

2002 NATIONAL CONVENTION.
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT
OF SLAVIC STUDIES

The American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies (AAASS) held its 34th Annual Convention of 21-24 November 2002 in Pittsburgh with about 1900 persons attending. The program listed altogether 358 panels sessions, luncheon lectures, business meetings, and roundtables. The majority of topics dealt with Russia, the Soviet Union, the post-Soviet states, and Ukraine, as usual, but those on the small states of Eastern Europe were plentiful. Eighty-two book dealers and organizations filled the exhibition hall, 13 more than in 2001 in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on Washington, D.C., and New York City. This time the mood was brighter and attendance more numerous.

The panels were well planned and punctual. Paper presenters were limited to 20-25 minutes to allow discussion. Speakers at the 47 "roundtables" were limited to 10 minutes each. The roundtable is an increasingly popular platform (there were 39 the year before) because no formal papers are required and discussion is often livelier. The AAASS seeks to have a mix of women and men on each panel. In the case of panels with Bohemian, Czech, and Slovak topics, they had 26 women speakers and 23 men, whereas in 2001 there were 20 women and 25 men. In the following listing of panel topics and participants, only those who presented papers are mentioned, not panel chairs or discussants.

On Day One, panels on topics relating to the focus of Bohemia included "State-Building and Memories of War, 1918-1938". Eliza J. Ablovatski (Columbia University, New York) spoke on "How 1919 Shaped the Memories of Munich and Budapest", and James Krapfl (University Cal., Berkeley) on "World War I in Czech Mythology, 1918-1939". The panel "Rural Economic Development in 19th-Century Central Europe" heard Catherine Albrecht (University Baltimore) on "Rural Banks and Economic Nationalism in Bohemia, 1880-1914". Paulina Bren (N.Y. University) spoke on "Ordinary Lives versus Dissident Lives in Post-1969 Czechoslovakia" at a panel titled "Rethinking Resistance". Slovak specialists formed a panel "Slovak Justice, Wisdom, and Feminist Writing". They heard Edita Bosák (Memorial

University of Newfoundland) with "Živena: The Beginnings of Early Feminist Organizations in Slovakia"; Patricia A. Krafcik (Evergreen State College), "Jánošík, the Slovak Robin Hood", and Gerald J. Sabo (John Carroll University), "The 1859 ,původní Bájky a Rozprávky pro Slovenskou Mládež' of Samuel Godra (1806-1873)". At the panel "The Demonic in Modern Slavic Literatures and Cultures", Lenka Pánková (Penn State University) discussed "Demonic Irony in Kundera's 'The Book of Laughter and Forgetting'".

Day Two had a session on "Parties and Politics Today in the Visegrad Four" with Robert K. Evanson (University Missouri) on "Parties, Elections, and Czech Foreign Policy" and Laszlo K. Urban (Catholic University of America) on "Parties and Politics in Hungary and Slovakia Today". A panel titled "Czechoslovakia in Transition" featured Melissa D. Feinberg (University North Carolina) on "Gender and Citizenship During the First Czechoslovak Republic", Owen K. Johnson (Indiana University), "Slovaks and Their Press, 1918-1938", and Daniel E. Miller (University West Florida), "Democratizing Czechoslovak Agriculture, 1918-1938". On the panel "State Authority in the Czech-German Borderlands", Teresa J. Balkenende (Washington University) dealt with "Public Health and Authoritative Knowledge in the Sudetenlands, 1930-1939"; Michael Campbell (University of Washington) with "The SdP in the 1935 Parliamentary Elections", and Caitlin E. Murdock (Stanford University), "State and Popular Redefinition of the Bohemian-Saxon Borderlands". A panel "The Collapse of Czechoslovakia" heard Kevin D. Krause (Wayne State University) on "Slovak and Czech Politics after Czechoslovakia"; James W. Peterson (Valdosta State University), "Czech and Slovak Foreign Policy Since 1993", and Lone Sarauw (University of Aarhus), "Czech and Slovak Stereotypes in A Public Memory Perspective".

