THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CENTER

In the course of the past year, the President and the Government of the United States have made clear their intention to end the “cold war” and to develop closer cultural and trade relations with the Soviet and East-European countries, despite the many obvious problems and difficulties. Logically arising from this new diplomatic stance will be the necessity of breaking down existing cultural barriers by assisting Americans to study and appreciate the social, cultural and economic life of those countries. The predominance of American influence on international affairs is now taken for granted. This gives rise to responsibilities such as position generates—in particular, the necessity of a thorough knowledge of the life and culture of those countries beyond the one-time “iron curtain”, which are now in the process of becoming our economic partners.

Already, the scholars of nations that have been developing closer cultural and trade relations with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe have come to realize that it is not sufficient to study the economies of those countries. In dealing with a country having a unique and highly specific cultural history, it is imperative that both sides know and appreciate each other’s mode of living and thinking. The main problem broached by the SIU Center for Soviet and East-European Studies in the Performing Arts is to bring to the campus and the general public the fullest possible knowledge and appreciation of the cultures of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Thus, the primary objective of the Center is to maintain a repository of information for interested scholars on heretofore untouched areas of Soviet and East-European cultural life. Specifically, the operational objective of the Center is to investigate the theory and practice of the performing arts as they have been pursued in pre-revolutionary Russia and the USSR, Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Rumania, and Yugoslavia.

The first phase of the Center’s operation is being devoted to the classification and cataloging of the extensive archives now available at the Center. These archives, in addition to a sizable collection of books in various languages, include periodicals, manuscripts, drawings and paintings (both original and reproductions), photographs, transparencies, phonograph records and tape recordings. Simultaneous with this phase, additional materials will be acquired to supplement gaps in the archives.

The Center is happy to welcome any visitor or any correspondents relating to its aims and material. And it is also looking out for future graduate assistants, who are specialists in one or other of the Slavic and East European Languages, and who will be able to both work in the Center and also research for their dissertations or theses into its rich material.

THE USES OF THE CENTER AND ITS ARCHIVES

Following the preparation of the foregoing material, the Center was honored with a visit of its first outside researchers.

Dr. E. Richards, Department of Government of Texas University at Arlington, came to the Center for special consultations for a paper he is preparing on a Study of the Soviet Leadership.

Professor Clayton L. Dawson, Chairman of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures of the University of Illinois, came with three other Professors: Tamira Pachmus, Evelyn C. Bristol, and Stephen P. Hill, to have a first look at the Center’s archives.

In no time they were each lost in their own specialty. Dr. Dawson found a volume of Khlebnikov he hadn’t seen before. Khlebnikov was one of the inspirers of Mayakovsky and a foremost innovator and “formalist” in Russian poetry. Dr. Pachmus was excited to find new material on a famous 19th Century Russian poetess, Hippius, about whom she is writing a book. Dr. Bristol, lecturing on modern Russian poetry, found the one and only volume of Bella Akhmadulina so far published. Bella is considered by many as one of the finest poets in Russia today. Her only published volume is unobtainable in the Soviet Union, except in some libraries. Dr. Hill was immersed in rare early cinema pamphlets and booklets, including the original script of Bezlin Meadow, by Rzheshevsky, from which Eisenstein made the film that was eventually condemned, banned, and destroyed by the Soviet authorities, but which now has been resurrected in a frame-by-frame stretched reconstruction. Dr. Hill proposes to prepare a book on Dziga Vertov, pioneer director of the documentary film, whose books and unpublished material are also found in the Center’s archives.

Sister Mary G. Swift, Assistant Professor, Department of History at Loyola University, New Orleans, is coming in Summer 1969 to research into the theater archives for material she has been unable to find in any other American library. Professor Swift is author of THE ART OF DANCE IN THE USSR, Notre Dame Press, 1968.

Mr. Robert Allen, Slavic Expert from the Library of Congress, inspected the Center’s archives and said that its collection of Russian Journals of the Twenties is quite unique and not represented even in the Library of Congress.
Dr. Harry M. Geduld of Indiana University in Blooming- ton has sent us the manuscript of their forthcoming volume, S. M. Eisenstein & Upton Sinclair's THE MAKING AND UNMAKING OF QUE VIVA MEXICO for our scrutiny. This publication throws at last a true light on this tragic episode, and is of great value in supplementing the Center's archives on Eisenstein.

The Center also has the unique advice of Madame Ida Kaminska of the late Polish State Jewish Theatre; and her husband, Mr. Melman Marian, is cooperating with the Center in compiling A HISTORY OF THE YIDDISH THEATRE—ITS RISE AND FALL.

Apart from the Russian and East-European archives, the Center also holds the following collection of books and periodicals:

a) specializing in the Sanscrit and Indian Theatre, together with color slides and films dealing with the culture and art of India
b) a specialized collection of books and plans dealing with the history of world theatre architecture
c) the archives, documents, and photos of the Unity Theatre and The Workers Theatre movement in Great Britain.

This last collection reveals the Unity Theatre movement as seminal in the evolution of the modern British theatre and drama, providing many distinguished names such as Joan Littlewood, Alfie Bass, Lionel Bart, etc., pioneering epic theatre productions, living newspapers, proletarian drama, modern satire, and also pioneering the new American dramatists of the thirties such as Clifford Odets, Irwin Shaw, Robert Ardrey, and others.

In 1968, Ron Travis completed his Master's Thesis on Unity Theatre of Great Britain: A History, drawing heavily from the files in the Center and on Professor Herbert Marshall's personal experiences as its principal founder.

