

Russkie Poslovitsy

Russian Proverbs in Literature,
Politics, and Pedagogy



FESTSCHRIFT FOR KEVIN J. McKENNA
IN CELEBRATION OF HIS
SIXTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY

WOLFGANG MIEDER, EDITOR

This unique Festschrift in honor of Professor Kevin J. McKenna on the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday is different from most such celebratory essay volumes in that it does not consist of essays from various authors but is rather a collection of fourteen of his most significant publications on proverbial matters from the last two decades. For more than twenty-five years, Professor McKenna has taught Russian language, culture, and literature at the University of Vermont, and during this time, he has gained national and international recognition as an instructor, scholar, and administrator. On the campus of his university, he has been a true champion of international education, and he has been an inspiring and guiding light for many students as they made impressive progress with their Russian studies in Vermont and in Russia. While his numerous cultural, literary, and political studies have brought him much recognition, it is especially his seminal book *All the Views Fit to Print: Changing Images of the U.S. in "Pravda" Political Cartoons, 1917–1991* (2001) that continues to be a mainstay today in the study of the relationship of the United States and the Soviet Union during the twentieth century. Of course, Dr. McKenna has also made a name for himself as a proverb scholar in the United States and in Europe with his paremiological publications on the literary, journalistic, and political use of proverbs. The edited essay volume *Proverbs in Russian Literature: From Catherine the Great to Alexander Solzhenitsyn* (1998) is especially noteworthy.

The fourteen essays of this Festschrift are divided into three groups—literature, politics, and pedagogy. The first six essays are dedicated to the literary use and function of proverbs in the works of Catherine the Great, Leo Tolstoy, Boris Pasternak, Vladimir Nabokov, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, and Sergei Eisenstein. The next five articles deal with the use of proverbs in *Pravda* headlines, the depiction of the proverb “Big fish eat little fish” in *Pravda* cartoons, Russian politics in *Pravda* cartoons, the image of the “Ship of State” in such cartoons, and Vladimir Putin’s employment of proverbs. The three essays in the section on pedagogy look at the role of proverbs in the Russian language curriculum, the appearance of proverbs in Russian language textbooks, and the importance of the so-called paremiological minimum, that is, the set of Russian proverbs that are known and used frequently by native speakers and that consequently should also be learned by foreign language students. Together these studies are representative of Kevin J. McKenna’s accomplishments as a proverb scholar, and they also present an informed and eminently readable introduction to the rich field of Russian proverbs.

Wolfgang Mieder is Professor of German and Folklore at the University of Vermont. Like his colleague and friend Kevin J. McKenna, he is especially interested in proverbs in politics, to wit his books *“No Struggle, No Progress”: Frederick Douglass and His Proverbial Rhetoric for Civil Rights* (2001), *“Yes We Can”: Barack Obama’s Proverbial Rhetoric* (2009), and *“Making a Way Out of No Way”: Martin Luther King’s Sermonic Proverbial Rhetoric* (2010). His two books *Proverbs Are Never Out of Season: Popular Wisdom in the Modern World* (2012) and *Proverbs: A Handbook* (2012) serve as surveys of the field of paremiology, that is, the study of proverbs.



Russkie Poslovitsy



Alan Dundes
Founding Editor

Wolfgang Mieder
General Editor

Vol. 6



PETER LANG

New York • Washington, D.C./Baltimore • Bern
Frankfurt • Berlin • Brussels • Vienna • Oxford

Russkie Poslovitsy

Russian Proverbs in
Literature, Politics, and Pedagogy

FESTSCHRIFT FOR KEVIN J. MCKENNA
IN CELEBRATION OF
HIS SIXTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY

WOLFGANG MIEDER, EDITOR



PETER LANG

New York • Washington, D.C./Baltimore • Bern
Frankfurt • Berlin • Brussels • Vienna • Oxford

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

McKenna, Kevin J., author, honouree.

Russkie poslovitsy: Russian proverbs in literature, politics, and pedagogy:
festschrift for Kevin J. McKenna in celebration of
his sixty-fifth birthday / edited by Wolfgang Mieder.
pages; cm. — (International folkloristics; vol. 6)
Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. Proverbs, Russian—History and criticism. 2. Russian literature—
History and criticism. 3. Proverbs in literature. 4. Proverbs,
Russian—Political aspects. I. Mieder, Wolfgang, editor.

II. Permiakov, G. L. (Grigorii L'vovich). K voprosu o russkom
paremiologicheskome minimume. English. III. Title.

IV. Series: International folkloristics; v. 6.

PN6505.S5M365 398.9'9171—dc23 2012038664

ISBN 978-1-4331-1951-4 (hardcover)

ISBN 978-1-4539-1022-1 (e-book)

ISSN 1528-6533

Bibliographic information published by **Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek**.

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the “Deutsche
Nationalbibliografie”; detailed bibliographic data is available
on the Internet at <http://dnb.d-nb.de/>.

The paper in this book meets the guidelines for permanence and durability
of the Committee on Production Guidelines for Book Longevity
of the Council of Library Resources.



© 2013 Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., New York
29 Broadway, 18th floor, New York, NY 10006
www.peterlang.com

All rights reserved.

Reprint or reproduction, even partially, in all forms such as microfilm,
xerography, microfiche, microcard, and offset strictly prohibited.

