INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR
JADWIGA MAURER
Michael D. Johnson

Editorial note: Professor and writer Jadwiga Maurer, who has taught Polish language and literature at the University of Kansas for thirty years, was the focal point of a well-attended session at the AAAS Conference held in St. Louis in November, 1999. Early in 2000 Professor Maurer chatted with graduate student Michael Johnson a bit more about her childhood, education, and career. The Lawrencian Chronicle offers her colleagues, students, and admirers of her art the opportunity to become more closely acquainted with her rich and fascinating life.

JM = Jadwiga Maurer, MDJ = Michael D. Johnson

MDJ: Professor Maurer, as a student of yours, I'm particularly interested in your life experiences, your writing, and your views on Polish studies and Polish literature. Could you begin with the obvious topic of where you were born, because I don't even know that—I know you are of Polish heritage, but that's as much as I know...

JM: Yes, I was born Kielce, Poland, which is in central Poland, in the early thirties and I lived there until the war. Then I was in many places, but only two places really had significance for my fiction—that's what most people misunderstand in interviews—they say that I was only in these two places. Also they often confuse the narrator with the author. I have been tempted to straighten them out, but I was told by some people not to do that—they said that it's only a compliment, meaning that these people think that my narrator is me. That is absolutely untrue.

MDJ: So then, what were these two places that were so important for your fiction?

JM: ... These were the two places where I lived on the so-called Aryan papers—I hate to say "false" papers—that was in Kraków, and the other one was in the convent school, under the care of a priest in Slovakia.

["Aryan papers" were official documents which showed an individual was of Aryan, i.e. not Jewish, heritage and therefore allowed the bearer freedoms denied to Jews under the Nazi occupation—MDJ.]

MDJ: This was just across the border, right?

JM: Well, yes...at some distance...

MDJ: Not as far south as Bratislava?

JM: No, no, in eastern Slovakia, I guess. I'm not so sure how they divide it up...

MDJ: And how long were you at the convent then?

JM: Well, I was in Presov [then Czechoslovakia] for almost a year... I was [there] a relatively long time, for the wartime, for my situation in Slovakia, not always in the convent school, but always under the care of the Catholic Church.

MDJ: So it was only a year that you spent in Slovakia, before you moved...

JM: Yes, I wasn't that long in Slovakia, and then the war—when the Russians came—I was in Slovakia, and then we went back to Kraków, ... The war ended shortly afterwards. Then I went to school in Gdansk. ... My father, who was a socialist, (not before the war, but after the war), and was editor of a socialist paper—heard this rumor, which later became true—that the Communist Party and the Socialist Party [were] going to merge, and everyone knew what that means—it would mean that Poland would be what was later called a"satellite" of the Soviet Union. There would be... only one so-called "united workers’ party," so he started making arrangements to leave Poland.

We went to Germany, I went to school, and I applied to the University of Munich. We came to Munich already in 1946 from Gdansk. I
studied Slavic languages—I also studied English literature and modern history, and when I came to this country later on—when I married my husband, who’s an American from Pennsylvania [Warren R. Maurer, Professor of Germanic Languages and Literatures at KU—MDJ]—people assumed that I learned English so quickly. [But] that wasn’t true, because I always, more or less always knew English—not as well as I do now, but I always studied it.

MDJ: Had you studied English in Kraków or Kielce?

JM: Not when I was little, but already in Gdansk, in the gymnasium. Then I studied it much more seriously in Germany. Everybody was studying English, everybody. So I had lessons, I had private lessons, I had English in school. I picked it as my outside field. Then I studied Slavic languages. I was more or less a linguist. It was customary often in Europe, for a long time anyway, that you pretty much studied what your professors were well—known for. My professor was in linguistics, although he, on occasion, took on literary dissertations, too. He felt more “at home” in linguistics.

MDJ: In Slavic linguistics or Germanic?

JM: Slavic, he was a Slavic linguist. Well, then when I met my future husband—he was a student, on a scholarship out of the University of Chicago. Then he was drafted, [and went into] the army. I went with him to this country, and I was very, very lucky. I also had very good recommendations, I must admit, and I got, you might say, the job at Berkeley, California...

MDJ: So did you marry then in Munich?

JM: Yes, we married in Fulda, where he was stationed in military intelligence, and then we were in Berkeley, where he got his Ph.D. I was Assistant Professor of Slavic Languages—I taught literature, language...I was really very happy there. We left then, for Indiana University, where we stayed for three years. Then we came to Kansas. At Indiana, I was also hired for Polish literature...I taught some advanced language, but mainly I taught literature.

MDJ: What was your first teaching year at Berkeley?

JM: 1960—the same year that [Czeslaw] Milosz came to Berkeley.

MDJ: And how long were you there then?

JM: Six years, I think

MDJ: Until 1966? So you’ve been at KU since about 1969?

JM: Well, I was in Lawrence, yes...I’ve been at KU since ’70. Professor [Joseph L.] Conrad was the chairman then. That’s exactly thirty years now.

MDJ: If you could speak just a bit on your writings...or even on your philosophy in, say, a story like “Było i działo i baba.”

JM: Well, you know there are various types of writers. The more I try to write, the more I see that I am one of those “inspirational” writers. I either have some inspiration or I don’t. And therefore, I haven’t written such big, huge volumes that people write when they have a plan, a method...and they know what they’re going to develop. I’m saying that tongue—in—cheek, but not entirely. So each short story represents some thought, some inspiration I had.

My characters are all composites of people I knew, or I think I knew. And my narrator—I like to write in the first person—and I am amused that so many people take this as gospel truth—that the author lived through all this. This is very strange to me.

MDJ: When you said that there were only two places that you remember, that you write about, and that one was Slovakia, and the other was Krakow, and yet I know this story about Munich.

JM: No, no...absolutely not. That was the AAASS remark that put me on that track, because there I talked about that story, “Q i pensionarka” ("Q and the Schoolgirl") which is a story I published in Tygodnik powszechny, which is a very respected, maybe the number—one paper, a mixed, cultural—literary paper in Poland, it’s a Catholic paper.

