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NAABS 2005 Election Results

Congratulations to our new officers and thanks to all the NAABS members who voted! These are the people who will lead and represent NAABS until the next elections in 2009. Brief biographies of our new officers are provided below; more complete biographies, as well as the duties of NAABS officers, are available online at our website: www.belarusianstudies.org/.

President: Dr. Maria Paula Survilla, Dept. of Music, Wartburg College (Iowa) (Field: Ethnomusicology; Research interests: Belarusian traditional and urban music; music and national identity).

Vice President: Dr. David Marples, Dept. of History, University of Alberta (Field: History; Research interests: History of Belarus (20th century emphasis); the impact of Chernobyl; health and social-demographic issues; contemporary Belarusian politics).

Secretary-Treasurer: Dr. Curt Woolhiser, Dept. of Slavic Languages and Literatures, Harvard University (Field: Slavic Linguistics; Research interests: Belarusian and East Slavic historical linguistics, dialectology and sociolinguistics; language attitudes and language ideologies; language planning and policy).

Newsletter Editor: Kern Lunde, Tri-Star Engineering, Inc., Bedford, Indiana, and graduate student at Indiana University (Field: Slavic Linguistics; Research interests: Russian and Belarusian language and linguistics).

Executive Council:

Dr. Thomas Bird, Dept. of Slavic Languages, Queens College, CUNY (Field: Slavic Languages and Literature; Research interests: Nasha Niva; religion in Belarus; Belarusian Drama; Belarusian diaspora literature).

Dr. Zina Gimpelevich, Dept. of Slavic Languages, Waterloo University (Canada), and Vice-President of MAB and the President of BINiM, Canada (Field: Slavic Languages and Literatures; Research interests: Belarusian and Russian language and literature; the works of Vasil Bykau, Russian Silver Age; Belarusian and Russian avant-garde: visual art and music).

Dr. Vitaut Kipel, Director, Belarusian Institute of Arts and Sciences (Biełaruski instytut navuki i mastactva, BINiM), New York (Field: History, Cultural Studies; Research interests: Belarusian history; history and culture of the Belarusian diaspora).

Dr. Jan Zaprudnik, Member, Board of Directors, BINiM, New York (Field: History; Research interests: Belarusian history; Soviet and post-Soviet Belarusian society and politics).

Dr. Alicja Boruta-Sadkowski, Dept. of Modern Languages, University of Northern Iowa (Field: Slavic Linguistics; Research interests: Russian and Polish influence on the development of the Belarusian language).

Message from the President

The brevity of my tenure as president of NAABS sits in contrast to the concentrated energies that have marked the first months of 2006. The momentum includes one of the key components of the elaboration of cultural process, the unparalleled presence of Belarus in public discourse.

It is the content and delivery of discourse in our work that informs this, my initial presidential report. I begin by acknowledging the work of key individuals who have shaped this organization, and have offered virtual and concrete locations for our membership. Firstly, Curt Woolhiser, the first and immediate past-president of NAABS whose consistent leadership, scholarship, and connection to academic communities here and in Belarus have served to define the breadth and scope of this association. Thank you also to Alicja Boruta-Sadkowski who has skillfully managed the business of NAABS as secretary/treasurer. The members of our executive board are invaluable in maintaining a dialogue regarding our role in the broader academic community and in mainstream circles. I would particularly like to thank Alex Artsyukhovich, whose involvement in registering NAABS is described in this newsletter. Dr. Artsyukhovich also continues to provide a significant resource about Belarus for the public at large through BelarusGuide.com. One of the most powerful means of communicating the details of our work is the NAABS website (belarusianstudies.org) through which Peter Kasaty, has offered our membership an invaluable and visually compelling site that maintains and communicates our identity as an organization. In addition, Kern Lunde's contributions to our newsletter are evidenced by the quality of the document you have before you. The membership participates through daily gestures of exchange in ideas, resources, and morale. These are constant, impossible to enumerate, and are a testament to the role NAABS offers to those engaged in Belarus as subject.

The involvement in the workings of NAABS represents a valuable component in our discourse. We are also in the business of producing discourse as academic work, as publications, through our

participation in conferences, and through the teaching and mentoring of our students. The achievements of our members and the issues that they raise in their work are described in the following pages of this newsletter.

Having navigated many disciplinary environments where Belarusian studies reside, I have been privy to a unique evolution of interest in a cultural and political space that had long been disadvantaged by its geographic and perceptual position. My initiation to the academic conference, however, was sobering and offers a case in point. In my own discipline of ethnomusicology, Belarus was and remains an exotic location. Until recently, the history of my field resonated with discourse about Africa, Southeast Asia, and other non-European destinations. My first conference was not populated by ethnomusicologists but, rather, by those concerned with Slavic studies. Fifteen years ago in a small classroom on the campus of the University of Victoria, I gave my first public paper on Belarus. We were not the headliners, we outnumbered the audience as I recall. This moment was seminal for me and for my colleagues as we began the epic strategy of maintaining a Belarusian presence in our academic circles. Fifteen years later the climate has changed on many levels. While conditions in Belarus may challenge our intellectual approaches, conditions in the academy provide a level of support, interest, and intellectual collaboration that contrasts deeply with my indoctrination into the public sphere of the academy.

Currently, the interest in Belarus is evident in the increase of media traffic (especially during and after the presidential election), in the number of conferences dedicated to research on Belarus, and the scope of theoretical approaches that emerge through our work. The symposium, "The Arts, National Identity and Politics in Belarus" held at Harvard in October 2005, also served to illustrate that we offer a wealth of perspectives, some with natural overlap and some controversial and extremely polarized. Our individual positions reflect the wealth of discourse and emphasize the individual intellectual histories of our specific disciplines. One of the potential benefits of an engaged community such as NAABS, is to bring

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Message from the President (continued)

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into focus the relationships that exist in the questions that we ask, the strategies we use, and the theories we produce. Whether or not we choose to interact with each other at deeper disciplinary levels, I propose that we should be critically aware of the role of our scholarship and the intellectual state of ideas in Belarusian studies as a whole.

