
NEWS OF THE PROFESSION

CONFERENCES

September 7-11, 1971: American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, in Chicago, Illinois, at the Pick Congress Hotel.

October 1-2, 1971: Southern Conference on Slavic Studies of AAASS, Tenth Annual Meeting, at Chapel Hill and Durham, North Carolina. Program: Josef Anderle, Department of History, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514. Contact: Jordan E. Kurland, AAUP, One Dupont Circle, Washington, D.C. 20036.

October 22-23, 1971: Conference on "Dissent in the Soviet Union," at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario. Contact: R. Johnston, Department of History, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

October 22-24, 1971: Conference on "Modernization and the Peasant in the Balkans," supported by the Graduate School of the University of Washington and the American Council of Learned Societies. Participation by invitation only. To be chaired by Professor Peter Sugar, Department of History, University of Washington.

November 18-21, 1971: American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, in New York City, at the Statler Hilton Hotel.

November 19-20, 1971: Central Slavic Conference of AAASS (formerly the Bi-State Slavic Conference) Annual Meeting, at Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri. Program: Central Slavic Conference, Department of History, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri 63130.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

August 20-26, 1972: Twelfth International Congress of the International Federation for Modern Languages and Literatures (FILLM), in Cambridge, England. Theme: "Expression, Communication, and Experience in Literature and Language." Contact: The Congress Secretary, Twelfth International FILLM Congress,

Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages, Sidgwick Avenue, Cambridge, CBS 9DA, England.

August 28-September 2, 1972: Eleventh International Congress of Linguists, in Bologna, Italy.

August or September 1972: International Federation of Library Associations, in Budapest, Hungary.

Summer 1973: Fourth Congress for Slavic History and Philosophy, in Salzburg, Austria, and Regensburg or Passau, West Germany (tentative).

September 1973: Seventh International Congress of Slavists, in Warsaw, Poland.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

The School of Library and Information Science at the University of Western Ontario now offers a course in Slavic librarianship. The goals of the course are to foster knowledge of publications and library development in Slavic countries and to survey the resources and availability of research materials for Slavic studies in Canadian, American, Soviet, and other European libraries.

To follow up this course the school is contemplating a special three-week seminar in the summer of 1972 on problems of access to material in the Slavic field. Participants would include scholars, teachers, and librarians. The purpose of the seminar would be "to initiate a dialogue between the user and the information scientist." To be eligible, applicants must be employed or studying in Canada.

For further details contact William J. Cameron, Dean, School of Library and Information Science, University of Western Ontario, London 72, Ontario, Canada.

An exhibit of photographs portraying the medieval atmosphere and life in the Slavic monasteries of Mount Athos, Greece, is now available for booking at art galleries and universities. The pictures were made by a professional photographer-faculty member, Walter Craig of Ohio State University, who participated in the Mount Athos Microfilm Project described in the spring 1971 issue of the *AAASS Newsletter*. Institutions wish-

ing to schedule a showing of the exhibit should contact Walter Craig, Department of Photography, 156 West 19th Avenue, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio 43210.

The Slavic Bibliographic and Documentation Center, 1527 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, is establishing a clearinghouse for information about translations-in-progress in the social sciences and humanities of interest to Slavists. The clearinghouse is a cooperative effort and depends upon direct reports from translators. Anyone at work on such a translation is asked to report to the center the following information: (1) author's full name, (2) original title, (3) translated title, (4) translator's name, (5) translator's institutional affiliation, (6) estimated date of completion, and (7) publication plans, even if tentative.

CONFERENCE REPORTS

The National Association for Soviet and East European Studies (NASEES) of Great Britain held its annual meeting at the University of London on April 23-25, 1971, with 126 scholars in attendance. The opening session's papers, all by members of the Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung in Berlin, were devoted to East German economic development and East German foreign trade in COMECON, 1971-75. Remaining sessions by British scholars dealt with the new Soviet Five-Year Plan, Soviet agriculture during the seventies, political developments at the Twenty-fourth Party Congress, and the composition of local soviets during the past decade.