Printed in Germany

CONTENTS

Tabula Gratulatoria	vii
Preface	xv
Part One: Literature	
Chapter 1: Proverbial Wisdom of an Enlightened Empress: Russian Proverbs in Catherine the Great's <i>O, Vremia!</i>	3
Chapter 2: Proverbs and the Poet: A Paremiological Analysis of Boris Pasternak's <i>Doctor Zhivago</i>	19
Chapter 3: <i>Poshlost'</i> , Hegelian Syllogism, and the Proverb: A Paremiological Approach to Vladimir Nabokov's <i>Laughter in the Dark</i>	39
Chapter 4: Didactics and the Proverb: The Case of Alexander Solzhenitsyn's Memoir <i>The Oak and the Calf</i>	55
Chapter 5: Proverbs in Sergei Eisenstein's <i>Aleksandr Nevsky</i>	83
Chapter 6: The Role of the Proverb in Leo Tolstoy's Novel <i>Anna Karenina</i>	101

Part Two: Politics

Chapter 7: Proverbs and <i>Perestroika</i> : An Analysis of <i>Pravda</i> Headlines, 1988–1991	125
Chapter 8: Propaganda and the Proverb: “Big Fish Eat Little Fish” in <i>Pravda</i> Political Cartoons	143
Chapter 9: Politics and the Russian Proverb: A Retrospective of <i>Pravda</i> Political Cartoons in the 1990’s	167
Chapter 10: A Nation Adrift: The Russian “Ship of State” in <i>Pravda</i> Political Cartoons During the Decade of the 1990’s	193
Chapter 11: “Fishing in Muddy Waters”: Vladimir Putin Takes on Russia’s Twentieth-Century Proverbial “Oligarchs”	217

Part Three: Pedagogy

Chapter 12: “НА ПОСЛОВИЦУ НИ СУДА НИ РАСПРАВЫ”: The Role of Proverbs in the Russian Language Curriculum	231
Chapter 13: “ПОСЛОВИЦА—ВВЕК НЕ СЛОМИТСЯ”: The Proverb as Linguo-Cultural Medium in American Russian Language Textbooks	251
Chapter 14: On the Question of a Russian Paremiological Minimum (translation of Grigorii L’vovich Permiakov’s essay “К вопросу о русском paremiologicheskome minimume [1982])	271
Proverb Index	283

TABULA GRATULATORIA

Erik Aasland
Fuller Graduate School
of Intercultural Studies
Pasadena, California

Jane Ambrose
University of Vermont

Z. Philip Ambrose
University of Vermont

Shirley L. Arora
University of California at Los Angeles

Helena Arsentieva
Kasan State University, Tatarstan

Howard Ball
University of Vermont

Gideon Bavly
University of Vermont

Rimma Baykova
University of North Carolina at
Chapel Hill

Catherine Blanchoud
Paris, France

Claus Bockwoldt
South Burlington, Vermont

Adriana Borra
University of Vermont

Antonello Borra
University of Vermont

Kathrin Bower
University of Richmond

Tony Bradley
University of Vermont

Simon Bronner
Pennsylvania State University at
Harrisburg

Christoph Chlosta
University of Duisburg-Essen,
Germany

Roger Cooke
University of Vermont

Patricia Corcoran
University of Vermont

Alice Daniels
Burlington, Vermont

Nicholas Daniloff
Northeastern University

Jennifer Dickinson
University of Vermont

Moustapha Diouf
University of Vermont

Heike Doane
Cary, North Carolina

Dmitrij Dobrovol'skij
Russian Academy of Sciences,
Moscow

Karin Doerr
Concordia University, Canada

Andrew Donskov
University of Ottawa, Canada

Bill Doucette
Boise, Idaho

Charles Clay Doyle
University of Georgia

Peter Ďurčo
University of Trnava, Slovakia

Rainer Eckert
University of Greifswald, Germany

Wolfgang Eismann
University of Graz, Austria

Peter Ernst,
University of Vienna, Austria

Tina Escaja
University of Vermont

Stefan Ettinger
University of Augsburg, Germany

Jan Feldman
University of Vermont

Natalia Filatkina
University of Trier, Germany

Csaba Földes
University of Veszprém, Hungary

Sinaida Fomina
University of Woronesh, Russia

Galit Hasan-Rokem
Hebrew University, Israel

Gregory Gause
University of Vermont

Theresia Hoeck
University of Vermont

Shirley J. Gedeon
University of Vermont

Rebecca Hogan
University of Wisconsin at Whitewater

Joel Goldberg
University of Vermont

Carrie Honeman
Clark University

Robert Gordon
University of Vermont

Don Honeman
Clark University

Eva-Maria Goy
Bournac, France

David C. Howell
University of Vermont

Christian Grandl
University of Würzburg, Germany

Hrisztalina Hrisztova-Gotthardt
Pécs, Hungary

Elizabeth Green
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Jonathan Huener
University of Vermont