My own discipline, with its familial relationship to anthropology, demands a critical evaluation about how data is gathered “in the field.” Credibility is tied to an acknowledgement of subjectivity and an attempt to consider the differing intellectual and social energies in the community being studied. This aspect of the research process is the foundation of representation and how we make conscious and unconscious choices about the framing of our Belarusian subjects. I am often left asking how scholars gather their data, and who they assume are representative of a cultural moment (assuming there is only one trend). Although admittedly my own work is about the elaborations of identity in post sovereignty Belarus, I wonder if part of the answer lies in the locations for Belarusian expression. Although this is a monumental subject in the history of any discipline and/or topic, I can offer two brief examples here.

One of these is the disregard for the immigration as a site for intellectual and political development, and as a legitimate location for the cultivation of contemporary Belarusian identities. Although the post-WWII immigration is graced with academics that have lobbied for, and contributed to the presence of Belarus in diverse intellectual and public circles, their pro-Belarusian assertions of a national history, language, and consciousness have often resulted in a lack of validity by “outsider” experts producing political and historical discourse. Part of this lack of centrality may be a response to the systematic devaluing of the Belarusian immigration by both Soviet and Lukashenka administrations. If the immigration is not credible, then how can informants in Belarus consider discourse by members of the Belarusian Diaspora in their own commentaries about contemporary

players in Belarusian life? By extension then, scholars that are non-insiders would also assume that discourse originating amongst the Belarusian intelligentsia abroad would somehow be inauthentic simply on the basis of location, rather than engagement. If cultural representation ideally demands an acknowledgement of all voices, then what it means to be Belarusian from a global perspective needs to enter the rhetoric as well.

My second example considers politics between and within the academic disciplines and reflects my experiences in the study of Belarusian-language rock. Most recently, the subject of rock, as well as its content, generated several questions and comments from conference audiences suggesting some of the ways in which a subject can frame Belarusian attitudes about genre and about identity. These represent three different speakers all engaged in Belarus as subject, either by virtue of their identities and/or their academic work (these are paraphrased from my notes and therefore I omit quotations here):

1. Why do Belarusian rock musicians think they have the right to express anything about politics or to advertise their support of a Belarusian identity? (academic)
2. We never listen to Belarusian rock, and none of my friends do. It is ineffectual. I have not experienced what you describe in your paper. (student)
3. All of my friends listen to Belarusian rock. In fact, even my Russian-speaking friends sing all the Belarusian words. It is their connection to the language. (student)

These statements illustrate how the negotiation of culture is complex not just for the variety of positions, but because attitudes are also in flux according to taste, class, and identity. A scholar who does not consider the performance of identity in a popular music might not have a sense of the negotiation of identities through this music. The added advantage of an awareness of the popular lies in the deconstruction of ideas about culture in relation to other topics of inquiry. The last decade aside, the traditional positioning of popular culture has assumed that it is less consequential in the reinventions of modern societies partly because the

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popular was seen to function only at the level of cultural reflection rather than as part of the active construction of a cultural and political space. The popular is, however, recognized as the chosen location for a commentary of the present and a necessary component in the academic recipes from diverse disciplines.

Although I have indulged in theoretical issues at the forefront of my discipline, I believe that thinking across disciplines is one of the compelling outcomes of becoming engaged in each other's discourse. NAABS then, can provide a location for the business of being a Belarusist, but it can also serve as a think tank, where we step back to consider the impact of our assumptions, our discoveries, and our rhetoric.

To borrow from the image of the ritual space, we gather at the same table, by virtue of our identities, our intellectual curiosities, our professional work, and our personal convictions. It is in the nature of this gathering that we disagree, that we strive to come to consensus, that we do our work well, and that we remain aware of how we contribute to a broader understanding of a Belarusian present. My hope is that in the coming year we deepen our connections and our dialogues.

Maria Paula Survilla, Ph.D.
President, NAABS

An Open Letter on the Eve of the Presidential Election in Belarus

March 18, 2006

On the eve of the third Belarusian election since Alyaksandr Lukashenka came to power, those of us who define our intellectual lives with Belarus as muse and as subject feel compelled to express our anger and deep dismay at the conditions our counterparts in Belarus have had to endure under the increasingly oppressive strategies of the

Lukashenka administration.

It is difficult to imagine how any of us might function when the basic tenets of our work, critical thought, free speech, and the production of discourse would be replaced by physical threats, the insistence upon coerced propaganda, and the risk of dismissal. This is indeed the experience of our peers in Belarus:

* Students are being expelled from universities for any participation in socially-responsible action. Student Tatsiana Khoma who attended an international student conference in Paris and who became a member of the European Student Council (ESIB) was summarily dismissed from her program upon her return.

* Professors are bullied and threatened by administrators. A. Kazulin - the former rector of Belarusian State University has been severely beaten by AMOH (special police forces) and jailed when he tried to register for the All-Belarusian Congress at the Railway Worker's Palace.

* The European Humanitarian University has been closed and has been forced to attempt to continue to serve its student population outside the borders of Belarus.

* The Belarusian Lycée, Jacob Kolas, has been closed and continues to teach students underground.

* Students who complete their higher education are forced to work for several years in the Chernobyl contaminated zone.

The level of critique in the world media and in the rhetoric of political administrations is unprecedented. Universities in Europe have stated their intent to admit Belarusian students who are the victims of Lukashenka's conditions. The world is finally watching.

This letter acknowledges the courage and convictions of Belarusians and aims to express our support for their right to choose their leadership under the principles of free democratic elections.

