

ПЕРУНЬ

ПЕРУНЬ: The Newsletter of the USC Slavic Department

Issue № 2 ♦ May 2022

Greetings!

Thank you for your contributions to this issue of ПЕРУНЬ. In addition to the usual joys and responsibilities of the spring semester, this year we are coping with Russia's unprovoked war in Ukraine. The department's website features a statement on the war, which bears repeating here: We stand with the Ukrainians defending their country and nation. We stand also with the brave Russians who are protesting their government's inexcusable actions.

Many members of our community were active this spring in efforts to support humanitarian aid for, and to educate the USC community about, Ukraine. In early March **Andrzej Brylak** and **Tom Seifrid** participated in a roundtable organized by the USC Global Policy Institute aimed at contextualizing the war. They were also interviewed about the war on USC Trojan Vision's "Morning Brew" program. In April, the **Organization for Students of Slavic and East European Studies (OSSEES)** hosted a teach-in and fundraiser for Ukraine on campus. They raised over \$2,000 for Help US Help, an NGO that provides medical supplies to volunteer medical units in the areas affected by the conflict in Ukraine. **Evgeny Dengub** also spearheaded a fundraiser with a colleague from Pitt. They raised over \$2,000 by selling trilingual "No War" stickers, which were sold on roughly 15 campuses across the US to support humanitarian aid to Ukraine.



Front row (L to R): Erica, Joseph, and Nikita; Back row (L to R): Dmitrii, Sarah, Simon, and Caity at the OSSEES fundraiser on April 25.



In other news, **Nikita Allgire** received a 2022 ASEES Summer Dissertation Writing Grant. **Andrzej Brylak** organized and participated in an AATSEEL roundtable entitled “The Idiomatic and The Institutional. Polish Studies and the Modern Subjectivity” (chaired by our very own Tom Seifrid).

Erica Camisa Morale gave the paper “Novels like Films: Cinematographic Techniques in Nabokov’s Prose” at MLA 2022; and organized the stream on *Russian Poetry and Poetics* for AATSEEL 2022, about which she says: it was “a great experience—one that I would definitely suggest other people to do!” For AATSEEL she also organized the panel *The Lyric Pact* and presented her paper “Lyric (Im)pacts: Derzhavin and His First Readers.” Erica defended her dissertation on February 14 (Valentine’s Day) and graduated with her PhD on May 11. She was awarded a two-year appointment at USC as a Dornsife General Education Fellow and reports that she “cannot wait to start this new chapter!”

Natasha Dame attended a virtual conference on Radiant Maternity organized by Slavic and East European Maternal Studies and presented the paper “Motherhood in Tolstoy: The Unmaking of a Myth.” Natasha also received a one-year Dornsife Fellowship in General Education at USC.

Evgeny Dengub received an award from American Council of Teachers of Russian (ACTR) “in recognition of his outstanding service to the Russian Profession.” A book that he co-edited, *The Art of Teaching Russian*, received an honorable mention for the Kenneth W. Mildener Prize from the Modern Languages Association. Evgeny and his colleagues received a grant (\$198,640) from the National Security Agency to run a Russian language pedagogy institute in 2022-23. The institute will begin on Zoom later this fall and will continue in the face-to-face format on the Middlebury campus in the summer of 2023. All of our graduate students are eligible to participate! It’s free and each participant will receive a stipend.

Liza Dvortsova gave two conference presentations this spring. The first was at AATSEEL and her talk was entitled “A Complicated Illusion of Simplicity: The Contradiction between Form and Content in Vvedensky.” She gave the second talk, “Iconicity: Portraying Beginnings and Ends,” at the California Slavic Colloquium on April 9th.

Simon Garibyan presented his paper “The Poetics of Death in the Prison Letters of Sergei Parajanov” on a panel that was part of the *Carceral States in Slavic and East European Studies* stream at AATSEEL. He reports that he became a member of ASEES and his paper “The War, Masculinity, and Death in the Visual Art of Sergei Parajanov” was accepted for the ASEES conference in Chicago.

Sarah Matthews gave two papers this semester: “‘Мне было трудно / Вновь ощущать всё тело, руки, ноги...’ Embodiment in Form and Content in Vladislav Khodasevich’s Poetry” at AATSEEL in February and in April she presented “A Fruitful Pairing: Olga Sedakova & Eco-poetry” at UIUC’s conference “Shifting Grounds: Changing Models of Nature in the Former Soviet Sphere.”





