

## Charles E. Gribble In Memoriam

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of our colleague and friend Charles Edward Gribble, Professor Emeritus of Slavic and East European Languages and Literatures, on June 3, 2016 after a long illness. Chuck (as he was known to his friends and colleagues) had a distinguished career of teaching, research, and service in the field, which spanned nearly 60 years, 35 of which he spent at the Ohio State University. He is survived by his wife, Lyubomira Parpulova Gribble, and his daughter, Elizabeth Rayna Gribble.

Chuck was born on November 10, 1936 and grew up in Lansing, Michigan, where his father was an executive with the General Motors Corporation. He entered the University of Michigan with the intention of specializing in physics, but soon he became captivated by the sound, structure, and history of foreign languages—a passion that would endure to the end of his life. Under the guidance of the distinguished Slavist and Byzantinist Ihor Ševčenko, he received his B.A. with High Distinction in Slavic Languages in 1957. Subsequently, he served as a graduate teaching assistant in the Department of Slavic Languages at the University of Michigan.

In 1958, Chuck entered the graduate program in Slavic Languages and Literatures at Harvard University, where he studied under the eminent Slavic linguist and structuralist Roman Jakobson. After receiving his A.M. degree, he served as a guide and translator at the first American National Exposition in the USSR held in Sokol'niki Park in Moscow in the summer of 1959. At the exhibition, he met President Eisenhower and witnessed the historic Kitchen Debate between then-Vice President Richard Nixon and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev.

Returning to the United States, Chuck continued his graduate studies in Slavic linguistics at Harvard with a focus on historical Slavic linguistics and philology. He developed significant expertise not only in Russian but also in Old Church Slavonic, Serbo-Croatian, Bulgarian, Czech, Polish, and Lithuanian. He returned to the USSR as an exchange student at Moscow State University in 1960–61, where he had the opportunity to work with the prominent linguist V. A. Zvegincev. Back at Harvard, he wrote his doctoral dissertation under the supervision of Horace G. Lunt on an early 12th-century East Slavic manuscript, *Linguistic Problems of the Vygoleksinskij Sbornik*, and defended it in 1967).

While still a doctoral candidate, Chuck worked as Assistant Professor of Russian at Brandeis University (1962–68). Subsequently, he served as Assistant and then Associate Professor at Indiana University (1968–75). During that time he served as the resident director of several study-abroad programs both in the USSR and in Yugoslavia.

In 1975 Chuck began his 35-year service at The Ohio State University Department of Slavic and East European Languages and Literatures, where he was promoted to the rank of Professor in 1989. A versatile instructor, he taught the Structure and History of Russian, Old Church Slavonic, South Slavic Linguistics, South Slavic Cultures, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Bulgarian, Czech, among other subjects. He directed eight doctoral dissertations and nine M.A. theses and served on innumerable graduate committees. In addition, Chuck served as chair of the department from 1990 to 1996 and later as Graduate Studies Chair from 2001 to 2008. He was also a longtime member of the Advisory Council of the Resource Center for Medieval Slavic Studies. In recognition of his dedicated teaching, scholarship, and service, the University honored him with the Harlan Hatcher Arts and Sciences Distinguished Faculty Award in 2007.

Chuck published his first book, *Readings in the history of the Russian language, 11th to 15th centuries* (1964) while still a graduate student. This was followed by *Medieval Slavic texts* (1973; reissued 2016); *A short dictionary of 18th-century Russian* (1975; reissued 2016); *Russian root list with a sketch of word formation* (1973; second edition 1982); *Workbook to the Russian root list* (with Gary Browning, 1985); *Reading Bulgarian through Russian* (1987; second revised edition 2013); and, as his crowning achievement, *The forms of Russian* (2014). In addition, he was the editor of *Studies presented to Professor Roman Jakobson by his students* (1968), *Alexander Lipson: In memoriam* (1994), and *Monastic traditions: Selected proceedings of the Fourth International Hilandar Conference* (with Predrag Matejić, 2003). He also published some 30 articles, 19 book reviews, and 14 coauthored volumes of curricular materials for the Individualized Instruction program at OSU. He served as editor-in-chief of the journal *Folia Slavica* from 1977 to 1988 and was a longtime member of the editorial board of *Palaeobulgarica*, the premier journal of medieval Slavic studies. In recognition of his impact in scholarship, Chuck was presented with a Festschrift on the occasion of his 70th birthday—*Studia Caroliensia: Papers in linguistics and folklore in honor of Charles E. Gribble*, edited by Robert A. Rothstein, Ernest Scatton, and Charles E. Townsend (2006).

Chuck also left a profound and enduring mark on the field of Slavic studies through his leadership of Slavica Publishers, which he founded in 1966. His vision as publisher was to promote high-quality textbooks and monographs on literature, folklore, and linguistics that were too specialized for consideration by large university presses. During his 30-year editorship (1966–97), Slavica grew to become the largest venue for Slavistic publications in the Western

Hemisphere. As the publisher, Chuck personally edited some 250 books and over 60 issues of scholarly journals. Thus he had a huge impact on the work of other scholars and, in general, on the profile of Slavic studies in the United States and Canada. His excellence as editor was one of the major reasons why the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages, a major professional organization in our field, presented him with a Special Commendation in 1986 and its Award for Distinguished Contribution to the Profession in 1992.

Chuck worked with special devotion to promote the field of Bulgarian studies in North America through his publications, editorial work, teaching, and service to the profession. He served as president of the Bulgarian Studies Association from 2001 to 2003; during that time, he co-organized the organization's annual conference, which was held in Columbus. He was highly respected in Bulgarian scholarly circles, was interviewed in a national newspaper, and received several honors from Bulgarian institutions—a Jubilee Medal from the Bulgarian Embassy for “contributing to expanding relations between the USA and the People’s Republic of Bulgaria” in 1985; a second Jubilee Medal from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in 1986; a Jubilee Badge of Honor from Sofia University in 1988; and a Certificate of Commendation from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences for his scholarly, pedagogical, and organizational contributions to Bulgarian studies in 2003. In 2006, he was presented with the Marin Drinov Medal, the highest honor given by the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, which is considered the equivalent of an honorary degree.

In the course of his long career, Chuck touched innumerable lives with his kindness, compassion, generosity, and humor. He loved teaching and was a selfless mentor and advisor to his students, who never found him too busy to help and who never left his office without a kind word and a handful of Hersey’s Kisses. When his physical sufferings forced him to retire, above all else he missed his interactions with students. He was an inestimable blessing to our program and to our field, and he will be sorely missed.

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