Maria Paula Survilla
President, NAABS

David Marples
Zina Gimpelevich
Alex Artsiukhovic

Alicja Boruta-Sadkowski

Curt Woolhiser
Kern Lunnde
Peter Kasaty

Belarus: Endgame

by David Marples

Five days after the presidential election of March 19, protesters continued a vigil on October Square. The authorities arrested more than 250 people between March 20 and 22, and administered beatings to many others, and in the early hours of March 24, hundreds of riot police stormed the camp site. How significant was the protest and what conclusions can be drawn from the authorities' actions?

There were some similarities between the "Denim" or "Jeans" protest in central Minsk and those in other republics, most notably Ukraine in late 2004. There is a strong youth element, music, numerous tents (there were declared to be over 30), and a defiant refusal to leave the square despite adverse weather conditions, a lack of sanitary facilities, and other handicaps.

However, there were also some critical differences. Though the numbers are unprecedented for Belarus under Lukashenka, they do not match those in Kyiv, even allowing for the smaller population in the northern republic. Between 10,000 and 15,000 gathered on March 19. Subsequently, the numbers dwindled to 2,000-5,000, and fell away during the nights to a few hundred or less.

The position of the Belarusian opposition is significantly weaker than that in Ukraine. There was no claim to have won the election. Rather, the unified democratic candidate, Alexander Milinkevich, made two statements: first, that the election results were fabricated because Lukashenka did not win 82.4% of the vote. Milinkevich has stated that "various sources" indicate his total was 31% and that of Lukashenka 42%. It is difficult to discern how such figures were ascertained, as all the major polling agencies found it too problematic to conduct polls in the oppressive atmosphere of the election. Second, Milinkevich maintains that there should be a rerun of the election without Lukashenka's participation. This demand complements that of his detained ally, Anatol Lyabedzka, who appealed to the Constitutional Court on these same grounds, i.e. that the president should not be allowed to run for

a third term, and that the 2004 referendum was neither democratic nor legal.

In addition, Milinkevich hopes to use the March 25 commemoration of the short-lived independent state of 1918 for a final mass demonstration. In this regard he elected, together with his supporters, to remain on the square, to the chagrin of the other opposition candidate, Alexander Kazulin, who claims that Milinkevich reneged on an agreement to end the protests. Milinkevich in turn stated that he was not leading the demonstration but was rather a participant and that the protesters had opted to stay. It was a risky position in that he is unequivocally the opposition leader, around which those who support regime change in Belarus have united.

Until Friday morning, the government alternated between restraint and brutality. Troublesome opponents were detained and jailed for short periods. The editor of *Nasha Niva* newspaper, for example, Andrey Dynko, received a 10-day sentence for the usual transgression: "petty hooliganism." Dozens of activists have suffered under the same law, including the leader of the Popular Front, Vintsuk Vyachorka. The deputy leader of Milinkevich's staff, Viktor Korniyenka, was beaten up outside his apartment building by two assailants and is reportedly in serious condition in hospital. The viciousness and the all-out assault on the demonstrators have been carefully concealed from the public eye.

Lidziya Yarmoshyna, chair of the Central Election Commission, has declared that the election was "absolutely brilliant." Allegedly, Lukashenka received 5,501,249 out of 6,630,653 votes cast (83%). The inauguration ceremony marking Lukashenka's third term is to take place on March 31. That date, one assumes, necessitated the clearance of the square, separated only by a small park from the president's residence.

Though the opposition is much weaker than its Orange counterpart in Ukraine, there are signs nevertheless that the Lukashenka regime faced a dilemma. Its opponents were denounced in the most derisory fashion, but thousands of citizens of the capital have witnessed a sustained protest, the likes of which has never been seen hitherto in Lukashenka's Minsk. Russia has accepted the

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Belarus: Endgame

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victory of Lukashenka, but has remained notably restrained over the past few days.

The president finally lost patience. Several hundred protestors were reportedly arrested and many were savagely beaten in custody. Yet more "commemorations" could be forthcoming, such as April 2, a date when the opposition usually denounces the Russia-Belarus Union, and the Chernobyl anniversary (the 20th), traditionally the biggest protest march, on April 26. Lukashenka would prefer that international attention be refocused elsewhere and seems perplexed by the sustained international interest. He could not have ordered a new election under the terms demanded by Milinkevich.

Overall, Lukashenka has been tested. He has attained a pyrrhic victory, but faces new uncertainties and doubts. The opposition is not yet powerful enough to remove him, but its threat has grown. The contrived turnout and vote count, as well as the over-reaction to the opposition campaigns, were in retrospect a blunder by the authorities that served to revive a long dormant civic society in Belarus. The end game -- a massive assault on the small group that chose to stay for a further night on the square -- was predictable. Additional retributions may follow. The Jeans Revolution might have failed, but it marks the first sustained attempt by the opposition to resist the Lukashenka dictatorship.

SOURCE: Eurasian Daily Monitor, March 24.

NAABS News

NAABS Incorporation

The North American Association for Belarusian Studies was recently incorporated in California as NAABS, Inc. Incorporation articles were filed with the California Secretary of State. All incorporation fees were covered through a donation by an NAABS member.

The following are the Articles of Incorporation of

NAABS filed in accordance with NAABS charter.

Article I

The name of this corporation is NAABS.

Article II

This corporation is a non-profit Public Benefit Corporation and is not organized for the private gain of any person. It is organized under the Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law for public and charitable purposes. The specific purpose of this corporation is to promote research, study, and teaching in all aspects of Belarusian studies.

Article III

The name in the State of California of this corporation's initial agent for service of process is: My Corporation Business Services, Inc.

Article IV

A. This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for Public and charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c) (3), Internal Revenue Code.

B. No substantial part of the activities of this corporation shall consist of carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate or intervene in any political campaign (including the publishing or distribution of statements) on behalf of any candidate for public office.

