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## **junOST – 1<sup>st</sup> Swiss Conference for Students of Slavic Studies (University of Basel, April 26–28 2012)**

The first international conference for students of Slavic Studies in Switzerland «junOST» took place from April 26–28 in Basel. The conference was organized by six young students and scholars in Slavic Studies enrolled at the University of Basel. The idea behind the conference was to provide an opportunity for interested scholars to present their research work in front of an international audience. For young academics, publishing in international journals, being invited to conferences and building a network in academia is not a matter of course. However, in the last few years, a number of conferences for young scholars have been organized at several German-speaking universities (*m\*OST* in Salzburg, *Junge Slavistik im Dialog* in Kiel or the *junges forum slavistische literaturwissenschaft*). These conferences have provided a great deal of inspiration for «junOST», because they all share similar aims.

«junOST» was hosted by the Department of Eastern European Studies at the University of Basel. The University of Basel is the oldest university in Switzerland (founded in 1460) with the Chair of Slavic Studies being the oldest of its kind in the country.

The participants were to give their presentation in one of six languages (German, French, Czech, Russian, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian, and Polish), providing written handouts in the language of the report as well as in English. It was the intention of the organizing committee that there was no official language for the conference. The aim was to have a truly multilingual conference: since all participants were students of Slavic studies, most of them shared at least one language in which they were able to communicate. «Find a way to express yourself» – this was the motto of «junOST». And it turned out to work perfectly. It goes without saying that misunderstandings occurred, but on the whole, everybody was able to get in contact with everybody. This concept had a twofold benefit: First, the single reports proved to be more substantial, since the speakers were allowed to express themselves in their native language, or in the language they felt comfortable in. Second, the audience had the chance to listen to presentations in foreign Slavic languages, thus benefiting from this supplementary language training.

A total number of 49 scholars from sixteen countries (Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Switzerland, and Ukraine) attended the conference. There was no topic prescribed and the presentations covered all fields of cultural studies (literature, linguistics, film, as well as interdisciplinary work). The reports were arranged into fifteen thematically coherent panels, thus providing scholars working on similar topics to exchange their knowledge.

The panel «Politics and languages» comprised four linguistic presentations dealing with political discourse. Domagoj Kostanjevac (Osijek) opened the session with his talk «Politička korektnost i govor mržnje u hrvatskom političkom diskursu», analyzing various types of «hate speech» in the media of the countries of former Yugoslavia during the 1990s. In her presentation «Analýza novoročnících projevů prezidentů Václava Havla a Václava Klause», Yvona Esterková (Ostrava) presented the findings of her analysis of the New Year's speeches of two presidents of the Czech Republic. Tanja Tanasković (Kragujevac) provided the audience with a lexical analysis of a novel by Radovan Beli Marković in her talk «Архаизирана лексика у делима савремених српских писаца (на примеру Лајковачке пруге Радована Белог Марковића)». Adam Kalita (Prague) closed the panel with his presentation entitled «Беларусь в плену исторических и культурных стереотипов соседей».

In the panels «Female figures» and «Narration and gender», three presentations were dedicated to gender-specific approaches to literature. Elena Točilina (Minsk), in her presentation «Тип «деловой женщины» в русской и белорусской драматургии 1970-х – первой половины 1980-х гг. (на материале пьес А. Галина и Е. Поповой)», analyzed the function of business women in contemporary Belarusian Drama. Marina Mijoč (Rijeka) expanded the subject by focusing on the female characters in Croatian Renaissance literature in her talk «Figura žene u hrvatskoj renesansnoj književnosti». Željko Predojević (Zagreb), «O ljubavnom pismu u suvremenoj hrvatskoj književnosti kroz vizuru poetike ljubavnoga romana i popularne kulture», concentrated his presentation on the topic of love in contemporary Croatian literature.

In the panel «Postmodernity», three presentations were given on different aspects of postmodern literature. Olga Kotova (Saint Petersburg) provided the audience with a comparative analysis of two Russian and Polish postmodern novels in her talk «Человек эпохи социализма в литературе России и Польши: «Москва- Петушки» Вен. Ерофеева и «Pod mocnym aniołem» Е. Пильха». Fanny Meyer (Lausanne), «La démystification de l'histoire à travers la figure de Staline: trois illustrations du roman historique contemporain», and Carlotta Jaquinta (Lausanne), «La pluralité de mondes chez Viktor Pelevine,

une vision phénoménologique? *Le Prince du Gosplan, La vie des insectes, Le livre sacré du loup-garou: trois façons de mettre en scène la projection de soi dans le monde*», both concentrated on the contemporary Russian postmodern novel, which resulted in an interesting discussion on the two different presentations.