A cluster of panels on Friday afternoon made choosing among them difficult. One was "Imaging Slavic Identity in Central Europe" with Patrice M. Dabrowski (Harvard University) on "Poles, Russians, and the 1910 Anniversary of the Battle of Grünwald"; Irena Gantar-Godina (Slovene Academy of Arts and Sciences), "The Slovenes between Myth and Reality: AustroSlavism, PanSlavism, and NeoSlavism", and Claire E. Nolte (Manhattan College), "Celebrating All-Slavic Identity at the 1912 All-Slav Slet in Prague". Another panel, "Literature und Nation in 19th-Century Bohemia" heard David L. Cooper (Columbia University), "The Invention of a Czech National Literary History"; Katherine David-Fox (University Maryland), "Nationalizing the Modern", and Alena Šimůnková (University Cal., Riverside), "Contesting Loyalties in Festivals and Politics". A fourth panel held at the same time was "In Allied London: The War of the Exiles, 1939-1945", featuring Bruce R. Berglund (University Kansas) with "Czechoslovak Exile Politics in England, 1940-1945".

The final bloc of panels on Friday afternoon had one on "Political Ritual and Territorial Marking in Late Habsburg Central Europe". Hugh L. Agnew spoke on "Franz Josef, Bohemia, and the Crown of St. Wenceslas" and Alice Freifeld (University Florida), "The House of Habsburg and Hungary in the Dualist Era". Another panel was titled "The Collapse of Czechoslovakia, Historical Perspectives", with Elisabeth Bakke (University of Oslo), "The Autonomy Discourses in

Parliamentary Debates During the First Czechoslovak Republic and After the Velvet Revolution"; Igor Lukes (Boston University), "Czechs and Slovaks: Strangers in One House", and Nadya Nedelsky (Macalaster College), "Czech and Slovak Dissidence in Post-Invasion Czechoslovakia".

Day Three began with meetings of the Slovak Studies Association (SSA) and the Czechoslovak History Conference (CHC). Unfortunately, both meetings were set for the same time due to a blunder by the leadership of the CHC, which rescheduled its meeting, originally set for Sunday, to the Saturday hour when the SSA held its meeting. Attendance therefore was stunted at both meetings. The SSA took up revision of its By-Laws and the terms of its Prize Award. The CHC reported it had raised over \$ 2000 for relief of flooded archives in Prague. Stanley B. Winters (NJIT) talked about the map series "Historický Atlas Měst České Republiky", and the Committee on the Stanley Z. Pech Prize announced that Katherine David-Fox was the winner with her essay "Prague-Vienna, Prague-Berlin: The Hidden Geography of Czech Modernism". In: *Slavic Review* 59/4 (Winter 2000) 735-760.

Saturday morning's panels included "Transforming the Past in Central European Cinema" with Herbert J. Eagle (University Michigan) on "Jan Hřebejk's Whimsical Realism" and Amarillis Lugo Fabritz (University Washington), "The Svěrák Legacy in Czech Film", also "Problems of Party-Building in Post Communist Eastern Europe" with Conor O'Dwyer (University Cal. Berkeley), "Patronage Parties and the Reconstruction of State Administration in Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia".

A panel titled "Generations and Generational Consciousness in East Central Europe, 1914-1945", had a paper from Thomas Ort (N.Y.U.), "A Terribly Unpleasant Generation: The Čapek Generation, 1914-1938". Another titled "Catholicism in Slovakia, 1939-1989" included David Doellinger (University Pittsburgh), "Slovak Catholics and the 1985 Pilgrimage to Velehrad"; James R. Felak (University Washington), "Catholics in Slovakia, 1945-1948", and James M. Ward (Stanford University), "Father Jozef Tiso and the Presidential Exemption". A fourth panel was "Gendered Realities in the Czech Republic". On it were Leah S. Anderson (University North Carolina) with "Regulating Women and the Family: Czech Policy-Making since 1989"; Rebecca J. Nash (University Virginia), "Kinship, Child Support, and the Ethnography of the Czech State", and Elaine S. Weiner (University Michigan), "No(woman's Land: The Post-Socialist Purgatory of Czech Female Factory Workers".