Article V

The property of this corporation is irrevocably dedicated to Public and charitable purposes and no part of the net income or assets of this corporation shall ever inure to the benefit of any director, officer or member thereof or to the benefit of any private person. Upon dissolution or winding up of the corporation, its assets remaining after payment, or provision for payment, of all debts and liabilities of this corporation shall be distributed to a nonprofit fund, foundation or corporation which is organized and operated exclusively for Public and charitable purposes and which has established its tax exempt status under section 501(c)(3), Internal Revenue Code.

NAABS is preparing for future filing for 501(c)(3) charity status. Upon this filing, donations
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NAABS Incorporation (continued)

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to NAABS will be 100% tax deductible. NAABS also filed IRS Form SS4 and was assigned Employee Identification Number (EIN) 20-4343905 on February 21, 2006.

The California corporation status requires filing an Initial Report within 90 days of incorporation (May 2006 for NAABS) and annual reports each year (February of each year). No NAABS stocks have been distributed. NAABS will determine the stock award and stock holder policy at the next meeting of NAABS board.

Once NAABS acquires 501(c)(3) status, NAABS will be able to perform various fund raising activities to strengthen its financial standing, thereby furthering NAABS goals of promoting research, study, and teaching in all aspects of Belarusian studies. NAABS is looking for a volunteer with some legal skills to assist with 501(c)(3) filing for NAABS. If interested, please contact Curt Woolhiser, cwoolhis@fas.harvard.edu.

Congratulations to NAABS for reaching this new level of professionalism and becoming a fully registered tax-paying non-profit US corporation - NAABS, Inc.

NAABS Business Meeting, October 2005

The annual NAABS business meeting was held on October 15, 2005 at the Barker Center for the Humanities at Harvard University from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Members of the NAABS executive in attendance were Paula Survilla (President, presiding), Curt Woolhiser (Secretary-Treasurer), Thomas Bird (Executive Council), and Zina Gimpelevich (Executive Council). Also present were Peter Kasaty (NAABS Web Master), Alex Artsyukhovich, and Grigory Ioffe.

The following items were discussed:

1. Results of the 2005 elections (see officer profiles in this issue of the newsletter).
2. Plans for a volume based on the Harvard symposium "The Arts, National Identity and Cultural Politics in Belarus" (see additional information about the symposium in this issue). Curt Woolhiser asked for volunteers to co-edit the volume; Thomas Bird indicated that he would

be willing to serve in this capacity.

3. NAABS newsletter. Curt Woolhiser requested contributions for the January-February issue of Naviny, including member news and announcements.

4. Re-registration of NAABS as a non-profit corporation. Curt Woolhiser noted the need to re-register the Association in another state, since the non-profit status of NAABS in Texas had lapsed due to the absence of an authorized representative. Alex Artsyukhovich volunteered to register NAABS as a non-profit corporation in California (see notice in this issue concerning the granting of non-profit status to the Association). The need to apply for federal non-profit status was also discussed.

5. Secretary-Treasurer's report. Curt Woolhiser reported that as of October 15, 2005, the Association had a balance of \$470.14 in its account at the John Deere Community Credit Union (Waterloo, Iowa). Expenditures since the last business meeting in December of 2004 included \$184.50 for printing and mailing costs for the July-August issue of the newsletter, \$200.00 for the newsletter editor's fee, and a conference grant in the amount of \$200.00 for AV equipment rental and supplies for the Harvard symposium on Belarus.

In conclusion, Curt Woolhiser reminded those in attendance to pay their 2006 membership dues and asked for additional donations for the Association's travel fund and publication prize and grant funds.

6. Zora Kipel Memorial Prizes for books and articles in Belarusian studies. Curt Woolhiser noted that the book and article competitions had been announced in Naviny, through the distribution list of the International Association of Belarusianists, on the SEELANGS discussion list and in the AATSEEL newsletter. He noted that as of October 15, three entries had been received; and reminded those present that the deadline for submission was January 1, 2006.

7. Belarusian Studies Resource Center. Curt Woolhiser solicited additional contributions for the BSRC, noting that all submissions would be screened by NAABS members.

8. Panel/roundtable proposals for the AAASS 2006 annual convention in Washington, DC. Paula Survilla solicited ideas for Belarus-related panels

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NAABS Business Meeting, October 2005 (continued)

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and roundtables at the 2006 AAASS convention.

Curt Woolhiser suggested that a panel on the media in Belarus would be important and timely. Others in attendance pointed out that the AAASS meeting in Washington would provide an excellent opportunity to draw the attention of U.S. policymakers to developments in Belarus.

9. Honorarium for Valzhyna Mort. Curt Woolhiser noted that thus far, donations received were only sufficient to cover the travel costs for the Belarusian poet Valzhyna Mort, who gave a poetry reading on the final day of the Harvard symposium. A number of those in attendance contributed additional funds to help cover Ms. Mort's honorarium.

10. Support for "Narodnaja volja." Paula Survilla proposed that NAABS contribute funds to the independent Belarusian newspaper "Narodnaja volja." It was decided to investigate further the ways in which NAABS could help support free media in Belarus.

Symposium on "The Arts, National Identity and Politics in Belarus", Harvard University, October 14-15, 2005

An international symposium on "The Arts, National Identity and Cultural Politics in Belarus" was held at Harvard on October 14-15, 2005 in conjunction with the first North American performances by the Viciebsk-based Jakub Kolas Academic Theatre (see information below on the theatre's performances).

The symposium, organized by Curt Woolhiser (Harvard), was sponsored by Harvard's Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, The Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, The Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, the Orsa-Romano Cultural and Educational Foundation, and NAABS.