Hope Greenberg
University of Vermont

Pat Hutton
University of Vermont

Peter Grzybek
University of Graz, Austria

Ben Jens
University of Vermont

Michael Gurdon
University of Vermont

Georgi L. Kapchits
Moscow, Russia

Melanie Gustafson
University of Vermont

Olga Karpova
Ivanovo State University, Russia

Huck Gutman
University of Vermont

Kathleen Kelleher
University of Vermont

Kate Kenny
University of Vermont

Jolene Kingston
Salt Lake City, Utah

Barbara Komenda-Earle
University of Szczecin, Poland

Anna Konstantinova
Krasnodar, Russia

Jarmo Korhonen
University of Helsinki, Finland

Arvo Krikmann
University of Tartu, Estonia

Daniel Krymkowski
University of Vermont

Maria Kul'kova
University of Kazan, Tatarstan

Arthur Kunin
University of Vermont

Lise Larose
University of Vermont

Kimberly J. Lau
University of California at
Santa Cruz

Robert Lawson
University of Vermont

Anna Lewandowska
University of Halle-Wittenberg,
Germany

Henny Lewin
Amherst, Massachusetts

Anna T. Litovkina
University of Szekszárd, Hungary

Lokangaka Losambe
University of Vermont

Daniel Lusk
University of Vermont

Tony Magistrale
University of Vermont

Angelika Mahoney
Burlington, Vermont

Dennis Mahoney
University of Vermont

Luther H. Martin
University of Vermont

Željka Matulina
University of Zadar, Croatia

Juan Francisco Maura
University of Vermont

William Metcalfe
University of Vermont

Barbara Mieder Williston, Vermont	Kenneth Nalibow University of Vermont
Wolfgang Mieder University of Vermont	Garrison Nelson University of Vermont
William Mierse University of Vermont	Andreas Nolte Jericho, Vermont
Hans-Manfred Militz University of Jena, Germany	Gayle Nunley University of Vermont
Brian Minier University of Vermont	Jim Overfield University of Vermont
Valerij M. Mokieno St. Petersburg State University, Russia	Gyula Paczolay University of Veszprém, Hungary
Christine Möller-Sahling Boston, Massachusetts	William Paden University of Vermont
George Moyser University of Vermont	Agnieszka Perlinska Williston, Vermont
Julia Sevilla Muñoz University of Madrid, Spain	Gordon Petersen Burlington, Vermont
Jo Anne Murad University of Vermont	Roumyana Petrova University of Rousse, Bulgaria
Timothy Murad University of Vermont	Elisabeth Piirainen Steinfurt, Germany
Christopher S. Myers Peter Lang Publishing, New York	Mark Pomar IREX, Moscow
Anita Naciscione University of Riga, Latvia	Nancy Poulin University of Vermont

Peggy F. Powell
University of Vermont

Munir Sendich
Michigan State University

Stanisław Prędoła
University of Wrocław, Poland

André Senécal
Boise, Idaho

Robert Price
University of Wisconsin at Madison

Peter Seybolt
University of Vermont

Andrey Reznikov
Black Hills State University

Mary Lou Shea
University of Vermont

James L. Rice
University of Oregon

Richard Sheldon
Dartmouth College

Veronica Richel
University of Vermont

Tea Shurgaia
Tbilisi State University, Georgia

Robert Rothstein
University of Massachusetts

R. Thomas Simone
University of Vermont

Thomas Salmon
Rockingham, Vermont

Douglas Smith
Seattle, Washington

Mara Saule
University of Vermont

Janet Sobieski
Boise, Idaho

John Schillinger
American University

Kevork Spartalian
University of Vermont

Helga Schreckenberger
University of Vermont

Peter Stavrakis
National Defense University

Kathleen Scollins
University of Vermont

Kathrin Steyer
Mannheim, Germany

David Scrase
University of Vermont

Mark Stoler
University of Vermont

Richard Sugarman
University of Vermont

Helen Wagg,
Burlington, Vermont

Richard Sweterlitsch
Asheville, North Carolina

Harry Walter
University of Greifswald, Germany

Grzegorz Szpila
University of Kraków, Poland

Marcy Waterfall
Burlington, Vermont

Robert Taylor
University of Vermont

Roger Waterfall
Ogden, Utah

Olga Trokhimenko
University of North Carolina
at Wilmington

Jürgen Werner
University of Leipzig, Germany

Peter Unseth
Graduate Institute of Applied
Linguistics
Dallas, Texas

Janet Whatley
University of Vermont

Fionnuala Carson Williams
Belfast, Ireland

Mark D. Usher
University of Vermont

Stephen D. Winick
Smithsonian Institution,
Washington, D.C.

Tatiana Valdaeva
Karelian State University, Russia

Beatrice Wood
University of Vermont

Boyd Van Horn
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Jared Wood
Burlington, Vermont

Stéphane Viellard
Université de Paris-Sorbonne, France

Denise Youngblood
University of Vermont

Luis A. Vivanco
University of Vermont

Gretchen Ziolkowski
Miami University

Vilmos Voigt
University of Budapest, Hungary

Jean Philippe Zouogbo
University of Paris-Diderot, France

PREFACE

For more than twenty-five years Prof. Kevin J. McKenna has been teaching Russian language, culture, and literature at the University of Vermont, and during this time he has gained national and international recognition as an instructor, scholar, and administrator. On the campus of his university he has been a true champion of international education, and he has been an inspiring and guiding light for many students as they made impressive progress with their Russian studies here in Vermont and also abroad in Russia. Of course, Kevin McKenna has also made a name for himself as a proverb scholar in the United States and in Europe with his paremiological publications on the literary, journalistic, and political use of proverbs. He has touched many scholars and students with his impressive erudition and his sincere generosity. Whoever has come in touch with his work, his teaching, or his ever pleasant demeanor will without doubt agree that his sixty-fifth birthday on May 2, 2013, deserves a proper celebration. In the scholarly world this implies a *Festschrift* that usually is comprised of essays written by colleagues and former students. But since Kevin McKenna is a very special colleague and dear friend to me personally, I thought it would be best to honor him with a different kind of *Festschrift*. Words cannot express what he has meant to me for close to three decades as a fellow proverb scholar. Of course, I have a large international network of

paremiologists at my disposal, but to have an immediate colleague with similar interests just a few doors down the corridor of the Department of German and Russian has been an intellectual blessing. There is hardly a day that we don't exchange ideas, and it has been an honor for me as the editor of *Proverbium: Yearbook of International Proverb Scholarship* to publish a considerable portion of his paremiological output over the years. In any case, the idea came to me that the best way to thank him for myself as well as his colleagues and students would be to edit his own book for him containing some of his best articles. This book then is presented to him as a surprise and with the best wishes of a multitude of good people on his sixty-fifth birthday as a *Festschrift* celebrating him as a paremiologist and as a friend.