Saturday afternoon was equally rich in presentations. The panel "Maintenance of Language, Ethnicity, and Nationality in Immigration" with Lida Dutková-Copel (East Carolina University) on "Negotiating One's Repertoire of Ethno-Linguistic Resources in 'Czech Texas'". Another panel was "Czeching It Out' After 1989: Literary Outlooks", whose participants included Christopher W. Harwood (Columbia University), "National Myth and Ethnic Stereotypes in two Novels by Eda Kriseová"; Madeline Hron (University Michigan), "Re-Turning Emigrant Pain: Post-1989 Narratives of Return", and Michelle Woods (Trinity College, Ireland), "The Role of English in Two Contemporary Czech Films, 'Tmavomodrý svět' and 'Návrat ztraceného ráje'".

That evening, at the AAASS Reception, awards for "Distinguished Contributions to Slavic Studies" were given to Prof. Maurice Friedberg (University Illinois), a specialist on Polish and Russian literature; Dr. Patricia K. Grimsted (Harvard Ukrainian Research Center), a historian of East European archives and diplomacy, and Prof. Andrzej Korbonski (University Cal., Los Angeles), a political scientist and historian of international relations. Prof. Gale Stokes (Rice University), a Balkanist, was elected the incoming president of the AAASS. Prof. Carole Rogel (Ohio State University) was awarded the Slovenian Honorary Gold Medal of Freedom for her scholarship on Slovenia and Yugoslavia. It was presented by His Excellency Davorin Kracun, Ambassador of Slovenia to the United States.

The final day had two morning sessions with a few topics relevant here. At a panel on "Environmental Consciousness in the former Soviet Union and East Europe", Christina Manetti (University of Warsaw) spoke on "The Tatra Mountains and National Consciousness in Inter-War Poland and Czechoslovakia". The panel on "Central Europe A Decade After: Left-Center Modes of Political Adaptation" heard Milan J. Reban (University of North Texas), "An uneasy Czech 'Opposition Agreement': Social Democrats versus Civic Democratic Party".

A final panel titled "Looking East: Jewish, Ruthenian, and Russian Themes in Modern Czech Literature" had papers by Jonathan H. Bolton (Harvard University) on "Ivan Olbracht's Ruthenia"; Charles D. Sabatos (University Michigan), "Nine Gates to the East: The Solitary Odyssey of Jiří Langer", and Valeria Sobol (Columbia University) "Yes, We are Scythians: The Image of Russia in Post-War Czech Prose".

In conclusion, the Pittsburgh conference was a positive event for the Bohemian, Czech, and Slovak fields. The intermediate scholarly generation (ages 30-45) delivered two-thirds of the papers mentioned above. Women were a majority of panelists perhaps for the first time. The future lies with these two groups. They impressed with their enthusiasm and knowledge, if often on narrowly drawn themes. A healthy number of scholars from abroad shared the podiums despite competing conferences at about the same time in Prague and Bad Wiessee. One feature worth pondering is the chronological profile of the conference papers: Of the 49 listed, 21 were on the post-1945 era, 14 on 1914-1945, nine on 1848-1914, and one pre-1848. The titles of four others were too broad to ascertain their time periods. Also, Moravia seems not to have been much dealt with except in some papers on the borderlands of Bohemia and Czechoslovakia.

This concentration on the 20th century and particularly on almost contemporary history since 1945 parallels the chronological profile developed twelve years ago in a survey of American scholarly interest published in *Bohemia* (32 (1991) 104-118). It does not bode well for future American contributions to earlier Bohemian historiography and to a balanced approach toward East Central European history in general.