The symposium focused on the role of literature and the arts in the construction of competing visions of Belarusian national and cultural identity, and the way which the Lukashenka regime has sought to shape post-Soviet Belarusian society through its cultural and educational policies.

The symposium was divided into two sessions; the first, "Literature and Music in Contemporary Belarus", was held on October 14th and featured papers by Arnold McMillin (University of London) -- "Aspects of Belarusian Literature since 1994," Zina Gimpelevich (University of Waterloo, Ontario) -- "Vasil Bykau: My Biography is in My Books", and Paula Survilla (Wartburg College, Iowa) -- "Back in the BSSR, or And the Beat Goes On: Adaptations in Sound and Vision in the Belarusian Rock Movement, 1989-2005." The discussant for the first session was Thomas Bird (CUNY-Queens College). Prof. George Grabowicz (Harvard University) welcomed the participants and audience on behalf of the Slavic Department and Ukrainian Research Institute.

The second session, "The Politics of Culture and Cultural Policy in Belarus" on Saturday, October 15 included papers by Grigory Ioffe (Radford University, Virginia) -- "Cultural Wars, Soul-Searching and Belarusian Identity", Iryna Vidanova (Johns Hopkins University) -- "The State vs. the Nation: Lukashenka and Educational Policy", and Elena Gapova (European Humanities University, Minsk/Vilnius) -- "The Cultural as the Political in Belarusian Intellectual Journals". The discussants for the second session were Vital Zajka (YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, New York) and Timothy Snyder (Yale University).

Both sessions of the symposium were well attended and stimulated lively discussion among both participants and audience members.

Plans are currently underway for a volume related to the themes of the symposium, including articles based on the presentations as well as other specially-commissioned pieces.

Other events related to the symposium included an informal meeting with members of the Jakub Kolas Theatre at the Barker Center for the Humanities at Harvard on October 13, during which members of the theatre answered questions regarding the theatre's repertoire and cultural policy in contemporary Belarus. After the meeting, a screening and discussion of the critically acclaimed film "Occupation: Mysterium" by Belarusian director A. Kudzinenka was held at the Fong Auditorium in Boylston Hall at Harvard University.

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During the week of the symposium and the performances by the Jakub Kolas Theatre, a small exhibition of photographs from Belarus by Paula Survilla and etchings by Belarusian artist Alena Liapko was held at the Arsenal Center in Watertown.

On the final day of the symposium Valzhyna Mort, one of Belarus's most promising young poets, gave a reading of her work in Belarusian and English translation at the Barker Center for the Humanities.

The poetry reading was followed by the NAABS annual business meeting (see page 7).

Performances by the Jakub Kolas Academic Theatre (Viciebsk, Belarus) in Massachusetts and New York

The Jakub Kolas Academic Theatre is the second-largest theatre company in Belarus and the country's premiere touring company. With funding from the Trust for Mutual Understanding (New York), Harvard University, and the Orsa-Romano Cultural and Educational Foundation, on its first North American tour the Jakub Kolas Theatre performed two of their most popular pieces, Uladzimir Drazdou's "Chagall... Chagall..." and Sakrat Janovich's "The Arrest", at the Arsenal Center for the Arts in Watertown, Massachusetts, October 13-15, 2005. "Chagall..." the theatre's most internationally acclaimed production, portrays the early life of the Viciebsk-born artist Marc Chagall as he remembers it in his dying moments. "The Arrest" is an exploration of Belarusian identity and the modern Belarusian experience based on episodes from the life of the Belarusian scholar, educator and political activist Branislau Tarashkevich (imprisoned by the Poles in the 1920s as a "Soviet agent," and later executed by the Soviets as a "Polish spy"). In both Drazdou's "Chagall" and Janovich's "The Arrest," the viewer is made acutely aware of Belarus's historical role as a contested cultural and political borderland -- a role that was to have particularly tragic consequences over the course of the 20th century. Both plays were performed in the original Belarusian with projected English supertitles.

After the performances in Watertown, the members of the theatre traveled to New York, where they performed on October 17 at the UN Headquarters and on October 19 at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

The Jakub Kolas Theatre's first North American tour was organized by Mr. James Mallinson of Chicago, a graduate of the MFA program in Theatre Management at Florida State University, who had arranged an internship with the theatre in Viciebsk in 2003-2004.

NAABS Member News

We encourage all NAABS members to share information on their recent publications, conference papers, current research, teaching, grants and awards, new appointments and other news that may be of interest to our readers. See what our members have been up to on the following pages.

Dr. Maria Paula Survilla (Wartburg College) presented "And the Beat Goes On: Adaptations in Sound and Vision in the Belarusian Rock Movement 1989-2005" during the Symposium "The Arts, National Identity and Politics in Belarus" held at Harvard University in October of 2005. In May she presented "Rhetoric and the Forecasting of a National Climate: The Diagnosis of Belarusian Identity in Contemporary Discourse," at the Canadian Association of Slavists, Learned Societies Conference in London, Canada. Most recently she contributed two articles, "Belarus" and "Miensk" to the Encyclopedia of Popular Music (Oxford, 2005).

David R. Marples (University of Alberta) gave a paper entitled "Contemporary Belarus and Ukraine: Contrasts and Comparisons" on the panel "Nationalism, Identity and Democratic Change in Ukraine and Belarus, 1991-2004" at the AAASS Annual Convention in Salt Lake City, November 3-6, 2005. Prof. Marples has been awarded a Killam Annual Professorship for 2005-2006 at the University of Alberta; these awards are provided by the Killam Trust for research, teaching and work in the community. Prof. Marples also received an Alberta 2005 Centennial Medal, a provincial award, for his public service and academic work.

Zina Gimpelevich (University of Waterloo) recently published *Vasil Bykaŭ: His Life and Works*, McGill-Queen's Press: Montreal, 2005, p. 265 (see page 12). The press received an SSHRC grant.