Another linguistic panel was dedicated to «Youth culture». Stefan Segi (Prague) focused on the poetics of rhymes in Czech hip-hop in his talk «Peneřina, těžká dřina: Poetika hlavního proudu českého hip-hopového textu» and Eugeniya Čuto (Zadar), «Неэксплицитированный скриптор-нарушитель». Характеристика автора студенческих граффити», presented the results of her study on student graffiti in Russian schools.

On Friday morning, Stefan Schmidt (Bochum) opened the panel «Spatial perceptions, special concepts» with his presentation «Der Raum als Bild im Text. Zur Verschränkung spatialen und visuellen Erkennens in literarischen Texten des russischen Symbolismus», focusing on spatial imagery in Russian symbolist texts. Natalia Palich (Kraków), «Perdus dans l'espace – topographie du sujet dans l'œuvre de prosateurs tchèques à l'émigration», presented the results of her research on Czech literature in emigration. Juliana Matasova (Kiev), «Лабиринт как «безгрунтовье» («неприкаянность») в романах В. Домонтовича: архетипический анализ», provided the audience with a topographical analysis of the novels by Ukrainian writer V. Domontovič. Patrycja Spytek (Warsaw) closed the session with her talk «Literatura rosyjska w *Dzienniku pisanym nocą* Gustawa Herlinga-Grudzińskiego».

The parallel session was dedicated to language of the «New media». Julie Tichitchkina (Clermont Ferrand), «Agressivité verbale dans les médias», presented the results of her study on aggressive language in Russian media. Małgorzata Cekiera (Katowice) gave a presentation entitled «Serbska tradycja a internet. Sposoby reinterpretacji bitwy na Kosowym Polu w komunikacji internetowej», focusing on the ways of reinterpreting the Battle of Kosovo in Serbian internet communication. Alla Krasnokutskaya (Dortmund), «Interaktive Einheiten in der deutsch- und russischsprachigen Netzkommunikation», and Margarita Chazanova (Moscow), «Украинский язык в Интернете: проблемы функционирования и языковой нормы», both provided the audience with a presentation on the language used in Internet communication.

The panel «Narratology, comparative literature» comprised four presentations with a narratological focus. Tat'jana Murav'eva (Minsk), «Новые формы в современной белорусской поэзии: версеты, вершаказы, зномы, квантемы, пунктиры (на примере творчества Алеся Рязанова)», gave a talk on new forms in contemporary Belarusian poetry. Svetlana Pachomova (Saint Petersburg), on the contrary, focused on contemporary Russian prose in her talk entitled «Повествовательные стратегии в современной русской прозе (П. Крусанов, А. Королев, В. Шаров)». Vadim Chochrjakov (Saint Petersburg)

provided the audience with an interdisciplinary approach to avant-garde literature and architecture in his talk «Андрей Платонов и советский архитектурно-художественный авангард: проблемы стилевой эволюции». Agata Anna Jawoszek (Kraków) closed the session with her presentation «Boszniacy. Literackie narracje tożsamościowe», focusing on Bosnian identity in narration.

The parallel session «Language contact, language acquisition» consisted of four linguistic presentations. Jana Macurová (Prague), «Наш чешский (Письменная речь носителей русского, украинского и польского языков в проекте «Электронная база данных ошибок в чешском языке носителей славянских языков»)», presented the results of a study analyzing mistakes of speakers with a Slavic mother tongue in the Czech republic. Andrej Woltschanskiy (Salzburg) focused on language acquisition of Russian-speaking children in German-speaking countries in his presentation «Probleme des russischen Erstspracherwerbs in deutschsprachiger Umgebung». Tat'jana Grigoreva (Ufa) gave a presentation entitled «Образное и символическое в межъязыковом когнитивном пространстве констант культуры (на материале русского, болгарского и английского языков)». Anna Walkowiak (Kraków) closed the session with an interdisciplinary analysis of the meaning of the colour red and its linguistic traces in the Slavic world in her talk «Językowe ślady wykorzystania czerwonych barwników do tkanin przez dawnych Słowian».

