

CAS President's Report, 2010

22 April 2010

Dear Colleagues, Members, and Friends of the Canadian Association of Slavists (CAS):

Let me greet you all and welcome new members of the Canadian Association of Slavists. Thanks to your ongoing support on every level and issue, I am happy to confirm once again that the Canadian Association of Slavists is solid, healthy, diverse, and strongly represents Canadian academia nationally and internationally. We are working truly amicably together: collectively, in groups, and individually.

The past year I personally took part in five international academic events and worked closely on your behalf with the Canadian Federation of the Humanities and Social Sciences. Besides my own presentations at these conferences, I looked intently at other Slavic and non-Slavic academic affiliations: their academic and teaching activities, numbers and percentage of academic ranks, students' ratio and participation, age groups, and gender. My conclusion is that CAS has a reason to stand tall because our standards and achievements are high. We teach and study to the best of our abilities, and our publications are well received around the globe. Our members receive promotions and get recognition at their own institutions, nationally and internationally. Let me give you just a few random examples. Dr. Natalia Pylypiuk has been promoted to the rank of full professor (Congratulations, Natalia!!!). Dr. David Marples was elected as the President of NAAB (North American Association of Belarusists; Congratulations, David!!!). Traditionally strong Ukrainian Studies of Western Canada are also striving at the University of Toronto thanks to many colleagues, in particular, our past president, Dr. Maxim Tarnawsky. You can find their homepage at <http://www.utoronto.ca/elul/>. Dr. Maria Paula Survilla, Canadian-raised US scholar, was promoted this year to the rank of full professor (Congratulations, Paulinka!!!); she also continues to preside over the academically stimulating CBS (Center for Belarusian Studies, <http://belarusiancenter.org>). Dr. Stuart John Durrant continues to serve in the capacity of the Honorary Consul of the Russian Federation. (Way to go, Stuart!!!). You will find many confirmations and details of the above in the CAS Newsletter, once again excellently prepared by Dr. Elena Baraban (Thank you, Elena!!!; affection and thanks go to Elena's sixteenth-month old daughter, Maria, who allowed her mom to perform this task!!!).

We continue to be on the larger side of the Federation's associations. You can find the Federation site at <http://www.fedcan.ca>. Please consult it for details and documentation. CAS was one of the first associations to react to the class action lawsuit pending in Ontario, known as "Robertson vs ProQuest." Several members of the Federation were named as "third and fourth party defendants," including the Canadian Association of Slavists and our journal, the Canadian Slavonic Papers. Thanks to unanimous support of all the associations and the personal effort of the Federation's president, Nathalie Des Rosiers, this notorious case was dropped.

This year we can look forward to the usual turn-out for our conference in terms of numbers, range and richness of panels and individual papers, diversity of age, academic experiences, and geographical locations. Traditionally, CAS continues to attract not only

Canadian scholars who work abroad but colleagues from different parts of North America and Europe. Highly regarded academics — colleagues from abroad will take part in the CAS's conference this year once again.

We all know that the CAS annual conference is as good as its chief curator, the Program Chair. Following in footsteps of superb Program Chairs of the past, Dr. Alison Rowley, in her wonderful unassuming manner pulled this heavy train seemingly effortlessly. Evidently, there were heavy family obligations, plenty of work at Concordia (in addition to teaching and research she was coordinator of all Arts undergraduate programs), and two cases of pneumonia. Nevertheless, Alison is of typical CAS stock, and our tough but loving family is happy to have her and note her many accomplishments. In short, a standing ovation is due at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). This year this most important event for the membership of CAS is taking place on April 29 (4:00 to 5:30; MB 3-210), and all the executives hope to see you there. Every single voice is important at the AGM, and if you want to contribute to the CAS operations, the AGM is the place to start, to continue, and to get results. Please send your items for the agenda to Dr. Bohdan Nebesio, our Secretary-Treasurer. Please note: we will have a visitor at the AGM: our current President of the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences (CFHSS), Dr. Noreen Golfman.

Special thanks go to our Secretary-Treasurer Dr. Bohdan Nebesio. Anyone who has ever served in this capacity knows who the real leader of our fine association is. Without a doubt, this is the most responsible and time consuming job in the organization. Dr. Bohdan Nebesio carries out his duties in a thoughtful, proper, and accurate manner. His professionalism and decency are highly commendable (Thank you, Boss!!!).

Our journal, *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, and its keepers continue to deserve our high recognition and admiration. We will have an annual report by *CSP*'s distinguished editor, Dr. Oleh Ilnytskyj, at the AGM. *CSP*'s talented and irreplaceable assistant editor, PhD candidate Ms. Svitlana Kryz, in addition to many academic tasks (she is about to complete her PhD thesis), heavy duties with *CSP* and CAS, managed to achieve what many graduate student's representatives have tried to pull off before. Ms. Kryz created a comprehensive graduate students network (Thank you, Svitlana!!!) Indeed, let us celebrate the whole impressive team of *CSP*, which also includes book-review editors Drs. Heather Coleman, Gary Toops, and Mark Conliffe. The membership fully appreciates this excellent scholarly journal, its management, and contributors.

I am happy to announce the results of our 2010 essay prize competition. The committee, consisting of Drs. Elena Baraban, Natalia Pylypiuk, and Alison Rowley (the longest service in this capacity, thanks, Alison!!!), came to a unanimous decision. The CAS essay prize for the best Graduate essay is awarded to Mr. Ben McVicker, an MA student at the Centre for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies (CERES) at the University of Toronto (nominated by Prof. Ed Schatz) for his essay "The Creation and Transformation of a Cultural Icon: Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn in Post-Soviet Russia, 1994-2008." Congratulations to Ben, Ed, and CERES. The Undergraduate essay prize is not awarded this year. After hard deliberation, our committee with gratitude to all who submitted came up with unanimous opinion and the following statement: all the undergraduate essays were very good but none was superb. Well, there is always next year. Our heartfelt appreciation goes to the readers of many excellent essays, and for making this tough and just choice.

I would like also to express the deepest and sincere feelings of gratitude for the privilege to be your President-elect during May 2008-2010. I am very grateful to every member of CAS for their contributions, hard work, excellence, collegiality, and trust. I am stepping down at this AGM with pride for the membership of CAS. With membership and executives like you, financial accountability and transparency, our past and present services, visions of our forefathers/mothers, our constitution, journal, teaching/study, conferences, community work and scholarly publications, any president of CAS will stand tall.

Respectfully submitted,

With warmest wishes to all,

Zina Gimpelevich

CAS President 2008-2010