Additionally, the following articles were published: "Two Hundred Years of Imperial Arrogance" (Dzviescie hadou imperskaj fanaberyji in Belarusian) published in *ARCHE* (6) 2005, pp. 311-315); "Alexander Solzhenitsyn's Belarusian Nation: From "How should we organize Russia" to *200 Years Together*". Accepted in the MAB Congress proceedings, in print, 2005; and "Ryhor Baradulin's Poetry in Music" Accepted by *Zapisy*, 2004, in print, 2006. She also received a 2005-2008 SSHRC Research grant for the project: *Krivich's Treasure Chest*.

She has submitted the following works for publication or are in progress: Belarusian writers of Jewish origin. 20th Century, a monograph in English and Belarusian. Expected to be submitted for publication by summer, 2006; Valentin Krivich's album (to be submitted for publication in late 2007-early 2008); and "Dimensional Spaces in Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *Dvesti let vmeste*" (Two hundred years together.) *Submitted to Canadian Slavonic Papers*.

She presented a lecture: "Vasil Bykau: My Biography is in My Books" at the symposium at Harvard University: The Arts, Cultural Identity and Cultural Politics in Belarus, October 14-15, 2005.

N. Anthony Brown (Brigham Young University) delivered a paper entitled "Signage and Language of Documentation in Belarus: Theory and Practice" on the panel "Language Use and Communities in Newly Independent States" at the 2005 Annual Meeting of the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages (Washington, DC, December 27-30).

Curt Woolhiser (Harvard University) read a paper entitled "Communities of Practice and Linguistic Divergence: Belarosophone Students as Agents of Linguistic Change" on the panel "Language Use and Communities in Newly Independent States" at the 2005 Annual Meeting of the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages (Washington, DC, December 27-30).

Eric Jarvis (King's University College, Ontario) gave a paper entitled "Vague Rumors from White Russia: British and American Dispatches During World War I and the Historical Invisibility of the Belarusian National Republic of 1918" at the annual meeting of the European History section of the Southern Historical Association, Atlanta, Georgia, November 2-5, 2005.

Kern Lunde (Indiana University) began his graduate studies at Indiana University in the Fall Semester of 2005. He is currently pursuing his M.A. in Slavic Linguistics and plans to continue toward his Ph.D. in Slavic Linguistics. He will continue to work at Tri-Star Engineering, Inc. in order to support his scholarly habits.

Grigory Ioffe (Radford University) read a paper entitled "Why is Belarus Such a Tough Case?" on the panel "Nationalism, Identity and Democratic Change in Ukraine and Belarus, 1991-2004" at the AAASS Annual Convention in Salt Lake City, November 3-6, 2005.

Your Name (Your Organization) could have been here! Just send a letter or email to Kern Lunde, Naviny Newsletter Editor (mailing address on back page; email kdlunde@indiana.edu) with a short paragraph (longer if you have really been busy!) describing your activities related to Belarus or Belarusian studies. This is a great opportunity to share your accomplishments with the rest of the NAABS membership.

In the Russian Archives: Zina Gimpelevich Discovers a Cultural Treasure

While wandering through Moscow's Russian State Archive of Literature and Arts (RGALI), UW Russian and Slavic Studies professor Zina Gimpelevich made a discovery that determined the course of her research for years to come. Dr. Gimpelevich was both surprised and elated to come across an intact collection of largely unknown early 20th-century literary works, musical scores, and artist sketches. A specialist in this "Silver Age" of Russian literature, Gimpelevich knew she needed to bring this long-hidden treasure to the world.

(continued on page 11)

(continued from page 10)

Gimpelevich describes the discovery: “It was a few years ago. I was looking for a particular name—Alexis Skaldin, a writer who had died in 1943 in the Russian Gulag—and by accident I found one of his poems in an album put together by Valentin Krivich. Krivich was the son of the well known Russian symbolist writer Innokentii Annenskii. As I looked through the album, I very quickly realized: *I wanted it!* I immediately started negotiations with the director of the archives and after a lengthy process (such negotiations can get complicated in Russia), I was finally granted access.”

The Krivich *Album* is part of what was once a well-established Russian tradition of the “guest book” or “note book.” A collective memoir of sorts, the genre of the artist “album” was typically associated with gatherings of writers and cultural figures who would contribute short pieces for inclusion in the host’s archive-in-progress. Krivich’s album is significant in that it is one of the few put together by a man (typically, the salon hosts were women) and it is one of the last in the genre, which began to wane with rise of publishing in Russia during the late 19th century. “We are very fortunate to have this collection,” notes Gimpelevich. “Given the upheaval of the intervening years—the Russian civil war, the Bolshevik Revolution, two world wars, and decades of cultural repression under the Soviets—it is remarkable that it has survived at all.”

Krivich’s *Album*, which spans the years 1907 to 1932, includes contributions by 144 writers and artists of the time. Although many of them are well known to Russian scholars, quite a few are not, making this a particularly exciting discovery.

Gimpelevich is also interested in learning more about Krivich himself. Born Valentin Innokent’evich Annenskii, Valentin Krivich was a lawyer by profession but also a poet, prose writer, memoirist and editor of his father’s poetry. Krivich has often been dismissed as a minor writer or treated as a mere footnote to his more famous father’s legacy. “My archival work will correct that perception,” says Gimpelevich, who believes that Krivich has been underestimated. “His own writing, which was very popular at the time, deserves more attention, and his compilation work,

more appreciation. I think of this collection as Krivich’s ‘treasure chest’.”

Gimpelevich’s archival project involves three main stages. The first stage, which is nearly complete, involves creating an electronic transcription in modern Russian of the mostly handwritten manuscripts. The second stage, which is currently underway, calls for translation of the material into English and research into the backgrounds of individual contributors.

