



THE PRINCESS DASHKOVA RUSSIAN CENTRE OCTOBER 2014 NEWSLETTER



September Events Review

After the summer break, the Dashkova Centre is back with a new series of events. We hope that we will provide an exciting and thought provoking programme in 2014-15.

The Russian Word in Edinburgh

On the 18th of September, as part of The Russian Word in Edinburgh events, The Princess Dashkova Russian Centre was pleased to welcome a writer and academic Maria Rybakova, who presented her latest novels 'Gnedich' (2011) and 'First Draft of a Human Being' (2014).

Maria Rybakova is a granddaughter of an acclaimed Russian writer Anatoly Rybakov. She was born in Moscow, completed her studies in Germany, and is now engaged at San Diego State University (USA) as professor of Classics and Humanities. An author of several novels and a novel-in-verse, Maria is a recipient of multiple awards for prose and poetry, whilst her novels have been translated into German, Spanish and French.

Both 'Gnedich' and 'First Draft of a Human Being' are based on biographies of poets: Nikolai Gnedich (1784-1833), an

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Thursday, 16th October
Denis Akhupkin, 'Ambiguity as a rhetorical device in literary and political discourse'

Thursday, 30th October
Robert Saunders, 'Laughable Nations: Parodying the Post-Soviet Republics'

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Maria Rybakova

18th century Russian poet and translator best known for translation of the Iliad; and Nika Turbina (1974-2002), a Soviet Russian-speaking poet from the Ukraine, who became famous for her profound and emotional verses which she started composing at an early age. At the presentation, Maria impressed her audience with a tour-de-force recital of Song 1 of her novel-in-verse 'Gnedich' in English translation, as well as demonstrated portraits of her protagonists.

Rybakova kindly agreed to give the Dashkova Centre an interview, in which she confessed her love of writing by hand as opposed to typing on the computer. She believes that a hand-written text is easier to edit, whilst computer-typed texts may look too neat and mislead you into thinking that your draft is quite finalized. Thus, Maria always carries a note-pad. The interview will be shortly available at the Dashkova website.

October 2014

On the 1st October the Princess Dashkova Centre was delighted to host the Alexei Kudrin, the newly-appointed Honorary Professor in the School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures (LLC) at the University. Professor Kudrin delivered a public lecture by 'New realities and challenges for Emerging markets after (and in) crisis: the case of Russia'.

Prof. Alexei Kudrin is a prominent political figure in Russia. He is a former Russian Minister of Finance (2000-2011), former Deputy Prime Minister (2000-2004, 2007-2011), Dean of the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Sciences of the St. Petersburg State University. In his lecture, Prof. Kudrin covered the situation of global economic imbalance and identified problems and challenges Russia as well as other emerging market economies are facing. Prof. Kudrin was welcomed by a large enthusiastic audience of all ages keen on posing



Alexei Kudrin, Stephen Hillier (right) and interpreter James Rann (left)



Prof. Alexei Kudrin and the Edinburgh University Students

insightful questions. On his Twitter account @Aleksei_Kudrin, he shared his photos with his eager audience, and those of the imposing Georgian building of the Old College. He also noted that Edinburgh University is among top 20 universities in the world.

The appointment of Mr Kudrin as Honorary Professor at the University of Edinburgh celebrates long-standing links between Edinburgh and St Petersburg academia, which go back to 1770s when Princess Ekaterina Dashkova was linked to the University of Edinburgh and Scottish Enlightenment.

Dashkova Fellows

The Dashkova Fellows Scheme is continuing this year. In August 2014 we were hosting **Prof. Jinghua Lin** from China. Prof. Lin is Dean of the Faculty of Comparative Literature at the Capital University of Shanghai and a Distinguished Professor in the School of Advanced International and Area Studies in East China University in Shanghai.

In October we are expecting **Dr Denis Akhapkin** who will be a Calvert-Smolny Fellow in the Dashkova Centre this semester. Dr Akhapkin is Associate Professor at the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies at the Saint-Petersburg State University and a Head of the Centre for Writing and Critical Thinking.

Postgraduate and Staff News

We are pleased to announce that **Mikhail Vodopyanov** has received a Principal's Career Development Postgraduate Scholarship. He has joined the Dashkova team in September as Public Engagement Coordinator.

We also warmly welcome **Violetta Galitskaya**, a Visiting PhD student from The University of Tomsk, onto our team at the Dashkova Centre. Miss Galitskaya will be with us for 3 months.

Forthcoming events in October

Dashkova open seminar

Prof. Denis Akhapiin (Smolny Faculty, St-Petersburg University), 'Ambiguity as a rhetorical device in literary and political discourse'

Date: Thursday, 16 October, 5:10

Venue: The Princess Dashkova Russian Centre

Dashkova open seminar

Prof. Robert Saunders (Farmingdale State College, New York), 'Laughable Nations: Parodying the Post-Soviet Republics'

Date: Thursday, 30th October, 5:10pm

Venue: The Dashkova Russian Centre

Robert A. Saunders is a Professor in the Department of History and Political Science at Farmingdale State College, where he teaches courses on world religions, international affairs, and global history. He is also the Chair of the Science, Technology and Society (STS) program, as well as the Director of the Politics Minor and the minor in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (MEIS).

His geographic areas of focus include Russia and Central Asia, Europe, and the Muslim world. His research explores the impact of mass media on national identity, geopolitics, and international relations.



Prof. Robert Saunders



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