

He was a wonderfully supportive mentor to his dissertation advisees and junior faculty and a scintillating presence in the classroom, where he inspired many students to choose Russian studies as their field of specialization. As a very young and callow assistant professor in the 1980s, I benefited tremendously from his guidance, as did quite a few others among my contemporaries on the Illinois campus. He was also an excellent dancer who on one memorable departmental occasion performed the mazurka to the strains of KC and the Sunshine Band (as this detail indicates, the festivities in question occurred when disco still ruled).

That much-used phrase “larger than life” was eminently applicable to Maurice. Effortlessly switching from language to language—Russian, Polish, Ukrainian, French, German, Yiddish—he was the life of the party or the seminar. He carried with him an inexhaustible and constantly updated trove of political jokes—he was even suspected of inventing some of them himself—which he joyfully shared with faculty and students and indeed anyone he engaged in conversation, be it in between sessions at an academic conference, at the dinner table, or during a flight. Some of his interlocutors were notables in the affairs of state: he was a frequent visitor to Washington, D.C., where he sat on a number of committees and enjoyed mixing with the high and mighty. As Maurice had it, it was he who told President Ronald Reagan, in the Oval Office no less, the story of the Russian houseguest whom his village host suspected of amorous designs on the lady of the *izba*: “Доверяй, но проверяй”—trust, but verify. This phrase, delivered in an atrocious Russian accent by the chief executive to all who would listen, became a leitmotif of the warming relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union in the late 1980s. Maurice had the knack of speaking to a fellow Slavist or a lay person about his research interests in exactly the same terms and tone, an ability few members of the academy possess. The thousands of students he taught at Illinois and, before that, at Hunter College of the City University of New York and at Indiana University, and his colleagues across the country and abroad will always remember him for his intellect, warmth, good humor, and compassion for those who fight against political and cultural oppression.

RICHARD TEMPEST

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
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Richard Peace, 1933–2013

With the death of Richard Peace, on 5 December 2013, the United Kingdom, and the English-speaking world more widely, has lost one of its leading Slavists of the post-war generation. Widely known as the author of monographs on Fedor Dostoevskii, Nikolai Gogol', Anton Chekhov, Ivan Turgenev, and Lev Tolstoi, Richard also wrote numerous articles and contributions to books on the classics of Russian literature and was a frequent conference participant, both at home and abroad, until long after his official retirement in 1994.

Richard was a Yorkshireman. He began to teach himself Russian at school at Ilkley, but, like many British Slavists and successful writers of his generation, he was to study the language intensively during his period of compulsory military service in the early 1950s. He graduated in French and Russian in 1957 from Keble College, Oxford. A period of postgraduate study followed, whereupon, in 1962, he was appointed to a lectureship in Russian in the English Department at the University of Bristol under Professor Henry Gifford, with whose encouragement and support he built up honors and joint honors programs in Russian studies and laid the foundations for the depart-

ment's future successes in teaching and research. After a period as professor and head of Russian at the University of Hull, from 1975 to 1984, where he also served as dean of the Faculty of Arts, Richard returned to Bristol as professor of Russian in 1984, where he presided over a flourishing department until his retirement ten years later. During this period, Bristol became recognized as one of Britain's leading departments of Russian, not least through its successes in the periodic national Research Assessment Exercises, inaugurated by the University Grants Committee in 1986.

Richard also played a prominent role in defending and promoting Russian studies nationally in a variety of important ways. These included chairmanship of the body that oversaw the expanding program of student study in Russia during the Soviet period and various duties attached to it. From 1977 to 1981 he was president of the British Universities Association of Slavists. His period in office coincided with the publication of the Atkinson Report in 1979, which recommended the closure or phasing-out of Russian in some nineteen to twenty British universities. A number of institutions did indeed phase Russian out in the years that followed, but Richard vigorously led the fightback, and his leadership and critique of the report is warmly remembered by those who were involved.

While these activities were of vital importance in their time, Richard will be most widely remembered for his scholarly books and articles. The authority of his writing on Russian fiction derives from a scrupulous reading of the text together with a deep sensitivity to its historical, biographical, and cultural background. Subtitles such as "A Study," "An Examination," or "A Critical Examination" characterize his approach to characters and plots. Richard's is not the kind of scholarship that pushes boundaries or seeks to introduce entirely new perspectives, to engage in polemic or pose radical questions. He rarely enters the lists against other scholars with whom he may disagree. He is unmoved by attacks on the canon, and he is unafraid to make value judgments. What he does give us are textual analyses that are well researched, reliable, lucid, measured, intelligent, knowledgeable, and well informed, bringing together character and narrative in unexpected and striking juxtapositions and providing the reader with a master class in close reading. As such, they commend themselves to undergraduates seeking firm critical ground on which to develop their own study of Russian literature; they remind scholars of the shared values that ensure that the great works of nineteenth-century Russian literature retain their preeminence on syllabi and in public esteem; and they continue to provide researchers with a stimulus to their own further work and a model for how to conduct it.

The best known of his monographs, and the one that established his reputation among both specialists and students at home and abroad, was his *Dostoyevsky: An Examination of the Major Novels* (Cambridge University Press, 1971). It is therefore not surprising that he became an enthusiastic and trusted member of the International Dostoevsky Society, serving as a member of the Editorial Board of *Dostoevsky Studies* from 1986 and eventually an elder statesman of the society, being elected to an honorary vice presidency in 1995. His presence, his wise counsel, and his highly stimulating papers at symposia will all be greatly missed.

Richard's book on Dostoevskii was the first of its kind by a British scholar and served as a template for the books that followed. It made an enduring impact on Dostoevskii studies not only for these reasons, nor even because of the many judicious insights into textual details that it contains, but also because his readings proved productive both in his own subsequent work and in the work of other scholars. Even now, when many of his insights have been internalized by later generations of Slavists, they may still strike the reader with their appositeness and freshness. Among his many other books and articles, the most significant are probably his works on Gogol' (*The Enigma of Gogol* [Cambridge University Press, 1981]), Chekhov (*Chekhov:*

A Study of the Four Major Plays [Yale University Press, 1983]), and Ivan Goncharov (*"Oblomov": A Critical Examination of Goncharov's Novel* [University of Birmingham, 1991]).

In 2010 Richard was awarded a DLitt by the University of Oxford for his published work.

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