Gimpelevich has made a point of bringing UW graduate students into the project by assigning them poems from the collection to translate. The final stage of this SSHRC-funded project will be to publish a bilingual Russian-English edition of Krivich’s *Album*, complete with annotations and a critical introduction.

“I’m very excited about this project” smiles Gimpelevich. “This album, miraculously preserved, is a symbol of and tribute to the era and its most renowned representatives.”

Zina Gimpelevich is an associate professor in University of Waterloo’s Department of Germanic and Slavic Languages. Her recent book Vasil Bykau: His Life and Works, a biography of the Belarusian writer and dissident, was published by McGill-Queens University Press in 2005 (see article on page 12).

Thanks to Our Donors

NAABS would like to express its gratitude to the following individuals for their generous contributions to support NAABS and its activities:

Alex Artsyukhovich
 Thomas Bird
 Wayles Brown
 Zina Gimpelevich
 Peter Kasaty
 Liudmila Liakh
 Alla Orsa-Romano
 John Stanley (patron level membership)
 Maria Paula Survilla
 Jan Zaprudnik

Announcements and Calls for Papers

Inaugural Meeting of the Slavic Linguistics Society

Scholars are invited to submit an abstract to the first meeting of the Slavic Linguistics Society on the campus of Indiana University, September 8-10, 2006.

Keynote speakers for this event will be: Östen Dahl (Stockholm University), Ronald Feldstein (Indiana University), and Barbara Partee (University of Massachusetts at Amherst).

The goal is to create a conference that will support the Slavic Linguistics field by being as inclusive as possible. Papers dealing with any aspect of Slavic linguistics and within any framework are appropriate, as well as those that represent cross-disciplinary approaches (sociolinguistics, computational linguistics, language acquisition, etc.). The only restriction is that all papers should address an issue pertaining to Slavic linguistics. All talks will be for 20 minutes, plus 10 minutes for discussion.

This is an historic event, at which future directions for the Slavic Linguistics Society will be resolved. Everyone is encouraged to participate and to share this announcement with as many colleagues and students as possible.

DEADLINE AND GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACTS: Please send your abstract to sls2006@unc.edu by April 15, 2006. Your abstract should:

- * Be sent as an attachment
- * Be sent in both MicroSoft Word (.doc) and pdf formats
- * Contain no more than 500 words
- * Contain only Unicode fonts, if at all possible

As appropriate, identify the framework, describe the methodology, explain how data will be analyzed – in other words, please be as concrete and specific as possible in describing your paper.

All abstracts will be refereed and participants should be notified by mid-May 2006.

CONFERENCE WEBPAGE:
<http://www.unc.edu/~lajanda/sls2006.html>

Publications in Belarusian Studies

Vasil Bykau: His Life and Works

by Zina J. Gimpelevich

A passionate literary biography of the Belarusian anti-war and dissident writer who is universally acknowledged as the conscience of his nation.

The Soviet Union banned many of Vasil Bykau's novels, which often focus on the agonizing moral dilemmas faced by young officers during the horrors of war. Considered the best modern Belarusian writer and the last Eastern European literary dissident, Bykau (1924-2003) is referred to as the "conscience of a nation" for leading an intellectual crusade against Lukasenka's totalitarian regime. In exile from Belarus for several years, he was given refuge by Vaclav Havel in Czechoslovakia. He has been nominated for the Nobel Prize by Havel, Czeslaw Milosz, and PEN.

In the first English biography of his life and work, Zina Gimpelevich describes the conditions under which Bykau lived in the former USSR and provides a literary and political history of Belarus from 1918-2003. Based on interviews that she conducted with Bykau, she illuminates his life of as an artist and a defender of human rights. She also provides literary criticism of Bykau's work, including *The Ordeal* and *Pack of Wolves*, and discusses the psychological realism of his early novels, and his interest in existentialism.

Review quotes:

"I hold Vasil Bykau in high regard as an opponent to totalitarian regimes in Belarus. During our encounter he never lost hope for positive changes in his country's future. I feel a certain correlation between our destinies and I regret that he was not lucky enough to experience changes, unlike those of us in Czechoslovakia, Poland, or Hungary." Vaclav Havel

"This timely biography is essential reading." Arnold McMillin, professor of Russian Literature, University College London

Ordering information may be found at the McGill-Queens University Press website:
<http://www.mqup.mcgill.ca/book.php?bookid=1881>

NAABS Membership Application

The North American Association for Belarusian Studies**Year: 2006**

Complete this form, enclose your check or international money order made out to "NAABS" in US funds (dues amounts are listed below under "Annual Dues"), and mail it to:

**Curt Woolhiser
Harvard University
Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures
Barker Center 327
12 Quincy St.
Cambridge, MA 02138-3804**

Use an additional sheet of paper, if needed, to complete all of the information.

Questions? Contact (by e-mail): webmaster@belarusianstudies.org

Name:	Occupation:
Title: Mrs. Miss Ms. Mr. Dr. Other _____	E-mail address:
Telephone (with country code; area code)	FAX (with country code; area code)
Are you a member of AAASS? Yes No (circle one)	
Annual Dues (2006 calendar year) Membership category (select one): Educator (\$30) Student (\$15) Belarus/FSU (\$5) Supporting member (\$30) Patron (\$100) Other/Donation \$ _____	Mailing Address:
Employer/Address:	1. Your Areas of Interest/Research:

<p>2. Your publications on Belarusian topics:</p>	<p>3. Your other Belarus-related activities:</p>
<p>4. Suggestions for NAABS-sponsored activities, offers to help, etc.</p>	<p>5. May we include your contact information on the NAABS Web site and in publications?</p> <p>Select One: Yes No</p> <p>If "yes", which ones? (Circle word to indicate the information that we may include.)</p> <p>Name Title Position Employer</p> <p>Mailing Address Phone Number Fax Number</p> <p>Interests about Belarusian Studies</p> <p>E-Mail Address Other_____</p>
<p>6. Other comments, questions, etc.</p>	



Calendar of Events

2007

2006

May 12-14. Formal Approaches to Slavic Linguistics 15 (FASL-15), University of Toronto. Visit <http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/fasl15/> for more information.

