

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

NICHOLAS S. PASHIN (1908 – 1976)

Nicholas S. Pashin, emeritus senior lecturer in Russian, died in the study of his Palo Alto home Saturday, February 7, of a heart attack. Although he had retired in 1973, his teaching and scholarly activity had continued unabated. During the winter quarter, 1976, he was teaching three courses, assisting Alexander Solzhenitsyn with his research, and translating American literature into Russian. He is survived by his wife, Helene, a library specialist at the Hoover Institution, and by his son, Andrei, a student at the University of California (Davis).

Mr. Pashin, the son of a village teacher, was born in Russia in 1908. In 1938 he graduated from the Moscow Institute of Literature and began advanced study at the Pedagogical Institute in Moscow, but the outbreak of World War II prevented him from completing his dissertation. Drafted in 1941 and sent to the front lines, he was taken prisoner by the Germans in 1942 and spent the rest of the war in German camps. After the war he refused repatriation and stayed in displaced person camps until 1950, when he came to this country and joined the Russian faculty at the U.S. Army Language School in Monterey. Aside from teaching at the University of Maryland Overseas Program in Heidelberg for a few months, he remained at Monterey until he entered Stanford as an M.A. candidate in 1960. His M.A. essay on the style of Zoshchenko's stories demonstrated his talents for both linguistic and literary study, and he was invited to join the Stanford faculty as a lecturer in 1962.

Mr. Pashin was again prevented from writing a doctoral dissertation, by the onset of serious illness in 1965. But this did not interrupt the scholarly activity which he had begun at Monterey. He was co-author of a textbook on basic Russian and published articles on several modern Russian writers and on the Moscow Institute of Literature. At the same time he was active in propagating the culture of his adopted country among the Russian reading public, both in emigration and in the Soviet Union. He was the first to translate Orwell's *1984* into Russian in its entirety; as might be expected, it became an underground classic in the Soviet Union and has been reprinted several times. Mr. Pashin also translated fiction by Steinbeck, Hemingway, and Norman Mafler as well as many critical essays and articles on American culture for the journal *America Illustrated*, which is circulated in the Soviet Union.

Mr. Pashin's love of Russian literature led him to pore over the many volumes which the official presses and underground typewriters of the Soviet Union produce each year. He had the rare critical independence to find fascinating work in the most unlikely places and would guide his students and colleagues toward it. This pioneering spirit was manifest in his greatest contribution to the study of Russian culture in the West - a series of reviews and articles on Solzhenitsyn and the first course on that author in this country.

Mr. Pashin advanced the Study of Russian culture at Stanford in many ways. He introduced the Stanford community to a number of émigré scholars and writers, and during his sixteen years in the Slavic department there were few facets of the Russian language or its

literature that his courses did not explore. The list spans almost the entire curriculum: Russian lexicology, phonology and syntax; conversation and composition; the novel, the short story, drama, folklore, literary criticism, Chekhov and Solzhenitsyn. Mr. Pashin taught the students in his department not only Russian culture and its language, but how to speak and write about that culture. In this the department placed a heavy responsibility upon him, and he responded to it successfully and conscientiously. He was an outstanding teacher because he was able to recognize the abilities of each student as an individual and to make that student rise above these abilities in gradual steps. Mr. Pashin spoke Russian beautifully on many levels, from the scholarly to the colloquial, but he never reacted to the mistakes of his students (and colleagues) with anything less than complete patience. He had to evaluate his students, of course, but he never mistook a student's performance on a given exercise for the student's human value and potential, and he was remarkable in his ability to respond to his students as whole human beings. In recognition of these many services to Stanford and to the Slavic Department, he was one of the first to be promoted to the rank of senior lecturer once the classification was established a few years ago.

Mr. Pashin witnessed and was the victim of some of the greatest disasters of this century. He had every cause for pessimism, bitterness, and cynicism, yet he refused to seize upon them. He remained passionately committed to the survival of Russian culture as a living phenomenon. His colleagues and students will remember not only his scholarship and the love of Russian culture that he shared with them, but his warm friendship and kindness, and his unfailing moral values.

Terence Emmons
William Mills Todd III, Chairman
Joseph A. Van Campen