At its business meeting which followed, NASEES announced that two major efforts came to fruition during the past year. Its Abstracting Service (ABSEES) was launched in July 1970, and the first books of the association's monograph series were published in January 1971 in the Soviet and East European Series of Cambridge University Press. At present the press is restricting output to four books a year. The association is also exploring the idea of establishing an annual record of publications in the United Kingdom which would correspond to the *American Bibliography of Slavic and East European Studies*.

APPOINTMENTS AND STAFF CHANGES

University of Alberta: R. M. Hankin and E. Mozejko promoted to associate profes-

sors in the Department of Slavic Languages.

Bluffton College: Von Hardesty of Ohio State University appointed to the Department of History.

City University of New York, Richmond College: George Fischer appointed professor of social science.

Denison University: Bruce Bigelow of the University of Chicago appointed to the Department of History.

Le Moyne College: Nicholas G. Bohatiuk promoted to professor of economics.

Ohio State University: Valentine G. Bolen of the University of Chicago appointed assistant professor of Slavic languages and literatures.

State University of New York at Albany: Jan Spalik of the University of Southern California appointed chairman of the Department of German and Slavic.

State University of New York at Binghamton: Frank F. Seeley of the University of Pennsylvania appointed professor and chairman of the Department of Russian Language and Literature.

State University of New York at Buffalo: Aleksander Gella appointed professor of sociology.

Vanderbilt University: Stuart R. Grover of the University of Wisconsin appointed assistant professor of history.

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

The American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies is an international, interdisciplinary organization of persons interested in the Slavic and East European field. *Regular* memberships are \$15.00 per year; *sustaining* memberships are \$25.00 per year. A *student* membership (without vote) at \$7.50 per year is available to full-time students with U.S. mailing addresses. Students outside the United States, as well as students with teaching assistantships or part-time jobs, may join as regular members. There are also nonvot-

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

United States post offices will not forward magazines or journals. They are returned to the publisher at a charge of at least ten cents each. If you move, please send immediate notice to the AAASS headquarters in Columbus, giving both new and old addresses. Allow four weeks to effect a change of address.

ing *associate* memberships at \$15.00 per year. *Joint* memberships are available for a married couple, both of whom wish to join the Association but who need only one copy of the publications; both names will be listed, but the fee and voting rights are those of a single membership. The membership dues for *emeritus* members are \$7.50.

All classes of membership receive the quarterly *Slavic Review*; the *American Bibliography of Slavic and East European Studies* (regular price \$3.50), published now by Ohio State University; the Association's *Newsletter* (regular price \$4.00 a year), published four times a year at

Ohio State University; and the *Directory* of the Association (sold to nonmembers at \$5.00) in the years when it is published. Application blanks for membership are available from the AAASS, Ohio State University, 190 West 19th Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43210.

Send contributions both for this section and for the *Newsletter* to Mrs. Ruth C. Morley, *Newsletter* editor, in care of the AAASS in Columbus.

AAASS mailing lists are available on envelopes or labels. Persons or institutions wishing to purchase this service should write to the Business Manager, AAASS.

WILLIAM STEWART CORNYN, 1906–1971

William S. Cornyn, professor of Slavic and Southeast Asian linguistics at Yale University and a long-time chairman of its Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures and of its Russian Area Program, died on March 15, 1971, at the age of sixty-four.

Professor Cornyn was active in many areas of scholarly endeavor, most of which, such as his work in general linguistics, Burmese, and other Tibeto-Burman languages, remains outside the thematic confines of this journal. However, he also made a lasting contribution to the field of Russian instruction in this country, and it is that aspect of his activity that I should like to recall in this brief tribute. I should like to focus specifically on the pioneering character of his first-year textbook of Russian, *Beginning Russian* (Yale University Press, 1950), which at the time of its appearance marked an entirely new approach to language study and which today, over a quarter of a century since its conception, has retained an important position in the ever-expanding market of Russian teaching aids.