The narrator, I would say, is a person, who is my imagination—in all the stories—is someone that the author thinks is what a person with her life experiences should be. But not necessarily a picture or an image of anybody. Again, it’s a sort of composite, or a character that the author thinks, that this character, having experienced the Holocaust and the
war and the post—war chaos should emerge from it that way. But it's, again, a figment of the author's imagination.

MDJ: So it's a form of psychological realism.

JM: Probably, if you want to call it that, yes, probably... And that's in all of them. The book of the stories that I wrote about the League of the Rescued (Liga osalalych) which is pretty much sometimes referred to as a novel—it's not a novel, but a collection of short stories. It has a certain unity, that's true, in time, particularly.

MDJ: And what date was that published?

JM: That was published in 1970, and it got a very prestigious émigré award in Wiadomosci. That's a London—based literary periodical, which no longer exists. And I've published in Kultura, in Paris, and other places.

MDJ: And you're still writing?

JM: There are some things that I would like to write, and my scholarly work, as you know, is also something that...

MDJ: Your writings on Mickiewicz...

JM: I have also written on Prus and articles on Przybyszewski.

MDJ: What draws you to these particular authors? I mean, Mickiewicz is Romanticism and Prus is...

JM: No, my book on Mickiewicz is not that much about Mickiewicz's poetry per se, it is more of a cultural study.

MDJ: His relationship to Polish Jewry?

JM: That's right. His relationship to the world of the Jews—all his relationships, including his very, very, very likely descent from the converts on his mother's side. But what I'm interested in is not his descent, but what I'm interested in is how it affected him in various ways, making life decisions, in life situations. All the passages of Mickiewicz's life are connected in some mysterious way to the Jews, his birth, very likely, of a Jewish mother, or as he said in a poem, of an "alien" mother (which is a kind of a code), his marriage to a convert whom he hardly knew, Celina Szymanowska, and his death in Constantinople while he was forming the Jewish Legions—something that he stubbornly insisted on organizing, in spite of great difficulties—a kind of utopian project. And all of that interest comes out in mysterious ways in his life decisions, but also in his works. But I'm not interpreting his poetry aesthetically, but more from a cultural point of view.

MDJ: If we could move to a last subject, Polish Studies...What would you say is that "selling point" of Polish Studies?

JM: Well, the universal appeal of twentieth—century literature—the psychological novel, writers like Gombrowicz or the poets of the Skamander, who were totally uninterested in politics and history, but a celebration of life, and the psychological novel, like Nałkowska, for instance...and then going earlier, Przybyszewski, for instance—those writers have a universal appeal.
Faculty News

As Director of the KU Center for Russian and East European Studies, Professor Maria Carlson has devoted most of her energies to professional activities promoting Slavic studies across the state and the nation. In September 1999 she was one of the organizers of an international conference commemorating the 50th anniversary of NATO. In November she presided as National Program chair for the AAASS Conference in St. Louis. True to her interdisciplinary focus, she addressed the Central State Anthropological Association on "The Undying Power of Ideas: How Post—Soviet Russia is Coping with Phantoms from the Past." Professor Carlson continues her work with the international offices of the U.S. Department of Education, the Senior Fulbright Scholars Board, the State Department's Dante Fascell Board, and other entities. She is proud to have received the Department's "Excellence in Teaching" Award (from the KU Center for Teaching Excellence), and continues to hope that she will finish her book on Andrei Belyi's novel, Petersburg, in this lifetime. She was promoted to Full Professor in fall 1999.

Professor Edith Clowes just completed her first year teaching at University of Kansas. As the new Director of Undergraduate Studies she has been advising this year’s 30 Slavic majors (in addition to 13 undergraduates in REES) in everything from course work to academic planning to funding to job searches. Her first book, The Revolution of Moral Consciousness: Nietzsche in Russian Literature (DeKalb, 1988) reappeared last summer in Russian translation, now titled, Nietzsche v russkoi literature (St. Petersburg: Academic Project Agency) with a suggestive Aubrey Beardsley reproduction on the cover. Her article on Andrei Bitov and the question of utopia appeared in the Serbian collection, Antiutopije u slovenskim knjizenostima (Belgrade: Janus, 1999), edited by D. Ajdacic. Professor Clowes has given papers on "Pasternak’s Doctor Zhivago and the Question of Philosophy" at University of Notre Dame and "Bitov and Wittgenstein" at the AAASS meetings in St. Louis. For the 2000—2001 academic year Professor Clowes received an NEH Fellowship and a Hall Research Fellowship from the Hall Center for the Humanities at the University of Kansas to complete a book on “The Displaced Discourse: Russian Writing Culture and the Question of Philosophy.”