Kevin McKenna earned his B.A. degree from Oklahoma State University in 1970 in Humanities Studies, followed by both an M.A. degree in 1971 and a Ph.D. degree in 1977 in Slavic Languages and Literatures from the University of Colorado. He started his professorial career at that university and also taught from 1981–1984 at the University of Utah. It was then that my colleagues and I were able to convince him to join us at the University of Vermont, soon to be followed by his wonderful spouse Marcy Waterfall. In 1990 he was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure, and as expected, he became Full Professor of Russian in 2001, having distinguished himself as a superb instructor, an acclaimed scholar, and a colleague ever eager to do his part of professional service here on our campus and beyond. He has enriched us all with his presence, his professionalism, and his collegiality. Above all, we want to thank him for having made such a serious commitment to our small Department of German and Russian. Were it not for his Herculean efforts, I am afraid that our Russian program might not exist today. And I should add that right after arriving on our campus he became my professor and I his student as I attempted to learn the basics of the rich Russian language with its important cultural, historical, and literary traditions. Because of him my own work became more internationally oriented, since my rudimentary knowledge of Russian opened up the world of Russian paremiology and paremiography to me.

The teaching evaluations that his students complete at the end of each semester are clear indications that Prof. McKenna is highly valued and much praised for his teaching and mentoring of generations of them. Little wonder that he received the treasured Kroepsch-Maurice Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1992 for his valiant efforts as a teacher and advisor. He is an excellent instructor on all levels of the Russian language, culture, and literature, with courses like Russian Lexicology, Russian Mass Media, Russian Culture

and Civilization, Survey of 19th and 20th Century Russian Literature, and special seminars on Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Nabokov, Bulgakov, or Solzhenitsyn being favorites of the students. His World Literature courses are legendary, giving students without any knowledge of Russian the opportunity to discover major Russian literary works in translation. Some of these challenging courses have dealt with such topics as “Fin de Siècle Russia: From Emancipation of the Serfs to Grigori Rasputin”, “The Intellectual and Cultural Contribution of Peter the Great and Catherine the Great”, “Witches, Goblins, and Ghosts: The Supernatural and Fantastic in 19th/20th Century Russian Literature”, and “Vladimir Nabokov’s *Lolita*: The Russian and American Contexts.” In addition, he established our Russian House Program that gives students the opportunity to live together in a suite of a dormitory and speak Russian, enjoy various lectures, and benefit from their professor’s willingness to spend many an evening with them so that they can benefit from his Russian expertise. He also continues to work untiringly to help his students to study abroad for a year at Moscow or St. Petersburg, and he is forever trying to find employment for Russian majors in Russia or Eastern Europe. Clearly Kevin McKenna is a master teacher, a knowledgeable advisor, a caring mentor, an intellectual leader, a defender of high academic standards, and a positive Pied Piper or “propagandist” in getting students interested in Russian and International Studies

Kevin McKenna is indeed a professor for all seasons, always ready and willing to step forward to be of help with student advising, meeting with prospective students and their parents, and lecturing at local schools and service clubs on matters relating to Russia. He has repeatedly been a scholarly guide for adult learners traveling to St. Petersburg and Moscow with the Smithsonian Institution, and he has served on dozens of university committees. There is, however, one accomplishment that is truly special, namely his long-term directorship from 1989–2007 of our Area and International Studies Program at the University of Vermont. In that role he organized innumerable lecture and film series, symposia, teach-ins, and open fora. He was especially helpful in fostering relationships of our university and its city of Burlington with the cities of Petrozavodsk and Yaroslavl in Russia. It was utterly amazing to see him function in this role and to benefit from his untiring efforts to expand our international awareness and commitment. His praises were sung loud and clear when he relinquished this leadership position some years ago. No wonder that in 1996 he was appointed Chair of the International Advisory Council, proving that he has incredible skills as an administrator and spokesperson regarding international matters on our campus and beyond. Between 1995–1997 he became special

advisor to the university president, and as one would expect, he has served on too many committees of all sorts to enumerate here. No service task ever seems too much for him, and he has proven himself to be a model citizen of our university. Whatever he undertakes with his seemingly unlimited energy, he leads by example or, proverbially expressed, he practices what he preaches. His service accomplishments at his university and for the Russian profession at large are exemplary indeed. But above all, he was the major driving force in internationalizing the University of Vermont, definitely earning the name “Mr. International” for his enthusiasm, commitment, and splendid success.

Turning to his remarkable scholarly achievements, it might be said by way of a bird’s eye view that they are informed by a triadic trajectory and a number of grants and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the U.S. State Department, the University of Vermont, and others. There are first of all his many publications dealing with grammatical, structural, and pedagogical matters that grow out of and inform his teaching of Russian language and culture classes, to wit:

“Teaching Russian to Scientists: A Single Skill Approach.” *Slavic and East European Journal*, 24 (1980), 400–411.

“Teaching a Course on the Soviet Press.” *Russian Language Journal*, 35 (1981), 15–18.

“‘Truth’ Comes to the College Campus: *Pravda*’s Contribution to Russian Enrollment.” *Russian Language Journal*, 37 (1983), 35–39.