The book's hallmark is its stress on the primacy of the spoken language and its clean break with the earlier teaching methods which emphasized grammar and reading to the detriment, and sometimes complete exclusion, of any training in the development of oral skills. Cornyn's language-teaching philosophy can be best exemplified by quoting directly from the introduction to his book: "the quickest and most accurate means of attaining fluency in a language is to begin by speaking it . . . , only by memorizing a large stock of expressions and by making these expressions actual by repetition, constant and unremitting, can a student build a foundation for fluent speaking and swift, accurate reading. . . . a student who wants to use Russian in any real sense has little time to devote to analysis, particularly in the first stages. . . . accurate and immediate responses are the result of constant practice in Russian, with reference not to English equivalents (although these may at times be helpful) but to the situations in which such expressions are used."

In formulating these ideas Cornyn was guided by the behavioristic approach to language-learning propounded by his teacher at Yale, Leonard Bloomfield, with its emphasis on the acquisition of quasi-automatic responses to specific situations and stimuli, and de-emphasis of grammar as a teaching tool. Within the controlled setting of a classroom, the student recreates, as it were, the process of the acquisition

of his first language. Therefore, Cornyn's lessons, though arranged according to the grammatical principle, are provided with a minimal amount of explanatory apparatus. This circumscription of the role of the textbook is compensated for in the classroom by a greater reliance upon the native tutor's skill in eliciting proper responses from the students, upon the course leader's ability to amplify the scanty grammatical material in the book, and upon a judicious use of the language laboratory. In this way Cornyn's textbook became the forerunner of what is known today as the audio-lingual approach or the direct method.

Cornyn's uncommon talents allowed him to gain expertise in Russian and in Burmese, with the latter occupying the more prominent place in his research. During the last decade he was working on a monumental Burmese-English dictionary, which appears sufficiently close to completion for eventual publication.

His unusual teaching skill, great linguistic erudition, and untiring promotion of Russian studies will be deeply missed at Yale, where he spent all of his thirty years in scholarship.

ALEXANDER M. SCHENKER
Yale University

GEROID TANQUARY ROBINSON, 1892-1971

The passing of Professor Robinson closes the career of a noted leader of Russian historical study in the United States. From an Anglo-Saxon background in the South he evolved into a devoted scholar in his field, and then, impelled by the Second World War, he became the architect of expanded Russian and Soviet studies within the framework of Columbia University's well-financed Russian Institute. This was his great achievement.

Born in a comfortable family of southern Virginia, the young Geroid was taken to Colorado because of the illness of his brother. The brother died, but Geroid flourished in the high mountains, spending summers on ranches or in lumber camps and on surveying parties. After high school—already with a bent toward history—in 1913 he entered Stanford University.

A history major, he made Phi Beta Kappa, edited the literary magazine, and served as a teaching assistant. Rather reserved, and something of a liberal, he had become fascinated by Turgenev. But he left college to work for a newspaper, and in 1917 a commission in the army, direct from civilian life, propelled him into new fields. Without military experience or knowledge of aviation, he was assigned to assist the redoubtable Colonel Hiram Bingham in building the air force. Though he would have preferred combat service, he devoted himself to his duties in France, winning high praise from his superior.

When the war ended, Robinson settled in New York, taking courses at Columbia University to round out his A.B. He also joined the staff of *The Dial*, where he was a member of the liberal literary constellation with Thorstein Veblen, John Dewey, Louis Mumford, and Maxwell Anderson. He soon moved to *The Freeman*, where he again showed his liberal outlook on labor and race questions and began to write on Russia.

He rose rapidly at Columbia, becoming an instructor in history, specializing on Russia and learning the language. After much study, in 1925 he went to the Soviet Union to work on his classic *Rural Russia Under the Old Régime*, which

he compounded from archival research, talks with peasants and former landowners, and long tramps on muddy roads. Thanks to this, he rose to associate professor in 1931, with a strongly social and cultural approach to his field, but scant political content. Later, he gave a seminar, which produced his first Ph.D. in 1940. At a time when Russians who had fled from the Revolution dominated Russian history here, he was the leading native American in the field.

