

CAS President's Report, 2012

14 May 2012

Dear Colleagues, Members and Friends of the Canadian Association of Slavists,

It was a pleasure this year to once more represent this dedicated group of scholars and teachers of Slavic Studies. As colleagues we live and work over a vast physical expanse, and yet we are connected and interconnected by our students, who arrive on one campus as undergraduate and then move to another to pursue graduate studies. Over the years at UVic I have shared many students with other Slavic Studies programs across Canada and it is gratifying to see that the same high academic standards are upheld from Victoria to St. John's. If our student successes testify to the hard work we put into our profession, at times it seems that that profession is coming under increasing scrutiny. There is no question that universities are in a time of transition and that increasing budgetary pressures are being placed on programs like Slavic Studies. I am immensely proud to see that despite these pressures, Canadian Slavists are continuing to publish widely, win grants and fellowships, organize conferences, lead study abroad programs, win teaching awards and inspire students. A look through the pages of this newsletter will testify to the continuing accomplishments of our colleagues.

This year we meet for our annual conference at the congress co-hosted by the University of Waterloo and Wilfred Laurier University. Many thanks go to our hard-working Program Chair Timothy Ormond, who put together an excellent program while juggling teaching duties at Grand Valley State University in New York and welcoming a new baby into his family. We are also very grateful to our equally tireless Local Events Coordinator Tanya Richardson. Our Past President Zina Gimpelevich, on-site at Waterloo, also contributed to organizing this important event.

Next year our annual conference will be hosted by the University of Victoria, which will also be celebrating its 50th anniversary. On behalf of the new Program Chair, my colleague Serhy Yekelchuk, I invite you all to plan to attend and enjoy our beautiful west coast scenery.

As always, the members of our CAS executive were a delight to work with over the year. Many issues came up and were dealt with expeditiously from the offices of executive members across the country. Many thanks to Jeff Sahadeo who acted as CAS representative at Federation meetings in Ottawa. Our *Canadian Slavonic Papers* editor Heather Coleman worked hard to put out a triple-issue of the journal dedicated to the 20-year anniversary of the collapse of the Soviet Union, which offered articles from the perspective of a variety of disciplines within Slavic Studies. Once again not only our journal, but our entire organization owes a debt of gratitude to Assistant Editor Svitlana Kryz, who has become our institutional memory and irreplaceable

person. Thanks to our book review editors Alison Rowley (History and Classics), Sarah Turner (Language and Linguistics) and Mark Conliffe (Literature and Art).

Finally, it is my pleasure to announce the **winners of the CAS essay contest**. As one of the jurists this year I can attest to the very high quality of the submissions. In the graduate category we declared a tie between:

Will McFadden, PhD Candidate (Department of History, University of Toronto). “The Power and the Paradox: The Early Lives and Writing of John Dos Passos, John Scott, and Vasily Grossman.” Nominated by Prof. Thomas Lahusen (Department of History & Centre for Comparative Literature, University of Toronto)

and

Ian Garner, PhD Candidate (MA Student at the time of submission, Department of History, University of Toronto). “Why the USSR Sent Troops into Kabul in December 1979.” Nominated by Prof. Robert E. Johnson (Department of History, University of Toronto).

In the undergraduate category the winner is:

Sara Miller, “From the Politics of Amnesia to the Politics of Remembrance: An Analysis of the Katyn Massacre’s Historical Narrative.” Nominated by Prof. Douglas Clayton (Modern Languages & Literatures, University of Ottawa).

Many thanks to the teachers and supervisors who nominated these essays and to my fellow jurists Allan Reid and Jeff Sahadeo.

With every good wish,

Megan Swift