In 1999 Professor William Comer received tenure and promotion to the rank of Associate Professor. In summer 1999 he conducted a two—day workshop on teaching listening comprehension skills for Russian language teachers at the Johnson Language Education Center at NASA in Houston, Texas. It was a terrific experience to work with the dedicated language instructors, who prepared astronauts like Shannon Lucid to communicate in Russian on space station Mir. Among the session's participants was KU alumna Olga Bauman (MA, 1992), who has been teaching in the Russian program at NASA. Professor Comer is continuing to serve as Director of the Ermal Garinger Academic Resource Center. He received a grant from the Hall Center's Improvement of Teaching Fund for a year—long project involving technology training for foreign language teaching assistants. He also serves as the Pedagogy Division Head on the Program Committee for the Annual AATSEEL Conference. He is currently finishing up two projects: the first on the acquisition of letter—sound correspondence in beginning learners of Russian (with KU Ph.D. candidate Meghan Murphy-Lee), and the
second on the life and career of Archimandrite Mikhail (Pavel Semenov, 1876-1916). Prof.
Comer's articles due out in 2000 include: "How do Dzhon and Dzhon Read Russian? On-Line Vo-
cabulary and its Place in the Reading Process," with Leann Keefe and "Making Our Way toward
Teacher Education Programs in the Slavic Lan-
guages," (both to appear in The Learning and
Teaching of Slavic Languages and Cultures: To-
ward the 21st Century, ed. by Ben Rifkin and Olga
Kagan; forthcoming Slavica); and "What Every
Russian Knows about Russian History," in The
Russian Context, ed. by Genevra Gerhart and Eloise
Boyle.
Professor Joseph Conrad attended the AAASS
meeting in St. Louis in November, where he read
his paper "Female Mythological Beings in South
Slavic Folklore" on the SEEFA panel. His paper
has been requested for publication in the SEEFA
journal. Two articles were accepted for publication,
one on "Jonych" for RLJ, the other comparing Tur-
genev's "Uezdnyj lekar" and Chekhov's "Sluchaj
iz praktiki" for an as yet undecided German/Austrian journal. He had three reviews pub-
lished, in SEEJ, SEEFA and the North American
Chekhov Society Bulletin. He is currently preparing
articles on Chekhov's "Uchitel" slopesnosti" and
"Ogni."
Professor Marc L. Greenberg recently had his book,
A Historical Phonology of the Slovene Language,
accepted for publication in the series Historical
Phonology of the Slavic Languages, ed. by Paul
Wexler (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitäts-
verlag), and was awarded a subvention by the KU
Center for Research for its publication. It is due out
in fall 2000. 1999 saw the publication of two arti-
cles: "Razlicni vzroki za siritve in povratni razvoj
glasovne spremembe: rotacizem v juznoslova-
skih jezikih," Logarjev zbornik: Referati s 1. med-
narodnega dialektoloskega simpozija v Mariboru
(Mednarodni dialektoloski simpozij 1, 1996): 40-49
(Maribor: Slavistico društvo); "Multiple
causation in the spread and reversal of a sound
change: rhotacism in South Slavie," Slovenski
jezik/Slovene Linguistic Studies: 63-76, as well as
a short dialect dictionary: "Slovarcek srediskega
govora na osnovi zapisov Karla Ozvalda," Sloven-
ski jezik/Slovene Linguistic Studies (Ljubljana and
Lawrence): 128-175. In spring 2000 he hosted, with
the help of Jane Hacking and the staff of CREES,
the 12th Biennial Conference on Balkan and South
Slavic Linguistics, Literature and Folklore at KU.
He is Chair-elect of the Slavic Department of
Slavic Languages and Literatures, with his term
scheduled to begin in fall 2000.
Andrzej Karcz, Visiting Assistant Professor of Pol-
ish, recently had his book manuscript, The Polish
Formalist School and Russian Formalism accepted
for publication. He also published the following articles: "Poland: Survey of Life Writing," for-
thcoming later this year in Encyclopedia of Life
Writing (ed. By M. Jolly; London: Fitzroy
Dearborn Publishers); and "Manfred Kridl: The
Struggle for the Reform of Polish Literary Scholar-
ship" in The Polish Review (New York). He gave
the paper "The Prose Fiction of Jerzy Pitch" at the
31st National AAASS Convention, St. Louis, MO,
November 1999, and was both organizer and chair
of the panel "Twentieth-Century Polish Literature"
at the AATSEEL Annual Conference, Chicago,
December 1999.
Professor Masha Kipp (KU Ph.D. '85) searched for
and found a sponsor who donated $2000 (as one
time gift) to the Slavic Department to be awarded to
a graduate student who had recently entered the
PhD program in this Department with the intent to
pursue studies in Russian Theatre and Drama. The
1999 award went to Michael Johnson to study in St.
Petersburg on the KU summer program. In spring
1999 she produced Il'f and Petrov's Sil'noe chu-
vstvo. It was student directed and performed in
Russian, primarily by students of the Slavic De-
partment. The production marked the tenth anniver-
sary of the yearly Russian play performed in Rus-
sian by students for the benefit of the students of
Russian and the Russian speaking community at
the University of Kansas, in Lawrence and the area.
In fall 1999 Professor Kipp brought to campus the
prominent Russian actor and director, Veniamin
Smelkov of the Taganka Theatre, to produce Nik-
olai Erdman's The Suicide on the 100th anniversary
of the writer's birth. She also organized a panel for
AAASS and delivered a paper: “Deconstructing the Soviet Intellectual: Radzinsky’s Our Decameron.” In January, 2000, she read a paper at the International Chekhov Symposium in Melikhovo: “Prostranstvo i vremja v pozdnikh pesakh Chekhova: literatura ili teatr?” The paper will be published in Chekhovskyy sbornik, a Moscow State University publication, along with several other papers presented at the Symposium.

In 1999 Professor Gerald Mikkelson published an article in Russia as «Образ русского в Америке: заметки американского путешественника» in Образ России: Россия и русские в восприятии Запада и Востока (Санкт-Петербург: Российская академия наук: 1998): 429-434 Two of his articles were accepted for publication in the forthcoming Collected Essays in Honor of the Bicentennial of Alexander S. Pushkin’s Birth, ed. by Juris T. Ryfa, and one book review in Modern Language Review. Professor Mikkelson delivered two scholarly papers, «Yury Trifonov’s Topsy-Turvy House (Опрокинутый дом): The View from Abroad,” at the First International Yury Trifonov Conference in Moscow, March 26, 1999, and Humanistic Study: Methodological Assumptions, issues of Translation, East—West Dialogue, in Palo Alto, April 13, 1999. He received travel and subsistence grants from the KU GRF and the University of Wisconsin, from Stanford University, and from the Hall Center for the Humanities. He learned in November 1999 of his selection as a Fulbright lecturer in Russia for academic year 2000—2001. He and his family will reside in St. Petersburg, and Professor Mikkelson will lecture on Russian literature at St. Petersburg University and several provincial Russian universities, including those in Perm, Cheliabinsk, and Gorno-Altaiisk. His current research includes Pushkin and religion, the recent prose of Valentin Rasputin, America as seen by visiting Russian writers, and the swan songs of Russian poets.

