

Charles Arthur Moser, 1935–2006

Charles Arthur Moser, professor emeritus of Slavic languages and literatures, died on 12 December 2006 in Sofia, Bulgaria, where he and his wife had made their home for the past fourteen years. Born on 6 January 1935 in Knoxville, Tennessee, to Arthur Hurst Moser, professor of classics at the University of Tennessee, and Sara Riddlehoover Moser, Charles received his BA in Slavic languages from Yale University in 1956 and his MA from Columbia University in 1958. He earned his PhD at Columbia in 1962 with a dissertation entitled, "Antinihilism in the Russian Novel in the 1860s."

After teaching at Yale University from 1960 to 1967, Charles began teaching at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., where he served as chair of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures from 1969 to 1974 and from 1980 to 1989. His scholarly career was mainly devoted to Russian and Bulgarian literature and culture. Among Charles's most significant publications were the books *Antinihilism in the Russian Novel of the 1860s* (1964), *Pisemsky: A Provincial Realist* (1969), and *Esthetics as Nightmare: Russian Literary Theory, 1855–1870* (1989). His *History of Bulgarian Literature, 865–1944* (1972) was a pioneering work. Charles was also an accomplished editor, as evidenced by *The Cambridge History of Russian Literature* (1989) and the Russian section of the Twayne's World Authors series for which he edited fifteen volumes from 1975 to 1990, in addition to writing a monograph on Denis Fonvizin in 1979. He wrote numerous articles for *Slavic Review*, *Russian Review*, and other leading professional journals on subjects ranging from the authenticity of *The Song of Prince Igor's Campaign* to Vladimir Maiakovskii's sojourn in the United States, as well as on Bulgarian authors such as Jordan Jovkov.

In 1979, Charles published a biography of Georgi M. Dimitrov, a prominent Bulgarian political activist who had fled from communist persecution in his homeland to the United States. The fact that Dimitrov—the father of Charles's wife, Anastasia Dimitrova Moser—was later rehabilitated and widely honored in his liberated homeland, proved a genuine triumph to the Mosers, both passionate *homines politices*. Indeed, Charles's work for conservative causes in such organizations as University Professors for Academic Order, which he cofounded in 1970, made him a somewhat unconventional and sometimes controversial figure in the profession. His political views never distorted his impeccable scholarship and open-minded teaching, however. As Strobe Talbott, a student of Charles's at Yale, wrote in a *Festschrift* in Charles's honor (*And Meaning for a Life Entire*, 1997, 15): "the same good-natured tolerance you showed for my tendency to fracture Russian grammar was also apparent when the subject between us was the Vietnam war, the student-instigated movement to abolish grades, or other issues that were burning in those days." This quote reflects the high esteem in which friends, colleagues, and students will always hold this principled, dignified man of letters.

PETER ROLLBERG
George Washington University
February 2007