“The Contextual Method: An Innovative Method for Attracting Science Majors to Our Language Programs.” *Applied Language Study. New Observations, New Methods*. Ed. by John Earl Joseph. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1984. 62–68.

“Reading Russian Expository Prose: The Role of Functional and Derivational Grammar in Textual and Lexical Analysis.” *Russian Language Journal*, 39 (1985), 29–35.

Reading Russian Newspapers. Columbus, Ohio: The Center for Slavic & East European Studies, Ohio State University, 1985 (co-authored with Alexander Nakhimovsky and Anelya Rugaleva).

“Associative Mnemonics in Russian Vocabulary Building.” *Russian Language Journal*, 43 (1989), 37–59.

“Changing Images of the U.S. in *Pravda* Political Cartoons at the End of the 20th Century: From ‘Glasnost’ to ‘Democratic Capitalism.’” *The Image of the 20th Century*

in *Literature, Media, and Society*. Ed. by Will Wright and Stephen Kaplan. Pueblo, Colorado: The Society for the Interdisciplinary Study of Social Imagery, 2000. 301–309.

To this group of publications also belong several small articles on the nature of *Pravda* political cartoons that appeared for the most part in the *American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages Newsletter*. This intriguing research combining politics, mass media, popular culture, and iconography culminated in a celebrated book on this fascinating subject matter:

All the Views Fit to Print: Changing Images of the U.S. in "Pravda" Political Cartoons, 1917–1991. New York: Peter Lang, 2001.

This richly illustrated book is a comprehensive study of the world of Soviet cartoons spanning almost an entire century. It is based on the quantitative and qualitative content analysis of primarily editorial caricatures, showing the newspaper's agitational and propagandistic mission to define and interpret the "American way of life" for its Soviet readers. Starting with a chapter on "Russian Propaganda and the Political Cartoon", Kevin McKenna moves on to chapters dealing with such matters as "Images of the United States, 1917–1945", "*Pravda* Political Cartoons in the Early Years of the Cold War", "U.S. Images in Years of Peaceful Coexistence and Détente", and "American Images in the Reagan/Gorbachev Era." The book concludes with an epilogue on "The End of the Communist Party – The Fall of *Pravda*." There is no doubt that this book belongs to the set of truly significant publications on the relationship of the United States and the Soviet Union during the 20th century.

The second tier of Prof. McKenna's scholarly work is comprised of literary studies that are based on his deep knowledge of Russian and Soviet culture, history, and politics. The following titles may serve as examples:

Catherine the Great's "Vsiakaia Vsiachina" and "The Spectator" Tradition of the Satirical Journal of Morals and Manners. Diss. University of Colorado, 1977.

"Elena Gan." *Modern Encyclopedia of Russian and Soviet Literature*. Ed. by Harry B. Weber. Gulf Breeze, Florida: Academic International, 1987. 8, 101–105.

"Russia Revisited: A Cultural Update to the Marquis de Custine's *Journey of Our Time*." *Selecta*, 8 (1987), 109–114.

"Empress Behind the Mask: The Persona of Md. Vsiakaia Vsiachina in Catherine the Great's Periodical Essays on Manners and Morals." *Neophilologus*, 74 (1990), 1–11.

"George Sand's Reception in Russia: The Case of Elena Gan." *The World of George Sand*. Ed. by Natalie Datloff et al. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1991. 227–233.

"Catherine the Great." *Dictionary of Russian Women Writers*. Ed. by Mary F. Zirin. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1994. 117–120.

Of course, Kevin McKenna's interest in literary paremiology had been developing right along, and it was a welcome event when he edited the following volume of essays in order to show to scholars and students of Russian literature that proverbs and proverbial expressions doubtlessly play a significant role in the language and style of Russian literature:

Proverbs in Russian Literature: From Catherine the Great to Alexander Solzhenitsyn. Burlington, Vermont: The University of Vermont, 1998.

The book registers how the oral tradition of Russian folklore has influenced the literary works of nearly all of Russia's greatest writers. The included essays represent a cross-section of three centuries of Russian literature. Beginning with the folk speech appearing in the works of Catherine the Great and Mikhail Chulkov, the essays deal with the role of proverbial speech in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* and *The Power of Darkness*, and Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *August 1914*. Personally, I shall never forget my excitement when my friend asked me to put together a bibliography of international scholarship devoted to the study of proverbs in Russian literature for this volume.

Obviously then the third tier of Prof. McKenna's scholarly activities is his prowess in paremiology. His *Festschrift* is ample proof that he belongs to the circle of international proverb scholars, having published numerous seminal articles in English, French, and Russian in such renowned journals as the *Russian Language Journal*, the *Slavic and East European Journal*, *Revue des Études Slaves*, *Neophilologus*, and *Proverbium: Yearbook of International Proverb Scholarship*. In addition to the fourteen representative articles contained in this *Festschrift*, the following four publications can well serve to show Kevin McKenna's devotion to Russian cultural and literary proverb studies:

"Proverbs and the Empress: The Role of Russian Proverbs in Catherine the Great's *All Sorts and Sundries*." *Katharina II. Eine russische Schriftstellerin*. Ed. by Michail Fajnstejn and Frank Göpfert. Wilhelmshorst: F.K. Göpfert, 1996. 61–80.

“If a Claw Gets Stuck, The [Whole] Bird is Lost’: Proverb Function in Leo Tolstoy’s Play *The Power of Darkness*.” *Res humanae proverbiorum et sententiarum. Ad honorem Wolfgangi Mieder*. Ed. by Csaba Földes. Tübingen: Gunter Narr, 2004. 197–204.