On Saturday, three panels ran in parallel. Anna-Maria Meyer (Bamberg) opened the panel «Translatology & intraslavic communication» with her presentation «Slavische Plansprachen auf dem Weg ins 21. Jahrhundert», focusing on constructed Slavic languages. Anna Agarova (Olomouc), «Нина Шульгина и Екатерина Бобракова-Тимошкина: две стратегии перевода чешской прозы на русский язык», and Martyna Ecler (Opole), «Превођење језичких маркера народног и етничког идентитета јунака у књижевном делу», presented their work in translational studies. Silvia Ivanidesová (Bratislava) closed the session with her presentation «Bilingvizam i njegovo mjesto u teoriji i procesu prevodenja».

In the panel «The Fantastic», Elvira Mezit (Mostar) gave a talk entitled «Fantastika kao heretička fikcija». Ana Arambašić (Mainz), «Kriminalroman und Phantastik im erzählerischen Werk von Pavao Pavličić», presented her analysis of fantastical aspects in the work of Pavao Pavličić. Katia Vandendorre (Brussels), «Le conte dans l'œuvre de Stanisław Lem», provided the audience with a presentation on the fairy tales of Stanisław Lem. Natalia Chuvleva (Brno) closed the session with a talk on the figure of the robot in Czech-Russian context in her talk «Образ робота в контексте русско-чешского диалога культур: Карел Чапек, Алексей Толстой, Семен Кирсанов».

The panel «Film» comprised four presentations dedicated to film studies. Anna Vol'skaja (Saint Petersburg), «Драматургия Льва Лунца и кино 1920-х годов (к проблеме синтеза искусств)», provided the audience with a talk on the work of Lev Lunc. Tomasz Rawski (Warsaw) focused on Yugoslavian partisan film in his presentation «Socijalistička revolucija – politički mit u jugoslavenskom partizanskom filmu». Natalija Karaseva (Minsk), «Художественные особенности звука в фильмах белорусских режиссеров-документалистов Виктора Асюка и Галины Адамович», gave a talk on sound in Belarusian documentary films. Lidija Rezoničnik (Ljubljana) closed the session with her presentation «Polski modernizm literacki a film». Lucie Radková (Olomouc) opened the panel «Vernacular language, your language, substandard» with her presentation «Mluva odsouzených v psychosociálních souvislostech». Peter Langenthal (Zagreb), «Pseudoanglizmi u jeziku mladih Zagrepčana», presented his analysis of the youth language in the city of Zagreb.

The panel «Play» was dedicated to different aspects of play and games in literary works. Marek Dobrý (Prague), «Jak se šachy zrcadlí v literárních dílech», and Maria Lebedeva (Tartu), ««Нет шаха королю»: сцена шахматной партии как скрытый текст в романе М. А. Булгакова Мастер и Маргарита», gave talks on the interpretation of chess games in literary works. Olga Krutowski (Basel), ««Господа бросимте карты, будемте считать». К портрету банкрота в русской литературе 40ых – 60-ых. Гоголь – Достоевский», presented her analysis of card games in Russian literature.

The last panel of the conference was entitled «Borders & periphery». Corinne Geering (Bern) gave a presentation on the Russian north with the title «Geschichte an der Peripherie – Der Archipel Solovki zwischen Zeitlosigkeit in Pavel Lungins Ostrov und historischer Transsubstantiation im UNESCO- Welterbe». Jan Nemček (Ostrava), «Prostor Sudet a česko-polského pomezí v současné české poezii», analyzed the theme of the Czech-Polish borderlands in contemporary Czech poetry. Jiří Šimon (Ostrava) closed the panel with his presentation «Polské náhrobní nápisy na hřbitovech v české části těšínska».

The participants of «junOST» showed that Slavic studies have no shortage of talented young academics. Indeed, the conference proved to be a forum for highly qualified researchers dealing with important research topics in their respective areas. It is to be wished that many of them will get the chance to carry on with their research and to contribute to the development of Slavic studies in their home countries.

The organizing committee is proud to have hosted the conference and is looking forward to a possible sequel. In addition, it is hoped that this conference will serve as an example for other young scholars, who might be inspired to organize a similar gathering at their home universities.