During 1968, Travis was engaged in research at the Center involving the origins of "Agit-Prop" and "Living Newspaper" drama. Although several people have discussed the origins of the form, (Mr. Douglas McDermott, Arthur Arent, Hallie Flanagan and others), it is hoped, that through the documents available in the Center, the link between the Soviet Zhivaya Gazeta, produced during the Russian Revolution, and the Living Newspapers of the Federal Theatre in America, and of Unity Theatre in Britain during the 1930's, can be conclusively established.

Ronald Levaco, formerly Graduate Assistant of the Center, has been granted a fellowship by the International Research and Exchanges Board and the Inter-University Committee on Travel Grants to visit and study cinema in the USSR for 1969/70.

WORK OF THE CENTER

A. For Publication: Manuscripts completed.

1. Dyakov, Boris—A Story of Survival, Translated by Herbert Marshall and Tony Wright. (Pub. London: Dennis Dobson Ltd. and USA)


3. Anthology of Russian & Other Poems. Translations by Herbert Marshall; bi-lingual edition. Publisher, Dennis Dobson Ltd., UK and USA.


B. Future Publications: (In Preparation)


2. Biography; V. Meyerhold, by Mrs. W. Hoover, who is now studying in the USSR specially for this work.


C. Recordings

1. Mayakovsky (Spoken Arts, Inc.—Klein, New York). Awaiting to be issued as LP record.
3. Yevtushenko—poems to be prepared and taped.
4. Voznesensky—poems to be prepared and taped.
5. Lectures of Professor Herbert Marshall. Recordings to be edited with slides.
   a. History of Russian Theater (two sets)—tape to be edited and synchronized with slides for self-education machinery.
   b. History of Ancient & Modern Indian Theater. Ditto
   c. Translating Russian Poetry: Tapes of seminar held at School of Slavic Studies, University of Illinois, Champaign. To be edited for publication.

D. Productions, 1968


1970/71
5. Poem in Memory of Yessenin, music by Sviridov, Herbert Marshall translation.
6. Russian Operas—Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, etc. for Professor Marjorie Lawrence Opera Workshop. 1969/70. Department of Music.
7. “The Beggars Opera” by John Gay, with the Marjorie Lawrence Opera Workshop.

E. Graduate Assistants

1967/68
1967/69

1968/69

F. Visiting Professors: proposed by Center

1. Professor Antsher Lobo: Musicology (Eastern and Western), Bombay, India, invited for three months by Department of Music, Dr. House; Spring quarter, 1969. Lectures to Department of Theater on Indian Theater and Music. Also with Herbert Marshall’s parallel seminar on Indian Theater, together with demonstration-lecture by Miss Lorraine Lobo on Bharat Natyam, the Classic Indian Dance.
2. Dr. Abram Stasevitch: (Soviet Conductor) invited by the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra as guest conductor in 1970. To visit SIU for Guest Lectures.
4. Dr. Juliusz Katz-Szych, former Polish Statesman and Ambassador and Professor of Faculty of Law, Warsaw University. Holder of Chair of International Relations. Seminars at SIU on these subjects.

G. Research

1. Computer Translation in co-operation with Mr. Robert Ashworth, Data Processing Center, SIU. Trial poem translation from Russian to English.
2. Experimental Phonetics & Hypnopedics. Exchange of research information with Professor L. Blizniychenko of Ukraine Academy of Sciences and Professor Hoshiko, Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology, SIU, in particular concerning HYPNO-PEDICS & sleep-learning.

H. Theater Architecture

I. Exhibitions: 1969/70

1. Exhibition of Indian works of art in conjunction with the Gandhi Centennial Committee.

2. Exhibition of the sculpture of Fredda Brillant, F.R.S.A., F.I.A.L. In conjunction with the University Museum, SIU, Carbondale and with the Fine Arts Dept. Edwardsville Campus.

3. Exhibition of Paintings, Gouaches and Prints of Soviet artists, and a one-man show of Solomon Gershov, Famous Russian Jewish Artist; following their exhibition 1967/68 at the leading London Galleries: Grosvenor & Alwyn with SIU Museum.

J. Archives

1. Arranging the acquisition by the SIU Morris Library Rare Book Room of the unique archives of Lionel Britton, famous British author & playwright, including letters & manuscripts of Bernard Shaw, Bertrand Russell & many of the leading names of British literature and theater.

2. Archives on Ira Aldridge, The Negro Tragedian, in Herbert Marshall’s collection to be donated by him to SIU’s proposed Performing Arts Training Center at E. St. Louis in conjunction with Katherine Dunham and the Black American Studies Committee.

K. Courses


3. *Translating Russian Poetry*, with Professor Kupcek, chairman of the Russian Section, SIU.

4. *Russian Poetry Readings*, a series of programs with Department of Speech, Professor Marion Kleinau. Illustrated with slides and tapes of Russian poets reading their own original works, with English translations.

L. Lectures: Professor Marshall is available, by arrangement, to give a course or individual lectures on the following subjects, illustrated with slides and tapes:

1. THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF SERGEI EISENSTEIN.

2. THE HISTORY OF THE RUSSIAN AND SOVIET THEATRE.

3. THE HISTORY OF THE RUSSIAN AND SOVIET CINEMA.

4. TRANSLATING RUSSIAN POETRY.

5. HISTORY OF ANCIENT SANSKRIT AND MODERN INDIAN THEATRE.

6. THE NEGRO TRAGEDIAN: IRA ALDRIDGE.

7. THE BLACK IN THE PERFORMING ARTS.

8. HISTORY OF THEATRE ARCHITECTURE.

9. HISTORY OF UNITY THEATRE AND BRITISH WORKERS THEATRE MOVEMENT.

M. Graduate Assistantships:

Graduate Assistants are required periodically by the Center. Candidates must have thorough knowledge of Russian and/or other East European languages and an interest in the Performing Arts. Details will be sent upon application.

CORRESPONDENTS are welcomed from any of the countries and spheres covered by the Center.