Visoška kronika in Slovenija 3-4 (Winter 1989). His review of the English translations of the novels in the Vilenica series appears in Slovene Studies 12/1. He is now working on a history of Soviet detective fiction, a handbook for teaching foreign languages in elementary school, studying the stylistic uses of subordinate clauses of result in Slovene, and preparing a thematic study of Slovene emigre literature from 1917-1956, which he will present at the XVII World Congress of the World Federation of Modern Language Associations in Pécs, Hungary in August.

Graduate News

Mark R. Lauersdorf plans to attend the annual Summer Slovak language and culture seminar at the Ján Komenský University in Bratislava. He hopes to activate his now passive knowledge of Slovak in preparation for his dissertation on Eastern Slovak, Carpathian Ukrainian and Polish dialects.

Harley Wagler is translating a book on the philosophical implications of changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe by Professor Svetozar Stojanović (Belgrade University). The original, Serbian version is due out in April, while the English translation is to be ready for press by the end of the summer.

Chronicle of Events

On May 19, 1990 the Department celebrated 20 years of granting Ph.D.s with a Conference and Dinner.

Professor Mala Klipp gave a reading of Russian poetry at Professor Jadwiga Maurer’s home, October 2, 1990.

At a Slavic Club meeting on November 8, 1990, Professors William March and Maria Carlson discussed study abroad programs in Yugoslavia, the USSR and Central Europe. Twelve students will be going to Leningrad on the CIEE Program this summer; several others will be in Leningrad during the academic year.

At a Graduate Colloquium at Professor Mikkelsen’s house on November 27, 1990, Hyun Taek Kim spoke on Slavic studies in Korea.

The Slavic Folksong Ensemble performed at the Slavic Club Christmas Party.

On February 26, 1991, following a Russian dinner given by Mrs. Louise Redford, director of the Russian House, Professor Maria Carlson led a round table discussion on recent events in the USSR.

A round-table discussion in the Think Global Issues on Friday program included Professors Maria Carlson, Ron Francisco and Leslie Dienes, and was moderated by Professor William C. Fletcher. The topic was “The USSR: Two Steps Forward, How Many Back?”

SEES and the Slavic Department will sponsor a lecture by Bernice G. Rosenthal, “Friedrich Nietzsche and Fin-de-siècle Russian Culture,” on April 11, 7:30 PM in the English Room of the Kansas Union. Professor Rosenthal is a professor of history at Fordham University and specializes in Russian intellectual history. She has recently edited a book of essays on Nietzsche in Russia.
Samantha Smith Memorial Exchange

In the Fall, Andrew Smith (KU), Chris Weaver (KU), Kathy Ladun and Natasha Seaman participated in the exchange at Zagreb University. In the Spring, James Nine (KU) and Marija Plančić made up the American side of the exchange. KU received five students from Zagreb in the Fall.

Повървъчните языковедове

Professor George Fowler, previously a Slavic linguist at KU and now at the Slavic Department at Indiana University, reports that he is doing well and, though he misses his friends in Kansas, is adjusting well to the new environment. The Slavic linguistics program there is in a boom phase: eight new graduate students began this year. Prof. Fowler says “I’d like to take credit for this nебывалый прилив, but the fact is, only one of these students had ever heard of me.” He has two research projects under way: a modern syntactic account of participial phrases in Russian and an analysis of extractions from subordinate clauses in Bulgarian. One of these projects will turn into a paper to be submitted to for the upcoming International Congress of Slavists in Bratislava. George’s wife, Mária Pavlovský, has begun her professorship at Purdue, where she is teaching one course each in linguistics and literature. She received a summer grant to write a paper on Remizov’s treatment of the St. Nicholas theme.

Смех

Побегала оцвета през границата и срещната магарето. «Къде се тръгнала?» попита очудено дългогуля Марко. «Бягам за Югославия. Тук вече не се живи. Всеки ден ме доят и стрижат. Вчера ми взеха агнетето и сега искат да ме копят.» «Добре си научила, рекло магарето. «Аз пък бягам за България, защото тук ми бият и товарят, а там всичките магарета станаха министри.»

Harley Wagler

Спросил у Брежнева: «Кто Ваш любимый писатель?» «Хемингуэй.» «Почему?» «Он писал о партийной работе.» «Разве?» «Да, в романе Обком звонит в колокол.»

Jason Merrill

Në vitin 1941 në Tirana u takuan dy shokë, pas një ndarje, se shumë të gjatë. «Dhionis, si je?» «Jam mirë. Edhe me punë shumë mirë!» «Ç'punë bën?» Më kanë emëruar ndihmës të shefit të zyrës.» «Po shefi ç'punë bën?» «Përmjet ditën.» [The year is 1941, in Tirana, when two comrades meet after a long separation. “Dhionis, how are you?” “I’m fine. And my work is even better!” “What kind of work do you do?” “They appointed me assistant to the director of an important office.” “And what kind of work does the director do?” “He sleeps all day long.”]

The Editor

Одна дама справляется у своей подруги об ее сыне, который находится в университете, в другом городе. «Плохо ему там, очень плохо.» «В самом деле? Почему?» «Как вам известно, музк мой хочет, чтобы сын был доктором.» «Ну, и что же?» «Ну и вот: он пишет мне, что лекции прямо отвратительны.» «Что вы говорите? Неужели его заставляют уже резать трупы?» «Еще хуже, дорогая моя: заставляют изучать мертвые языки!»

The Editor

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Как попасть в летопись

Do you have something to contribute to The Lawrencian Chronicle? News about activities and accomplishments in the field of Slavic studies are always welcome from current and emeritus faculty, graduate students, alumni and friends of the KU Slavic Department. If so, contact the editor:

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If you are an alumnus or alumna, please include the following information with your news item: (1) major field while at KU and the highest degree earned, (2) date the degree was awarded, (3) graduate degrees from other universities, (4) present occupation, (5) current address, phone and e-mail address (if available).