“Proverbs and the Folk Tale in the Russian Cinema: The case of Sergei Eisenstein’s Film Classic *Aleksandr Nevsky*.” *The Proverbial “Pied Piper.” A Festschrift Volume of Essays in Honor of Wolfgang Mieder on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*. Ed. by Kevin J. McKenna. New York: Peter Lang, 2009. 277–292.

“Ne stoit selenie bez pravednika’: A Paremiologic Analysis of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn’s *Matrjonin dvor*.” *Słowo, tekst, czas. Jednostka frazeologiczna w tradycyjnych i nowych paradygmatach naukowych*. Ed. by Michaił Aleksiejenko and Harry Walter. Szczecin: Wydawca Print Group, 2010. 267–279.

It will, of course, surprise nobody that Kevin McKenna is presently hard at work on two book-length studies that are tentatively entitled *The Role of Russian Proverbs in the Prose of Alexander Solzhenitsyn* and *A History of Proverbial Wisdom in Russian Literature: From the Middle Ages to Post-Modernism*. As his relatives, friends, colleagues, and students we all wish him much pleasure and success with these projects. Since he is by no means ready to retire from the University of Vermont, we also look forward to have him among us as a magisterial instructor, a renowned scholar, and a treasured friend. This *Festschrift*, presented to Prof. Kevin J. McKenna on his sixty-fifth birthday by the many people listed in the “Tabula gratulatoria” and by scores of additional friends, colleagues, and students, is then a token of our sincere appreciation for everything that he has accomplished over the years.

Four years ago it was my dear friend Kevin McKenna who edited *The Proverbial “Pied Piper”* (2009) as an absolutely unexpected *Festschrift* in my honor on my sixty-fifth birthday. I still remember my surprise and the festivities that went along with the presentation of this celebratory volume to me on the campus of the University of Vermont. I also recall thanking my friend Christopher S. Myers, managing director of Peter Lang Publishing at New York, for having published this book in my honor. When I approached him a little more than a year ago with the idea of editing a surprise *Festschrift* for Kevin McKenna as a sort of proverbial “tit for tat”, he immediately agreed to this plan under the most generous conditions. I thank him as well as my friend Jackie Pavlovic, production manager at Peter Lang Publishing, for their good will and much appreciated support. I am especially pleased that this *Festschrift* is appearing in the *International Folkloristics* series, attesting to Prof. McKenna’s global outreach. Many thanks are due to our friend and former colleague Prof.

Andrey Reznikov from Black Hills State University at Spearfish, South Dakota, for his invaluable help in checking the Russian texts in several chapters. Finally, I would like to thank my staff colleagues Mary Lou Shea and Hope Greenberg for their assistance with a number of technical matters, and I also want to acknowledge the permissions granted by various publishers to reprint Prof. McKenna's articles without fees. The editing of this *Festschrift* in honor of my very special friend Prof. Kevin J. McKenna has been a most welcome task for me in recognition of our long friendship and in celebration of our common interests in paremiology. This friendship includes our dear wives Marcy Waterfall and Barbara Mieder, with the four of us having fond memories of our picnics, concerts, and bicycle trips enjoyed together in beautiful Vermont and elsewhere.

Ad multos annos, dear friend Kevin, and here are three proverbs for us: "Real friendship does not freeze in winter" (Russian), "Friendship is the salt of life" (German), and "Friendship is a magic weaver" (American). All the best on your sixty-fifth birthday, take care, and let's carry on for a few more years together—Wolfgang.

PART ONE

LITERATURE

PROVERBIAL WISDOM OF AN ENLIGHTENED EMPRESS: RUSSIAN PROVERBS IN CATHERINE THE GREAT'S *O, VREMIA!*

The contributions of the Russian Empress Catherine the Great (1728–1796) to the social and political life of eighteenth-century Russia understandably have received considerable scholarly attention—both in her adopted homeland as well as abroad. In addition to the important role Catherine played in shaping the political and social life of Russia, the provincial, German-born princess has won deserved praise as well for her contributions to Russian cultural and intellectual life. It is under her rule, for example, that a system of lay schools was inaugurated throughout the country; Catherine also opened the Smol'ny Institute in St. Petersburg as a finishing school for daughters of the Russian gentry, as well as organized a college of medicine at Moscow University. She, of course, is responsible for overseeing the completion of the Winter Palace and the world renowned Hermitage, which houses one of the world's richest holdings of Russian and European paintings.

It is unfortunate, however, that relatively little attention has been assigned to the role Catherine played in the development of eighteenth-century Russian literature. The little scholarship devoted to the writings of Catherine the Great traditionally has focused on her memoirs as well as her correspondence with Voltaire, Diderot, Grimm and other eighteenth-century *philosophes*. Catherine's belletristic writing has been the subject of far less

inquiry over the years, although increasing attention has been accorded her satirical-moralistic periodical essays, *Vsiakaia Vsiachina*, written in the style of John Addison and Richard Steele's *The Spectator*.¹ Still less scholarly attention has been given to Catherine's dramatic writings.² In fact, relatively few students of Russian literature are even aware of the fact that the Russian empress was the author of some twenty-five dramas during her lifetime or even that the German princess possessed a sufficient command of her newly-adopted language to be able to write her comedies, histories, and tragedies in the Russian language. The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that not only had Catherine sufficiently mastered the idiom, but that she succeeded to the extent of being able to incorporate a variety of Russian proverbs and proverbial expressions onto the pages of her comedies, as witnessed in her first dramatic comedy, *Oh, These Times!*

