

## Foreword

The title of the present volume, *And Meaning for a Life Entire*, was inspired by the concluding line of a poem by Bulgarian author Blaga Dimitrova, a close friend of Charles Moser and his wife, Anastasia. The poem had been rendered into English some years ago by Charles Moser himself and has been reprinted in this *Festschrift*. But, most importantly, the poem's title "At St. Cyril's Grave" signifies the values that have been of utmost importance for Charles Moser's entire life as scholar and *homo politicus*: His lifelong interest in matters Slavic, especially Russian and Bulgarian literature and culture, his activism in educational and public policy, and the gesture of remembrance as a central aspect of literature per se and its legitimacy for Western society.

Yet, the title line with its almost programmatic richness and its personal and intellectual associations also unites the manifold topics presented in this collection of essays contributed by scholars from around the world: the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Russia, Norway, France, and Austria. The majority of these essays are concerned with themes in the domains of literary study Charles Moser himself pursued: Russian literature from the beginnings to modernity, with strong emphasis on the 19th century. But they also cover other aspects - political, cultural, pedagogical, and linguistic - that marked the life of our honored colleague.

Charles Arthur Moser was born on 6 January 1935 in Knoxville, Tennessee, to the family of Arthur Hurst Moser, Professor of Classics at the University of Tennessee, and his wife Sara Ridlehoover Moser. After an education in Knoxville public schools, Charles Moser received his B.A. (summa cum laude) from Yale University in 1956, where he majored in Slavic Languages. In 1958, he earned his M.A. in Slavic Languages at Columbia University, where he also was awarded his Ph.D. four years later. The topic of Charles Moser's dissertation "Antinihilism in the Russian Novel of the 1860s" (published as a book in 1964 by Mouton, The Hague) has remained one of his principle interests throughout his career.

From 1960-1967, Charles Moser taught at Yale, whereupon he accepted an offer from the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at The George Washington University. An ardent teacher and productive scholar, Charles Moser remained there for the next twenty-five years. He served as Chairman of the department from 1969 to 1974 and again from 1980 to 1989. He offered a wide variety of courses on subjects ranging from Introduction to Russian Literature of the 19th century and Russian Poetry in the original, to Dostoevskii, the Russian short story, and Bulgarian language. His more widely known scholarly efforts in the field of Russian literary history were the books *Pisemsky: A Provincial Realist* (Harvard 1969), *Aesthetics as Nightmare* (Princeton, 1989), *The Cambridge History of Russian Literature* (Cambridge, 1989). From 1975 to 1990 Charles Moser was General Editor of the Russian section of the Twayne's World Authors Series, for which he penned a monograph on Denis Fonvizin (1979) and edited fifteen other volumes. Charles Moser is arguably the foremost authority on Bulgarian Literature in the United States; his book *A History of Bulgarian Literature* (Mouton, 1972) is regarded a superb source for any student of the subject. Charles Moser authored more than twenty-five scholarly articles on a wide variety of topics, from the authenticity of *The Song of Prince Igor's Campaign* to Mayakovsky's experiences in America.

Since 1958-59, when he studied at Leningrad State University as a member of the first graduate exchange between the United States and the USSR, he established and maintained close ties with Russian scholars. In later years, he helped facilitate visits by Russian scholars and writers to the United States.

This introductory portrait of Charles Moser would be incomplete without mentioning one of the more unconventional aspects of his persona, namely, his active interest in American public policy. The following example may illustrate to what extent this aspect is organically integrated into Charles Moser's life: In 1979, he wrote the political biography of Dr. Georgi M. Dimitrov, whom the Communist regime in Bulgaria had forced to emigrate to the United States; Dimitrov was also the father of Moser's wife, Anastasia, which allowed Charles Moser to extensively use the private archive of his father-in-law.

The personal, ethical element of scholarship - scholarly work as a public and as a personal duty - is typical of Charles Moser. A man of strong conservative convictions from early on, he never hesitated to voice his news even when it was disadvantageous, whether as a graduate student at Yale or a scholar in present-day academe. Since Charles Moser's scholarly career evolved at a time of profound cultural shifts in Western society - with indubitable ramifications for American academe - the coherence between his struggle for conservative principles in higher education and in society at large was logical. Apart from these societal factors, it was the location of The George Washington University in the nation's capital which provided a most stimulating environment for Charles Moser's political partisanship.

In 1970, he founded the organization University Professors for Academic Order, worked as its Executive Director and edited its monthly, *Universitas* for which he also authored numerous articles. Further, he founded or cofounded several other organizations, such as the Committee for a Free Afghanistan, Freedom League, which supported anti-communist insurgents throughout the world, and he engaged himself in other organizations - The Heritage Foundation, The Free Congress Foundation, The National Associations of Scholars, to name but a few. In 1986 and 1987 President Ronald Reagan nominated Charles Moser for membership on the National Council for the Humanities, but the United States Senate Committee responsible for NEH rejected the nomination. Finally, in 1992, after Anastasia Moser was elected General Secretary of the Bulgarian Agrarian Union and the Mosers moved to Sofia, Charles Moser organized the Free Initiative Foundation which finances and publishes studies on problems of Bulgaria's transition to democracy. To many of the mentioned organizations, Charles indefatigably lent his editorial skills as editor and author.

Considering the minority status of conservatives in present-day academe it is hardly surprising that Charles Moser's political activities were not to everybody's liking. yet, a great number of scholars who do not necessarily share Charles Moser's political views nonetheless have remained loyal colleagues and friends. The main reason for this loyalty seems to be Charles' own ability to clearly divide these two spheres - his deep interest in Russian and Bulgarian literature, and his passion for politics. After all, even when his articles and books dealt with explicitly political subjects, such as Russia's discourses on nihilism in the 1860s, it was next to impossible to tell that they were written by an ardent conservative thinker. Consequently, adhering to a 19th-

century tradition of academic ethics, Charles Moser has always avoided ideological paradigms in his own scholarship and criticized political bias in other's'.

The present *Festschrift* was almost four years in the making. The articles have been arranged in a roughly thematic and chronological order: those dealing with Russian literature were placed at the beginning, followed by studies on language pedagogy and linguistics. For the sake of some relative coherence, I have applied the Library of Congress Transliteration System II throughout, adjusting the original texts when necessary. Also, in cases where no bibliography was provided by the author, it was added by me.

It is my pleasant duty to thank all those who helped me overcome the numerous technical and editorial problems: James R. Millar, director of the Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies, provided me generously with the needed research assistants. Richard Robin resolved many of the computer problems. Special thanks are due to Cathy M. Zeljak of Gelman Library who compiled the bibliography of Charles Moser's writings and proofread the manuscript. I am sincerely grateful to my assistants David Junius, Julijana Hastings, John Loncle, Christopher Johnson, and Jon Rodeback; the latter's expertise in copyediting used in the last stage of this project deserves special mention. The Free Congress Foundation generously permitted use of a portrait of Charles Moser, scholar and publisher, whose lively interest, patience and encouragement made its completion a reality.

May I finish by saying that the decision to begin and end this volume with translations of poetry is in accordance with Charles Moser's own perception of literature's role in an aggressively unpoetic age.

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*Peter Rollberg*