As Secretary/Treasurer of the International Vladimir Nabokov Society, Trustee and Board Member of the Vladimir Nabokov Foundation, and Editor/Publisher of the journal The Nabokovian, Professor Stephen J. Parker was preoccupied with things Nabokovian during the 1999 Nabokov Centenary year. He served as consultant, source of information, liaison, conduit with the press and with organizers and participants involved with Nabokov celebrations, large and small, around the globe, and was pleased to be able to attend several events in various venues. He put together and published two particularly handsome special centennial issues of The Nabokovian which featured previously unpublished poems by Nabokov, coverage of centennial celebrations, the 1997 and 1998 annual Nabokov bibliographies (with KU graduate students Eugenia Walton and Jon Perkins as co—compilers), and extended sections of annotations and notes on Nabokov’s works, including Brian Boyd’s superb—going annotations to Ada. He also wrote a Nabokov—related article and review, both of which will appear later this year.
Undergraduate Student News

Senior Callie Stanley has received an NSEP Fellowship to spend the academic year 2000—2001 in Russia. Her research project will be to study "The Culture of Suffering." Sophomore Merry Goodman is an alternate for an NSEP for a semester of study in Russia in spring 2001. Senior Elizabeth King received a US—Russian Young Leaders in Public Service Fellowship for one year of study and internship in public service in Russia. She will be taking courses throughout next year. In addition, she will volunteer 10 hours per week and have a two—month internship in a public service organization. Senior Robert Choromanski was selected as KU Student Ambassador for next year and has been accepted to Washburn University Law School. Senior Cynthia Schiffelbein is looking forward to summer study at KU’s Summer Institute in St. Petersburg and then to the start of her career in the Air Force.

Congratulations go to Juniors Elizabeth Simmons and Jeffery Wormington on receiving the prestigious Nelson Scholarship for their senior year of study at KU.

Graduate Student News

Jonathan Perkins will be completing his year as instructor in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, where he has been teaching third-year Russian and Slavic Folklore. He plans next year to work in EGARC.

Congratulations to all those who received an M.A. or Ph.D. during the 1999-2000 year!

MA degrees received: Malgorzata Stamm (Fall 1999), Melissa Moore (Spring 2000), Jared Carter (pending)
PhD Comprehensive passed: Meghan Murphy-Lee (Spring 2000)

PhD dissertations defended: Joachim Faust (The Metaphysics of Grammar in Aleksandr Blok’s Poetry); Co-chairs: Maria Carlson, Marc L. Greenberg (Fall 1999)
Grant Lundberg (A phonological Descriptiona and Analysis of the Dialect of Haloze, Slovenia); Chair: Marc Greenberg (Spring 2000)
Karen Bapst (Archetypal Patterns in Pushkin’s Dramatic and Narrative Works); Chair: Gerald E. Mikkelson; defended with honors (Spring 2000).

Russian Theatre at KU

In November 1998 Veniamin Smekhov, a prominent Russian stage and screen actor and director, as well as author, visited KU to teach a Master Class in directing and a workshop for student-actors at
Liubimov’s Iurii KU Russian to gained a reputation in Europe, Israel and the USA as a director and acting teacher. Mr. Smekhov came to KU with his wife, Galina Aksenova, a scholar of Russian theatre and cinema. Dr. Aksenova gave an open lecture in Russian cinema since perestroika. Both agreed to come to KU during fall, 1999, he to stage Nikolai Erdman’s The Suicide and she to teach a course in Russian cinema after perestroika. The KU production marked the 100th anniversary of Nikolai Erdman, whose play “The Suicide” has been one of the most popular and frequently performed Russian plays in this country (second only to Chekhov’s plays). Veniamin Smekhov had the privilege to know Nikolai Erdman and to work with him: Erdman was an admirer and supporter of the Taganka Theatre, the most avant-garde Russian theatre of the 1960s-1970s. Smekhov’s production and Aksenova’s course were important events for KU Slavic Department, Russian and East European Center, Department of Theatre and Film, as well as for the university and the community at large. The production was a great success. Not only did it play to a full house every night, but people familiar with Smekhov’s reputation came from Chicago, New York, Washington DC, St. Louis and other places to see it.

KU’s program in Russian Theatre is a unique program in the USA. It has a set curriculum and, since 1997-98, a scholarship for Ph.D. students in Slavic or Theatre who have a specific interest in Russian Theatre and Drama. Russian Theatre is a vital component of both Slavic studies, and the International Theatre Program. Smekhov’s and Aksenova’s visit here was part of a continuous effort by Professor Kipp to expand the Russian Theatre program and to give it greater visibility by bringing to KU Russian playwrights (Volodin), directors (Arie, Kreindlin, Smekhov), and stage design exhibits (Boris Anisfeld); establishing connections and exchanges with Moscow’s Theater Institute to allow our interested students to study at that prestigious theatre school (Mark Jennison); exploring the possibility of expanding Russian Theatre curriculum to include Russian cinema as well.

Alumni News

Tom Beyer (Ph.D. 1974) is Professor and Chair of Russian at Middlebury College where he also serves as the Faculty Associate in Admissions which has seen Middlebury climb to number 5 on the US News list of Liberal Arts colleges. Author of fifteen books including 501 Russian Verbs and 501 English Verbs, Professor Beyer continues his work on Belyj with particular emphasis on Russian Berlin in the 1920’s. He has been active with the Internet including an online system to learn the Russian alphabet and a resource to Dostoevsky’s major novels. (http://www.middlebury.edu/~beyer). For the past two years, Tom has worked as a workshop leader on campus for the National Coalition Building Institute, dedicated to supporting and celebrating diversity among all members of the Middlebury College community.