(L to R) Sarah, Simon, and Liza enjoying some fresh, cold air while in Philadelphia for AATSEEL.



(L to R) Simon, Kate, Lena, Sarah, and Liza conversing after Kate’s AATSEEL paper.

Greta Matzner-Gore reports that she has started working on two articles on Goncharov and she reviewed her very first book manuscript for a press this spring.

For AATSEEL **Colleen McQuillen** co-organized the stream *Carceral States in Slavic and East European Studies*, organized and participated in a roundtable honoring Irina Reyfman, and chaired three panels. She was invited to deliver the Second Annual Kalbouss Lecture in Innovative Approaches to Slavic Cultures at Ohio State University. Her talk, given in April, was entitled “Mikhail Zenkevich’s ‘Voice of Matter’: Poetry and Paleontology in the Age of Russian Modernism.” Also in April she gave the paper “The Porous Borders of Donbas: Natural and National Histories” at the online conference *Shifting Grounds: Changing Models of Nature in the Soviet Sphere* organized by UIUC. Behind the scenes Colleen refereed a journal article and grant applications.

Lena Petrova became the department’s newest Master of Arts by passing her MA Exam in May. She participated in three conferences this spring. At AATSEEL she presented “Emile Zola’s ‘Comment on se marie’ as an intertext of Tolstoy’s *Kreutzer Sonata*.” For the California Slavic Colloquium she gave the talk “‘Among the czarinas of Pushkin’s heart was some Jewess’: About the influence of Imperial Russian Antisemitism on “*Gabrieliad*.” Lastly, in May she appeared at the Princeton University Graduate Conference “The ‘Byt’ of Literature: Literary Personalities, Scholarly Discourses and the Modes of Their Production” with her talk “Parodying Shklovskii: Sternian ‘byt’ in Veniamin Kaverin’s *Skandalist*.”

This spring **Kelsey Rubin-Detlev** began an eighteen-month research fellowship, funded by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, at the Moritz-Stern-Institut in Göttingen, Germany, a center for intellectual history, modern Jewish studies, and Enlightenment culture. Her refereed book chapter, “Epistolary Relationship and Intellectual Identity in Maria Antonia of Saxony’s



Correspondence with Frederick the Great, 1763-1779,” appeared in *Portraits and Poses: Female Intellectual Authority, Agency and Authorship in Early Modern Europe* (Leuven, 2022); the full volume is open access and can be downloaded from <https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/53924>. In March she gave an invited lecture entitled “Language and Logos in the Writings of A. N. Radishchev” for the Besterman Enlightenment Workshop at the University of Oxford, and in April she spoke about an eighteenth-century Ukrainian-born bishop and prolific author, Apollos Baibakov, at the British Association for Slavonic and East European Studies (BASEES) annual conference. In addition to these academic engagements, she did an outreach talk for British high school students studying Russian, discussing Catherine the Great’s public image largely with reference to the ongoing Hulu series, *The Great*. She also peer-reviewed a book manuscript and a book proposal.

Kate Tomashevskiaia presented her research at three conferences. Her paper for AATSEEL was entitled “Fyodor Sologub’s ‘The Poisonous Garden’: the transformation from a novella to a play in verse” and she presented it on the panel “Modernist Transformations,” which she organized. At the Wisconsin Slavic Conference in Madison she presented “Yurii Olesha’s *The Conspiracy of Feelings* and *A Strict Youth*: two stages of dramatization of the novel *Envy*.” At the Princeton University Graduate Conference she delivered her paper “‘I Love Your Eyes, My Dear...’: Tarkovsky, Bjork and the role of Tyutchev’s poem in the transfer of symbolic capital.”



The department looks forward to welcoming two new graduate students in August: Aleksandra Pchelintseva and Assel Uvaliyeva. We are also eager to welcome Dr. Ellina Sattarova to our faculty as an Assistant Professor in January 2023.

Перун, which may be translated as thunderbolt, is the name of the pagan Slavic thunder god. It is also the penname of Vadim Nevskii, who contributed illustrations to Russian satirical journals from the years 1905-1907. His monogram graces this newsletter’s heading, which was taken from the Russian Satirical Journal Collection housed in the University of Southern California Digital Library.