To appreciate the full extent of this accomplishment, it is helpful to understand the nature of the educational journey undertaken by this German-born princess transplanted to the Russian capital, as well as the impetus behind her decision to take on the challenging task not only to write fiction but to do so in her adopted Russian language. Sophie Auguste Fredericke von Anhalt-Zerbst arrived to the Russian imperial court early in 1744 at the invitation of the Russian Empress Elizabeth to be betrothed to her German cousin, Karl Peter Ulrich of Holstein, the grandson of Peter the Great. Unlike her fiancé, who displayed little interest in adapting to his new Russian surroundings, Sophie immediately dedicated herself to the study of the Russian language. According to her memoirs, her ardor for learning Russian compelled her to arise in the early morning hours to memorize lists of Russian vocabulary in order to hasten her mastery of the language.³ Her impressive efforts met with brilliant success as the young duchess revealed a considerable aptitude for colloquial Russian speech and, according to one source, could correctly call upon "a multitude of Russian proverbs, sayings, idioms, and characteristic local words and expressions."⁴ In addition to time spent on linguistic endeavors, Catherine was soon forced, by circumstances of her unhappy marriage to an imbecilic, inattentive husband, to seek intellectual companionship in the company of books. In addition to classics by Plato, Plutarch and Cicero, she turned to more contemporary works by Bayle, Montesquieu, Voltaire, and Diderot.

Judging by the twelve volumes of her writings, it would seem that the interest Catherine displayed in her youth for language and ideas remained a lifetime passion. Included among these works are copious letters and correspondence with Europe's leading *philosophes*, nearly two-dozen dramatic works,

historical plays, opera libretti, children's books, and personal memoirs.⁵ Prior to the set of three comedies she wrote in 1772, Catherine's publicistic writings fell into two categories: her "*Nakaz*" or "Instructions" to the Legislative Assembly of 1767 and her satirical-moralistic periodical, *Vsiakaia Vsiachina* or *All Sorts and Sundries*. Common to both categories, as well as to her dramatic works, are an underlying message and tone which seek to provide moral instruction on how Russian people should conduct themselves at home and in public. As we shall see in the discussion of her periodical essays and dramatic writings, ever mindful of the need to package her didactic message in an entertaining mode, Catherine would attach considerable significance to the use of proverbs in an attempt to speak to her Russian audience.

I have argued elsewhere that part of the impetus behind Catherine's decision to write her *Nakaz* stemmed from a desire to consolidate her position as the new Empress of Russia by communicating with her subjects in their native Russian language.⁶ As a German-born princess directly involved in the court coup that dethroned and subsequently executed her husband, Peter III, Catherine had good reason to establish her authority among her subjects and to win their approval and support on the merits of her enlightened good will and benevolence. While the *Nakaz* met with immediate success in France and Germany, with Voltaire describing it as the finest monument of the century and Frederick the Great appointing Catherine a member of the Berlin Academy, its impact on the Legislative Assembly proved negligible.

Although Catherine was disappointed with the Assembly's failure to implement the principles of her *Nakaz*, her first attempt at public writing continued to win repute elsewhere in Europe. Bolstered by this adulation, she determined to take pen in hand once again in an attempt to improve the manners and morals of her Russian subjects. Reluctantly acknowledging the failure of the *Nakaz* to channel public opinion along the enlightened principles she had set forth for the social and moral improvement of her people, Catherine turned from a legislative mode of discourse to the persuasive art of fiction. Adopting the *persona* of a wise and sagacious grandmother, Md. Vsiakaia Vsiachina, she turned to the model of Joseph Addison and Richard Steele's *The Spectator* in a renewed attempt to reach her Russian audience.⁷

Appearing weekly over the course of nearly two years (1769–1771), *All Sorts* utilized the conventional letter-to-the-editor format, which typically was followed by an editorial reply from Md. Vsiakaia Vsiachina. Reflective of her love for the colloquial Russian language, Catherine revelled in peppering the speech of her correspondents with a variety of proverbial expressions.

In addition, owing to the pithy and authoritative folk wisdom which they contained, Catherine on occasion injected proverb responses into Md. Vsiakaia Vsiachina's replies to the letters which she received.⁸ Indeed, in light of Catherine's didactic impulse to communicate her views on contemporary morals in a manner both engaging and entertaining, it is not at all surprising that she would avail herself throughout the pages of her journal of the authoritative folk wisdom contained in Russian proverbs. A detailed examination of *All Sorts* reveals the use of thirty-three proverbs which appear on the pages of twenty-five issues of the journal.⁹ Perhaps the best testimony to the success of Catherine's journal is evidenced by a flurry of journalistic "grandchildren" who suddenly came into existence within weeks of the appearance of *All Sorts*. In time, Catherine's "grandmotherly" patience with these new journals grew thin and she ceased publication of her periodical, soon turning her interests to a new vehicle for her didactic impulses, but not, as we shall see, abandoning her flare for Russian proverbial wisdom.