Alexander Boguslawski, Ph.D. ’82, is Professor of Russian Studies at Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida, and Chair of the Department of Foreign Languages Teaching. He teaches Russian prose of the 19th and 20th centuries; Russian history; Russian folklore, Russian culture, Russian language, Russia through the Internet; Russia in the movies. He writes: “I am the only Russian faculty here – this explains the variety of courses. His scholarly interests include: Medieval Russian culture (art and literature); folklore (fairy tales); Web pages about Russia; modern Greek and Greek culture; literary translation. He writes: "In 2000 my translation of Sasha Sokolov’s Mezhdu sobakoi i volkom into Polish will appear in Poland (I think this is the only
translation of the novel into another language so far) and an English translation of Aleksandr Mi- 
gunov’s stories will appear here." His hobbies and 
other interests include: painting (pictures on the 
Web under (http://www.websher.net), playing gui-
tar and singing ballads (Czech, Polish, Russian, 
Greek). His web pages are: Russian Painting 
(http://www.rollins.edu/Foreign_Lang/Russian/ruspa 
int.html) with about 10,500 visitors in 18 months; 
(http://www.rollins.edu/Foreign_Lang/Russian/lub 
ok/lubok.html) on Russian lubok; Voyage to 
Greece (in preparation—pictures and text from my 
two—month research trip to Greece this summer). 
Some personal news: "my daughter Julia (a junior) 
is Student Government Association president at 
Rollins. Daughter Tonia (a junior in Lyman High 
School) is planning to attend Rollins. My wife, Kay 
Davidson—Bond, is a Professor of Humanities at 
Valencia Community College in Orlando.” 
Valentina Brougher (Ph.D. ’73) writes us that 
“Georgetown emphasizes the ‘scholar—teacher’ 
mode (as opposed to the other way around) and so I 
try to be productive. I’ll report on the last few 
years… ‘The Occult in Russian Literature of the 
1990s’ came out in The Russian Review (Jan. 
1997); ‘Demystifying Socialist Realism: Vladim 
imir Sorokin’s ‘Marina’s Thirteenth Love’; in Aus-
tralian Slavonic and East European Studies (No. 1, 
1998); ‘The Demonic in the Short Stories of G. 
Petrov, A. Kurchatkin and O. Ermakov,’ in Cana-
dian Slavonic Papers (June, 1998). A chapter de-
voled to ‘The Occult in the Prose of Vs. Ivanov’ 
was published in The Occult in Russian and Soviet 
Culture, B.G. Rosenthal, ed., Cornell U. Press; and 
an anthology of Vs. Ivanov’s prose, Fertility and 
Other Stories, which I co-translated and wrote an 
introduction to, came out in 1998, Northwestern U. 
Press. I am now working on an annotated transla-
tion of Aleksandr Kondrat’ev’s Na beregakh 
Jarini, a novel based on Slavic folklore which was 
published in Berlin in 1930 and in Russia in 1993. 
We all teach language and literature (or linguistics) 
courses in the Slavic Dept. at Georgetown. The last 
few years I have offered ‘Survey of 20th century 
Russian Literature,’ ‘Russian Literature since 
1985,’ ‘Cultural Perspectives on Russian Literature 
of the 1990s,’ and such language-orientated courses 
as ‘Topics in Russian for Oral Proficiency,’ ‘Issues 
in Russian Culture and Life’ and ‘Intensive Level II 
Russian.’ Even though it is my 28th year of teach-
ing at G.U., I still enjoy the challenge! I do try to 
participate regularly in conferences. This fall I read 
a paper at the AAASS on ‘Folklore and National 
Identity in Recent Russian Prose,’ two years ago I 
read a paper at the Canadian Association of Slavists 
conference on Vladimir Sorokin and socialist real-
ism. Since the fall of the USSR, I have been also 
fortunate to participate in two conferences in Russia 
and to travel there to consult with colleagues and 
buy books. On a personal note, my son, who is 16, 
is now taking Russian and enjoying it. My husband 
still serves as Director of Russia and Independent 
States Division, International Trade Administration, 
U.S. Department of Commerce. He has gotten to 
know Sakhalin and Siberia well… As you can see, 
in one way or another, we are all into things Rus-
sian!” 

Caroline Curry (M.A. ’98) spent a year at home 
with her family after receiving her M.A. degree. 
She is now completing her first year of law school 
at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. 

Halina Filipowicz (Ph.D. ’79) has been appointed 
to the editorial board of Slavic and East European 
Journal. She is also serving on the AAASS/Orbis 
Book Prize Committee of the AAASS and on the 
Pre-Dissertation Fellowship Committee of the As-
soc. of Women in Slavic Studies. She edited a fo-
rum entitled “Rethinking Slavic Drama, Theatre, 
Performance,” which was published in the spring, 
1999, issue of Slavic and East European Journal. 
Her recent publications include: “Hera’s Glass 
Eyes: A Counterreading of Zbigniew Herbert’s 
Plays,” The Other Herbert (ed. Bozena Shallcross), 
special issue of Indiana Slavic Studies 9 (1998): 9-
27. "Performing Bodies, Performing Mickiewicz: 
Drama as Problem in Performance Studies. Slavic 

Mark R. Laurersdorf (Ph.D. ’95) reports that he is 
teaching 3rd-year French during the spring semester 
at Pacific Univ. in Forest Grove, OR and one 1st-
year Russian class during the winter and spring 
quarters at Chemeketa Comm. College in Salem,
OR (as a maternity leave replacement). He has also recently taken on the duties of webmaster for the Slovak Studies Association while continuing to collaborate with Jeff Holdeman (of Ohio State) (http://www.slavic.ohio-state.edu/people/holdeman/czech/main.htm) on the development of the Czech test site for the Slavic and East European Less Commonly Taught Languages Project.