May 27-29. Canadian Association of Slavists Annual General Meeting, York University. Visit <http://www.ualberta.ca/%7Ecsp/cas/conference.html> for more information.

September 8-10. Inaugural meeting of the Slavic Linguistics Society, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana. Visit <http://www.unc.edu/~lajanda/sls2006.html> for more information.

September 21-24. Second International 'Perspectives on Slavicists' Conference (PoS II), Regensburger Institut für Slavistik, Regensburg, Germany. For more information, visit http://www.uniregensburg.de/Fakultaeten/phil_Fak_IV/Slavistik/pos/.

September 26. European Day of Languages. Visit <http://www.ecml.at/edl/default.asp?t=celebration> for more information.

November 16-19. 38th National Convention of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, Washington, DC. Visit <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~aaass/> for more information.

December 1-3. Formal Descriptions of the Slavic Languages 6.5. Nova Gorica Polytechnic, Slovenia. Visit <http://www.p-ng.si/~fmarusic/fdsl/> for more information.

December 27-30. Annual Convention of the Modern Language Association and the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages, Philadelphia. Visit <http://www.mla.org/convention> and <http://aatseel.org/program/> respectively for more information.

April 5-7. Midwest Slavic Conference, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio. Details at <http://slaviccenter.osu.edu/>.

Other News

IBO Seeks Examiner in Belarusian Literature Course

The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) is currently seeking an experienced individual to take on the role of examiner responsible for their Belarusian A1 literature course.

The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) is a recognized leader in the field of international education, encouraging students to be active learners, well-rounded individuals and engaged world citizens.

Founded in 1968, IBO currently works with 1,605 schools in 119 countries to develop and offer three challenging programs to more than 200,000 students, age 3 to 19 years. The A1 program is a literature course for students, age 16 to 18. It is offered at both higher and standard level. You may be interested in visiting our website at www.ibo.org for some background information on our organization and programs.

The duties of the post of examiner responsible include the setting and marking of examinations and may involve occasional (paid) travel to the IBO curriculum and assessment center in Cardiff, UK. Please note that this post does not involve relocation to an IBO office; the duties of this post are normally carried out alongside other professional and academic commitments.

Professionals of the following background are invited to apply:

- * Native speakers of Belarusian
- * Degree in Belarusian literature
- * Teaching experience
- * Examining experience (desirable, not essential)

If you think you would be interested in the taking on this position, please contact Rebecca Coleman by e-mail (rebecca.coleman@ibo.org) so that more detailed information, plus an application form, can be sent to you.

NAVINY Editorial Policies

NAVINY is published twice yearly, in March-April and September-October. Members are encouraged to contribute materials relevant to the field of Belarusian studies. Non-scholarly materials may be published at the discretion of the newsletter editor and NAABS executive. Deadlines for submission are February 15 for the Spring issue and August 15 for the Autumn issue. Items to be included should be sent by e-mail attachment to the Naviny editor, Kern Lunde, kdlunde@indiana.edu.

Please contact the editor for more detailed information on formatting and fonts.

Languages of publication are English and Belarusian (provision may also be made for contributions in Russian, Polish and Ukrainian). Belarusian names and terms in English-language texts should be rendered in Belarusian *łacinka* or using the Library of Congress transliteration.

NAABS, Inc.
EIN 20-4343905

www.belarusianstudies.org

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NAABS Membership Information

Membership in the North American Association for Belarusian Studies is open to all individuals and institutions in North America and abroad who share the goals of the Association and are engaged in research or study concerning any aspect of Belarusian studies. Annual membership dues are \$30 for educators, \$15 for students. Dues for academic and non-academic members from Belarus and the FSU are \$5. Dues for institutional members are \$50.

In addition, two types of non-academic membership in NAABS are available: supporting, \$30, and patron, \$100 (patrons will be listed in each issue of NAVINY).

Upon completion of a membership application and dues payment, individuals are entitled:

- To vote in NAABS elections
- To serve as NAABS officers
- To receive NAABS publications
- To serve as NAABS delegates at the International Congress of Belarusianists and at other international conferences
- To receive NAABS grants to

help defray the costs of presenting papers on Belarusian topics at professional gatherings

Membership dues, as well as donations to NAABS, shall be used for the following purposes:

- To cover printing and mailing costs for the NAABS newsletter
- To cover the fees required for the NAABS Web site and any related Internet activities (e.g., domain name registration, Web server fee, listserv, etc.)
- To help fund scholarly publications sponsored by NAABS
- To provide funds for travel grants
- To help cover the costs of visits to North America by Belarusian scholars, writers, cultural and political figures
- To contribute to a fund for a book prize in Belarusian studies
- To contribute to a scholarship fund for students in Belarusian studies

Complete and mail in the membership application form (pages 9-10) with appropriate payment in US dollars. The membership application form is also available online at www.belarusianstudies.org.

NAABS Mission Statement

The North American Association for Belarusian Studies (NAABS) is a non-profit scholarly organization which seeks to promote research, study, and teaching in all aspects of Belarusian studies, including the fields of history, language and linguistics, literature and the arts, cultural studies, sociology, anthropology and ethnography, political science, economics, and international relations.

To achieve these goals, and to foster the exchange of information among scholars engaged in various aspects of Belarusian studies, the Association will publish a biannual newsletter, sponsor or co-sponsor panels and roundtables at regional, national, and international conferences in the U.S. and Canada, organize conferences and symposia, and support the publication of research by North American Belarusianists.