From her readings of numerous dramatic works and attendance at countless stage performances held at the Winter Palace and other St. Petersburg theaters, Catherine was well aware of the ability of the public theater to influence social values as well as public manners and mores. In all, the Russian plays which Catherine wrote comprise three thick volumes of her collected works, with a fourth volume containing plays she wrote in French.¹⁰ As indicated by the dedication of his new journal, *Zhivopisets* (*The Portrait Painter*), to the author of *Oh, These Times!*, Nikolai Novikov found much to praise in Catherine's first attempt at writing a dramatic comedy: "To the unknown gentleman who is the author of the comedy *Oh, These Times!* and [whose pen] is worthy of rivalry with that of Molière." In fact, he praises it as "the first comedy written precisely on our manners."¹¹ Written as well as performed on the imperial stage in 1772, *Oh, These Times!* is the best of a series of three plays (the other two are titled: "Mrs. Grumbler's Name Day," and "Mrs. Newsmonger and Her Family") Catherine wrote over a one-year period. Reminiscent of her use of Addison and Steele's *The Spectator* as the model for her own satirical journal, *All Sorts*, Catherine freely adapted her first comedy from the 1745 German play, *The Prayer Sister* [*Die Betschwester*] written by Christian F. Gellert.¹² While the two works share a number of plot similarities, Catherine's play fares better than the German original—especially as regards its light humor and wit.¹³

The content of *Oh, These Times!* enables Catherine to revisit many of the educational and social themes which she first sounded in *All Sorts*. In particular,

the focus of this satiric comedy is targeted on the “unenlightened” views of a backward, bigoted Moscow gentry, whose moral cowardice and vulgarity impede the kind of social and cultural reforms championed by Catherine. The link between her journalistic writing and comedy derives from a belief that the manners and mores of her people could be reformed under the influence of her admonitions coming from the stage and from her journal.¹⁴ The story’s rather simple plot opens with the intervention of Mr. Wise (Gospodin Nepustov) in negotiating a suitable match for his friend, Milksop (Molokososov), whose intended is Khristina, a young Moscow girl and granddaughter of Mrs. Pious (Gospozha Khanzhakhina), a bigoted noblewoman and religious hypocrite. It is clear from the beginning that the miserly and superstitious Pious seeks to prevent the union between Milksop and her granddaughter, especially because she does not want to relinquish the latter’s dowry. Typical of the comedy of manners in vogue at this time in Russia, a learned and well-read servant girl, named Mavra, is introduced into the action to comment on the duplicity of Pious’s seemingly devout character in the face of the miserliness and cruelty with which she actually treats Khristina and herself. Reminiscent of many of the opinions expressed in *All Sorts*, for example, Pious makes the following observation about providing dowries for one’s serfs:

Надлежало бы праительству-то сделать такое учреждение, чтоб оно, вместо нас, людей-то бы наших при женинтьбе снабжало. Правду сказать, ведь оно обо всем ничего не смотрят!¹⁵

(The government should establish an institution to provide a dowry to our serfs when they marry, rather than our having to do it. To tell the truth, the state should see to everything. We’ve had enough of its not concerning itself with anything anymore!)

Such railing against government inefficiency constitutes a major theme in *Oh, These Times!*, especially in the complaints of another in Catherine’s gallery of grumpy, old women who comprise Pious’s circle of friends. Mrs. Tattler (Gospozha Vestnikova) and Mrs. Marvel (Gospozha Chudikhina), for example, respectively bemoan police inaction and the manner in which Russian girls are being educated at the Smol’ny monastery in St. Petersburg. As Grigorii Gukovskii has noted, in light of Catherine’s vehement complaint to Voltaire and others of Moscow’s backwardness and fanaticism, it should come as no surprise in Catherine’s comedy that a Muscovite gentry woman would stand symbolically as “the center of opposition to the government and of all kinds of freethinking.”¹⁶ Against the backdrop of Pious’s bigotry and a flurry of

comical exchanges between Tattler and Marvel, the action of *Oh, These Times!* proceeds to reveal the level of superstition which governs the provincial minds of the Muscovite gentry. In her perceptive reading of Catherine's play, Lurana O'Malley, in fact, singles out superstition as "the engine that drives the plot" as Pious finally agrees to permit Khristina's marriage to Milksop following the embarrassing revelation that she believes a grasshopper signals an omen of imminent death.¹⁷

While the plot of *Oh, These Times!* is rather predictable, Catherine succeeds admirably in painting a gallery of interesting and humorous *dramatis personae* who embody both, in her view, positive and repugnant aspects of Russian life in the second half of the eighteenth century. The latter are symbolically represented by the trio of female characters, Pious, Tattler, and Marvel who, as at least one observer has noted, respectively stand as the embodiment of the vices of hypocrisy, superstition, and a passion for news and gossip.¹⁸ The ignorant and bigoted Pious, as we have seen, is depicted, much in the manner of Gellert's Frau Richardinn, as a superficially devout grandmother whose superstitious beliefs and miserly disposition stand in the way of Khristina's marriage. In addition to the above-mentioned cruelty toward Khristina and Mavra, her behavior in this play is chiefly associated with a predilection for divining bad omens in virtually everything that surrounds her.

The remaining two female caricatures in this trio, whom Catherine uses to illustrate the venality of the Moscow gentry, are no less humorous nor "unenlightened" in their attitudes. They also represent one of the main departures Catherine takes from Gellert's *The Prayer Sister*, where only one person, Frau Richardinn, personifies virtually all the vices and foibles in the play.¹⁹ The effect resulting from this multiplicity of flawed *personae* in *Oh, These Times!* produces "an impression not of a single idiosyncratic character but rather of an entire stratum of society, a generation of the foolish and superstitious."²⁰ The high degree of superstition among the Muscovite gentry is reinforced in the person of Mrs. Marvel, whom in Act Two Catherine introduces as being frightened out of a room upon hearing that the master of the house had died thirty years earlier precisely in the spot where Marvel is sitting.

In her development of Marvel's character, Catherine cleverly selects a series of proverbs to be intoned by these shallow women in comical situations. To dramatize the ignorance and backwardness of Pious's world, for example, Catherine creates a scene in which the three women share their thoughts about the uselessness of education for women in Russia. Marvel states her view in the form of a rhetorical question: "Начто девку учить грамоте?" / What