Laura Wilhelm (Ph.D. '94) writes us that her husband, Chris, is still working towards his Ph.D. in the UCLA Indo-European Studies program, and she is still working for the City of West Hollywood with Russian and Ukrainian immigrants. She was named Employee of the Quarter for January—March 1997 and in July 1999 the City Council gave her a commendation in recognition of her work with the emigre community and the organizations Women for Women (centered upon relief efforts in former Yugoslavia) and SERRV International (marketor of handicrafts from artisans around the world according to fair trade principles). Since June 1996 she has served as Secretary of my union, West Hollywood Municipal Employees, and produce our newsletter (HomeFront). She founded the SERRV fundraiser and the WEHOME film committee and have coordinated several special events dedicated to women's rights. She has also sat on the WH/St. Petersburg Sister Cities Committee and the Ombuds Task Force and is becoming increasingly active in the Southern California Mediation Association and the Los Angeles World Affairs Council. Her biography is slated to appear in several Who's Who, American Biographical Institute and International Biographical Centre publications early in the new millennium. In 1999 she was appointed an ABI Life Fellow and invited to serve as a delegate for the ABI's 27th International Millennium Congress on Arts and Communications next summer in Washington, DC. Here she will present her paper "Pornography and the Politics of Oppression in the Russian Aesopian Tradition" that was just published in the collection Eros and Pornography in Russian Literature (Moscow: Ladomir, 1999).

Heather (Dickerson) Wright (M.A. '97) graduated with a M.L.S. degree from Indiana University in August of 1999 and currently works as a research librarian for the law firm, Dinsmore & Shohl, in Cincinnati, OH.

Grant Lundberg (Ph.D., '99), Assistant Professor of Russian at Brigham Young University just announced the birth of his first child.
EVENTS OF 1999—2000

Speakers
November 22, 1999, the History and Slavic Departments and REES hosted Dr. James West, Professor of the Humanities at Middlebury College and co-editor of Between Tsar and People: Educated Society and the Quest for a Public Identity in Late Imperial Russia (Princeton, 1991) and Merchant Moscow: Images of Russia's Vanished Bourgeoisie (Princeton, 1998). Professor West lectured in Professor Clowes’ Russian literature course on “A Retrospective on Time and Justice in Crime and Punishment.”

March 20, 2000, the Slavic Department and REES sponsored Dr. Gary Rosenshield, Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures at University of Wisconsin. Professor Rosenshield lectured on "Goldhagen and Dostoevsky: Psychological Motivation of Genocide."

April 10—11, 2000, the Slavic Department and REES hosted Dr. Konstantin Azadovsky of St. Petersburg, Russia. Dr. Azadovsky gave a public lecture on "Marina Tsvetaeva: Tragedia romanticheskogo soznaniia" and lectured on the topic of Fedor Sologub’s "kostiumirovannye vechebra" in Professor Carlson's Symbolism seminar.

Winter Slavic Party
The Winter Slavic Party was a jovial affair this year. Held on Sunday, December 5, in downtown Lawrence at the Lawrence Community Center, it was attended by 60 students, faculty, and friends of the Slavic Department. Everyone made a favorite Slavic dish, and tables were laden with pirozhki, vinagret, strukli, salat Olive, and much more. Dressed in a handsome peasant blouse, Professor Mikkelsen served tea from his samovar. As always, the entertainment was equally jolly. Professor Greenberg played études for Russian six- and seven-string guitar by Ivanov-Kramskoi and Sychra. The Slavic Chorus sang a medley of songs from all around the Slavic world and invited everyone to sing with them for the old favorites. Professor Mikkelsen regaled the merrymakers with his recent translations of Krylov’s “The Crayfish, The Swan, and the Pike,” among other things.

Maslenitsa Party
Professor William Comer help his annual party at his home on Sunday, March 12. Dozens of faculty, students, and friends enjoyed large amounts of bliny with all imaginable filings.

CARTA Conference
April 8—9, 2000, a large contingent from KU traveled to Oklahoma City to the 2nd Annual conference of the Central Association of Russian Teachers of America. Professor Mikkelsen chaired a session on St. Petersburg in which papers were delivered by REES graduate student, Aaron Hoel, and undergraduates Emily Franklin and Kristine Eck. Professor Clowes chaired a general session on Russian literature with papers presented by Slavic graduate students, Ben Admussen, Shannon Doyle, and Adrienne Harris—Bogess.

Balkan and South Slavic Conference
On May 4—6, 2000 the 12th Biennial Conference on Balkan and South Slavic Linguistics, Literature, and Folklore was held at the University of Kansas, with sponsorship by CREES, the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the Office of International Programs. More than fifty scholars from the U.S. and abroad (including Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, Estonia, Hungary, Israel, Macedonia, and Slovenia) attended the conference. In addition to KU faculty Joseph L. Conrad and Marc L. Greenberg, students Matthew Feeney, Meghan Murphy—Lee, and recent graduate Grant H. Lundberg (Ph.D. 1999, now Assistant Professor of Russian at BYU), a number of prominent scholars participated, including Henning Andersen, Victor Friedman, Brian Joseph, Alexander Dulichenko, Gerhard Neweklowski, and Olga Nedeljkovic. For a listing of abstracts, see: http://www.ukans.edu/~slavic/bss/bss—abstracts.html. The program was organized Marc L. Greenberg and by Jane F. Hacking.
Slavic Honors Reception

On April 20, 2000, at the Slavic Honors Reception, the following students were acknowledged for their excellence in their areas of study. Seniors, Robert Choromanski, Preston Fairley, and Elizabeth King, were inducted into Dobro Slovo, the National Slavic Honors Society. Juniors, Elizabeth Simmons and Jeffery Wormington, received the prestigious Harley Nelson Scholarship for their senior year. The following students were honored with a certificate and a book award: Leann Keeve for her outstanding contributions to the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures; Elizabeth King, Cassandra Payton, and Beth Warlick for their excellent work in Advanced Ukrainian; Lindsey Collier, Joanna Fewins, Sarah Jewell, Jenna Justice, Adrienne Landry, Maureen Morton, Matthew Middendorf, Alison Tepsic, and Jeremy Wade for their excellence in Elementary Russian; Meghan Fanning, Justin Hauxwell, Rebecca Smith, Shelly Walton, and Mark Willcoxon for their outstanding work in Intermediate Russian; Kevin Bobbett, John Erlinger, Preston Fairley, Emily Franklin, Heather Hart, Janna Khichoyan, Igor Shkolnik, Elizabeth Simmons, Callie Stanley, Jeffery Vestal, and Jeffrey Wormington for their excellent work in Advanced Russian; Phara Charmchi for outstanding work in Elementary Polish; Kimberly Spence for her excellence in Intermediate Polish; Michael Johnson and Mark Munzinger for their excellent work in Advanced Polish; Ben Admussen for his outstanding work in Elementary Croatian-Serbian.