Called to Washington in the crisis of 1941, Professor Robinson soon ran the USSR Division of Research and Analysis, OSS, with dozens of specialists in all areas of Soviet affairs. Unlike most Washington agencies, it was convinced of the Soviet ability to survive. Its chief was highly committed: at the Christmas party in 1943 he interrupted the gaiety with a stern call for more zeal, ending with an impassioned outburst: "Damn the Fascist beast!" But as Fascist damnation drew nigh, the USSR Division shifted its emphasis from matters military to the intentions and ideology of the USSR. In this less urgent atmosphere Dr. Robinson devoted much thought to the future.

His proposal of 1943 to create a center of intensive Russian studies won strong support from Columbia and the Rockefeller Foundation, giving rise to the Russian Institute, which opened in September 1946. Under his guidance it soon became an outstanding agency for study and the training of scholars and officials, who won wide acclaim in academic life, in government, and other fields.

In addition to administering the Institute, Professor Robinson taught Russian history, with emphasis on political aspects and ideology. He also did much to build up the Russian holdings of the Columbia library, and was in demand as a consultant on Russian studies. In 1951, when the load became too great, he resigned as director of the Institute, becoming Seth Low Professor of History at Columbia. He continued to teach and to write, publishing several articles, on Soviet political thinking rather than on the peasants. In 1963, as his academic career was ending, twenty of his students and associates honored him with a Festschrift, *Essays in Russian and Soviet History*.

Dr. Robinson's last years, saddened by the lingering illness of his beloved wife, Clemens, brought him distress and suffering. Other family burdens and his own terminal decline he also bore without complaint. Now it is over.

Geroid Tanquary Robinson was a man of great gifts, who never spared himself and who tried unceasingly to inspire others to attain the same high standards that he set for himself. His pioneering work in the field of Russian historical studies will long be remembered.

JOHN SHELTON CURTISS
Duke University

NICHOLAS P. VAKAR, 1894–1970

Nicholas P. Vakar was born in the Ukraine in 1894 into a family of Russian intellectuals and army officers. He attended the Alexander Gymnasium and later took a degree in law at Kiev University. His career in the artillery during the First World War was distinguished by a battlefield commission, two crosses of St. George, and three citations for bravery. Beginning in 1917 he played a leading role in the anti-Communist underground and engaged in various diplomatic and political activities. From the mid-1920s he devoted himself to writing, translating, and above all to journalism; his treatments of political, legal, and church affairs

in the newspaper *Latest News* were read by Russian émigrés all over the world. Vakar became one of the directors of the Foreign Press Association in France. After suffering many hardships during the first part of the Second World War, he and his family made their way to the United States, through the help of the Unitarian Church.

In 1943, at the age of forty-nine, Vakar embarked on an academic career, teaching Russian in a night school, and studying anthropology, sociology, and Slavic philology at Harvard University. His Ph.D. thesis (1946) was on "The Family in the Slavic East." His first book, *Belorussia: The Making of a Nation* (1956) was praised by reviewers for its thorough historical scholarship and detachment from partisanship. Only six years later followed *The Taproot of Soviet Society*, dealing systematically with the relation between Russian peasant mores and the life style of the ruling Soviet elite. *Taproot* received some glowing reviews (e.g., in the *New York Herald Tribune*), but also provoked criticism in the émigré press, which Vakar answered in the *Novoe Russkoe Slovo*. During the middle and late 1960s Vakar worked on a variety of statistical approaches to Soviet Russian semantics; some of the results appear in *Word Count of Spoken Russian* (1966). He was an energetic and successful teacher of Russian language and civilization as a faculty member at Wheaton College and as a visitor at Middlebury, Wellesley, and several other institutions, and, before his retirement, at Ohio State University. He loved to paint, and did excellent semiabstract work.

Vakar's death, after a brief illness, came in July 1970. He is survived by his wife, Gertrude, a poetess and the translator of numerous books and articles, most notably the psychological studies of Vygotsky. His eldest daughter, Catherine Chvany, teaches Russian at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and his second daughter, Anna, is a technical translator and teacher of Romance languages. The number of bereaved extends far beyond his immediate family to the students, colleagues, and friends who had the good fortune to know his spontaneous warmth and appreciation of life.

PAUL FRIEDRICH
University of Chicago