Professor Stephen J. Parker was honored for 13 years of service as Chairperson of the Department of Slavic with two presentations by Professor Kipp and Professor Greenberg.

Песня о русских писателях
Посвящается моему бывшему учителю, а ныне коллеге.
Степану Паркеру

Эпиграф 1й
"Я не поэт... о, нет. Мои стихи
шлаковые." (Из неизвестного поэта)

Эпиграф 2й
"Поэт сдрочнулся, воспринув ото сна.
И излияв губы штиллии: не на...
...до... Пушкин ответил... товарищ.
Светло! Не надо, не надо, не надо
стихов!"

Великий Федор Достоевский...
Он Петербурга не любил:
Он говорил, что этот Невский
И самый город весь проклял.

А песенцевы... те упали

В Москве. Он верил дуракам.
Его жандармы захватили
И крепко дали по мозгам.

тут призадумался писатель.
Царя вдруг страшно полюбил.
"Что за комиссия, Создатель!"
Ведь был он вовсе не дебил.

Жил крокодил тогда в Пассаже.
Его ходил он навещать.
А, навестив его, тогда же
Решал он насвистать написать.

Он много видел преступлений.
О них правдиво написал.
И весь исполненный сомнений,
Искал он Бога и страдал.

Любил поигрывать в картишки..
Ходил в игорные дома.
Анютка справила пальцюкок:
Пришла домой, пальта нема.

Иван Сергеевич Тургенев
Его за это прозирал
И говорил, что он не гений,
А просто нечут и накал.
And now Professor Marc Greenberg's contribution:

There is one final award which remains, one that is
given only irregularly in cases of special merit.
Such an award has no particular name because it is
unique and its contents defined by its bearer. It is
with some trepidation that one approaches the be-
estowal of such an award, for it is under the aegis
of the recipient that many illustrious events have taken
place and which are summarized in the following
list, a list, I hasten to add, that was first compiled
by a scholar on the dog-eared pages of a yellow
legal tablet (on the verso of which was hastily
scrawled recipe for chien-à-son-goût, a northern
Yakutian dish with Kartvelian and Provencal in-
fluences whose name belies its vegetarian content) and
dutifully copied into a word-processor of now ante-
diluvian vintage (Toshiba Tecra 510 laptop, which
was removed from the market at the time when
Gore invented the Internet). Lest I lose the audience
in my rambling minutiae, the relevance of which
will become apparent only in due course, let me
present the list forthwith:

- The fall of communism.
- The retention of outstanding senior faculty.
- The building of the Information Superhighway
- The rise of the New Economy.
- The recruitment and able mentorship of prom-
ising young faculty.
- The conquering of greater Wescoe territory.
- The era known as the Pax Parkerii.
- The prospering of a vibrant intellectual envi-
ronment fostering Slavic studies.
- Playing David to the administration’s Goliath.
- Speculation arose as to whether it would be more
propitious to appeal to his proclivity to la chasse or
more cerebral pursuits involving the cliquement
(rather than outright execution) of a class of cyber-
netic rodentia. Of the latter there could be no issue,
for sufficient assets had been collected but the legal
tender (in crisp notes depicting a largish sad—eyed
son of Philadelphia) was absent—mindedly dis-
carded at some intermediate point between Lamar’s
Doughnuts and City Hall. A subsequent emptying
of pockets yielded an austere $33.57. It was in the
aftermath of these vicissitudes that I was called
upon to seek a new synthesis. Devoid of substantial
lucre, I came upon the notion of pursuing immor-
tality for our honoree, for there is no greater abun-
dance of the currency of fame than in the halls of
academia, at least insofar as the gaining of such

Something of a conundrum was presented to the
diminutive academic community that wished to
honor these August accomplishments. One faction
desired to make a statement concerning the mo-
mentous events that appeared to have been in some
way actuated by this paragon of statesmanship (yet
within this assemblage of mildly contentious literati
there raged a vitriolic disputation on cause and ef-
fect that remains dolorously unresolved). Others
insisted on considering pursuits of a universally
appealing nature that would occupy the newfound
leisure hours of an imperator bereft of his scepter
and solium. In deference to the unsettled contro-
versy proceeding from the deliberations of the
aforementioned subcommittee, the whole languidly
resigned itself to a settlement in keeping with the
latter’s good intentions.

And what is in the campus pedagogue.
And what you will tell, without sleep.
For all about these four.

And such, quickly write to him, on the courses.
As one.
No, he will not write to the priests, brothers.
Lest he will be a learned this host.

(Может исполняться как песня. Но, если мотив не знаете, то читать эти стихи надо с большим чувством)
fame is achieved without the aid of cold hard cash. I first set to work in the realm of the exploration of the history and meaning of his name, Stephen J. Parker, for the purpose of which I placed a call to the Department of Entymology at Humbert College, a small liberal arts institution where a dear colleague of mine has been toiling for decades on a dictionary of historical names for digestive ailments. (Last I checked she had reached dyspepsia, anhydrous, know in the vulgar as heaves, dry.) As misfortune would have it, I was connected in error to the Department of Entymology at said Humbert, where to my horror I was confronted with an increasingly popular gambit designed to raise private-source funds for their department. Before I could convince the secretary to transfer me to the department I had desired I was given the offer to have an as yet unnamed insect named after myself for a one-hundred dollar donation to the departmental discretionary account. No manner of protestation could dissuade the tenacious secretary from this line of pursuit and thus when the price was at last lowered to a rock—bottom $15.95, I finally grasped the opportunity that this blunder had presented. Here was the chance to attain for our honoree the fragment of immortality that I had been entrusted to secure. Because the price of immortality had become a veritable bargain, the remaining $17.62 was in principle mine to spend wantonly. Nevertheless, ever aware of my custodial responsibilities, I elected to invest this sum in a sojourn to the Datura stramonium—covered walls of Humbert College to view the magnificent arthropod destined to propel our dear leader into perpetual glory. I shall spare the audience the ghastly details of this trip, which has, incidentally, caused me to have a recurring nightmare in which I am impaled, desiccated, on a set of fine Czech 5-millimeter mounting pins and examined mercilessly under a magnification—10 loupe by unwashed doctoral students. My entomological contact there, a Professor Sean Jade, absenty queried me on my preferences, grumbling bitterly along the lines of what I might expect for a mere $15.95. (I am under the impression that he said I deserved a swift kick in the pants, but I could not attest to this under oath.) I pointed out that I was authorized to go as high as $20.00 for the appropriate specimen, reining an air of entomological epitude. This only increased his indignation, though he grudgingly pursued his line of interrogation in the hopes of terminating the transaction at a moment sooner rather than later. I pointed out that the person to be honored was a Russian literature professor, had chaired our department for thirteen years, saw it through thick and thin... Suddenly the professor stood upright and displayed a look of ebullience. "Indeed," he said, "I have just the one. Yes, just the one." He led me to a tray of tentatively mounted butterflies (or moths, for I cannot distinguish them myself) and pointed out an enormous blue with expansive oval wings. "This," he said, "is a very curious creature. It is currently known colloquially as the 'Arctic' butterfly (Papilio borealis being the proposed but as yet unregistered official term), for it was found in the northern part of Russia, in a place called—forgive me for my lack of skill in pronouncing Russian—Novaya zembla, or something similar. It is the only butterfly known to thrive in such a harsh northern climate. It was known only from lithographs made in the 19th century and no specimen had been located until a recent expedition made in November 1998." In my eagerness to consummate the trade before second thoughts ensued, I produced the twenty dollars, at which moment I quickly found myself shuttled out the door by the firm prodding of the professor's beefy paws. The 'Arctic', mounting pins still dangling perilously from the body, was thrust hastily into my hands where the banknote had lain just seconds before. And so I present you with this rare butterfly, the 'Arctic' formerly known from prints. It shall now be renamed the Papilio Stephanos ioannes Parkerianus.

[Professor Parker is presented with a large cloth butterfly.]

There is a curious epilogue that gives one pause and causes one to ponder mysteries such as destiny. Two months to the day after my encounter with Professor Jade, I received in the mail an 8 1/2" x 5" Manila envelope from the Professor's widow, Dierdre Jade, in which there was an index card clipped
to a black and white photograph of a portly man in a blazer and Bermuda shorts pursuing a butterfly with a wide-mouthed fine mesh net. The photograph is blurred and yellowed, not from age but apparently harsh conditions, yet it is apparent that the subject is the very same late Professor Jade. On the verso is written in pencil “Sean – Novaya Zemlya 1998″. Each time I withdraw the index card from the envelope I religiously remove the paperclip (coated with violet elastic) and, once my business with it has been discharged, I replace it in precisely the same fashion so as to conform to the indentation in the card stock that were made initially by the late Jade or widow Jade. On the index card was written in a delicate and florid penmanship the following lines:

It was before an iceberg where I met
The Arctic Blue, trapped in my net.
I stood upon a windswept floe where
Not a soul stood by to care
That I had caught the rarest kind
Of butterfly that one may find.
Down below the still morass
Reflected me, as in dark glass,
And spoke to me in dulcet tones
That caused a shiver in my bones:
And my visage yet grew darker:
“Name this after Stephen Parker!”

Humbert College, Denton, Kansas, September 14, 1999.

SEND US YOUR NEWS!

Name:

New Address?

New Job?

What’s your other news?

Please Support Your Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures!

The Department of Slavic at the University of Kansas is historically among the strongest Slavic programs in the United States. As you probably know, the wellbeing and indeed the survival of individual departments is increasingly being left to the vagaries of market forces. There are fewer and fewer state-mandated funds for ongoing operations. The Slavic Department is vulnerable in that it serves a relatively small constituency. We are appealing to you, our alumni and friends, to help us maintain our status as one of the country’s best Slavic programs. Among the areas we would like to bolster are fellowships in Slavic, travel funds for our students, and our speakers fund. We also hope to increase the number of named memorial funds to support student activities (awards, fellowships, grants, etc.). Please feel free to specify how you would like your contribution to be used. We encourage and deeply appreciate donations to the Department, be they large or small. Please be sure to send your tax-deductible donation directly to the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures in the enclosed envelope. Make your check out to “Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures – KUEA” (KUEA = Kansas University Endowment Association), so that we can be sure that the funds will be properly credited to the Department’s account. If you wish to establish a named fund, please contact Professor Marc Greenberg, Chair, at the Slavic Department, or KUEA directly (the contact there is Terri Knoll Johnson, phone 785/832-7340; fax 785/832-7495; e-mail: tjohnson@vaxa.ks.ukans.edu).
SOME UPCOMING SLAVIC EVENTS IN 2000—2001

October 12—14, 2000, Central Slavic Conference, Wyndham Garden Hotel, Kansas City, MO. For more information, please email Patricia Brodsky at brodskyp@umkc.edu or Robert Evanson at evanson@umkc.edu.

November 6—8, 2000, Professor Michael Hagemeister from University of Innsbruck will be delivering two talks, one at the Hall Center Faculty Seminar in “Philosophy and Literature,” and one at REES on conspiracy theories in Russia. For more information, please email Edith Clowes at eclowes@ukans.edu.

November 9—12, 2000, AAASS National Meetings, Adam’s Mark Hotel, Denver, CO.

April 5—7, 2001, “Crossroads of Europe: The Czech Republic Today,” University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.