

5th Biennial John Updike Society Conference



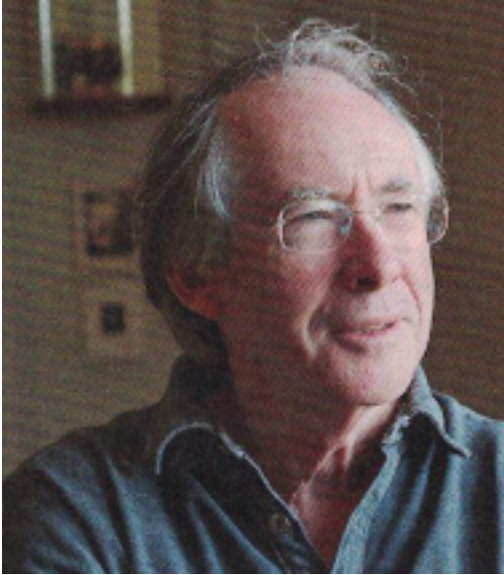
University of Belgrade, Faculty of Philology
Serbia - June 1-5, 2018

*—Celebrating the 50th anniversary of COUPLES
and Updike abroad and in translation—*

Conference host: Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade
Conference hotel: Hotel Palace Belgrade (with additional rooms at
University of Belgrade's Students' Home "King Alexander I")
Conference director: Professor Biljana Dojčinović

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

- The Fifth Biennial John Updike Society Conference is the first to be held outside the United States. Updike visited Belgrade, then the capital of Yugoslavia and now the capital of Serbia, in 1978.
- Opening keynote address by Ian McEwan, who knew Updike and is well read and widely translated in Serbia.
- A second keynote talk by Prof. Alexander Shurbanov, Updike's Bulgarian translator and also an accomplished writer and poet
- Plenary session by Michael Updike featuring photographs of the family's year in London and their travels abroad following the publication of *Couples*
- Tracing Updike in Belgrade: walking tours through Kalemegdan Fortress and Skadarlija Bohemian quarter, with a visit to the Writer's Union Club for a kind of hedonist mapping of Belgrade and reenactment of a tour Updike took 40 years earlier
- Meeting Updike: a panel of the translators, journalists, writers, editor who have met Updike on this and other trips
- An optional all-day bus tour of Serbian sites: Oplenac (St. George's Church and vineyards), Viminacium (Roman ruins, mammoth park), and Smederevo Fortress (capital of Serbia in the Middle Ages, built 1427-30), with lunch and wine sampling at Tarposh restaurant and vinery
- Shorter tours of the Tesla Museum and Zemun, with visits to the Hotel Moscow (where Updike stayed) and the National Library, where the society will sponsor a public program on Updike and Politics
- A reception at the residence of Kyle Randolph Scott, U.S. Ambassador to Serbia (subject to change or cancellation because of the fluidity of world affairs)



Ian McEwan is one of the most significant and respected writers in English. Like Updike, whom he knew, McEwan worked in multiple genres, the author of 14 novels, three short story collections, two plays, two children's books, five screenplays, and even a libretto. Among his numerous awards are the Booker Prize for his eighth novel, *Amsterdam* (1998); the Jerusalem Prize for the Freedom of the Individual in Society (2011); and the 50th Anniversary Gold Medal from the University of Sussex. Long an advocate for Updike's legacy and an admitted beneficiary of Updike's influence, McEwan has gone on record as saying that Updike's Rabbit quartet is the prime contender for Great American Novel. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, the Royal Society of Arts, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. His most recent novel is *Nutshell* (2016), which retells the story of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* from the point of view of an unborn child.



Alexander Shurbanov is a distinguished Shakespeare scholar who translated Updike's novel, *Gertrude and Claudius*, into Bulgarian. Now Professor Emeritus at the

University of Sofia in Bulgaria, Shurbanov corresponded with Updike while translating the *Hamlet* “prequel” and was also a longtime friend of Blaga Dimitrova, the prototype for Vera Glavanakova from Updike’s O. Henry Award-winning short story “The Bulgarian Poetess.” Shurbanov, who also taught at the University of London, UCLA, and SUNY-Albany, has translated 14 texts ranging from Chaucer, Shakespeare, and the *Magna Carta* to *Tales* by Beatrix Potter and poetry by Milton, Coleridge, Dylan Thomas, Ted Hughes, and Rabindranath Tagore. As a poet and essayist he is also the author of 18 collections, including three bilingual Bulgarian-English titles: *Frost-Flowers* (Princeton, 2001), *Beware: Cats* (Sofia, 2001), and most recently *Foresun: Selected Poems in Bulgarian and English* (Sofia, 2016).



Michael Updike, a slate sculptor by profession, is the youngest son of John Updike. At the very first conference at Alvernia University in Reading, Pa., Michael took part in a panel with his mother, Mary, and sisters Elizabeth and Miranda; at the second conference at Suffolk University in Boston, he and Elizabeth mounted an extensive exhibit of objects mentioned in their father’s fiction and non-fiction and Michael also led a walking tour of Ipswich, where his father had an office within walking distance of the 18th-century house the family lived in. In Serbia he will share slides and talk about the year that his family spent in London after *Couples* was published. Included will be slides of “side vacations to Morocco, Austria, etc.”

CALL FOR PAPERS

Keynotes and plenaries are set, but papers on ANY aspect of John Updike's work or life are still sought for the academic sessions. Especially appropriate topics include:

- Translations: histories, methods, relation to an author's reputation, human elements and biases, censorship issues, etc.
- Updike and Traveling (inside and outside the U.S.) as both real-life experience and fictional motive/inspiration
- Updike in the U.S.S.R.: his reception, bibliographies, interview(s), translations; Updike in (Post) Socialist Countries
- Updike and Religion(s) and Ideologies (socialism, pacifism, etc.)
- Updike and Gender or Ethnic Politics
- Coming of Age / Aging in Updike's Fiction
- Intertextuality in Updike's Fiction
- Comparative Perspectives (Updike and Laclos, Proust, Joyce, Danilo Kiš, Ian McEwan, etc.)
- Papers on works celebrating a milestone anniversary in 2018: *Couples* (50th), *The Coup* (40th), *S.* (30th), *Collected Poems* and *Love Factories* (25th), *Bech at Bay* (20th), and *The Widows of Eastwick* (10th)

Scholars may also wish to consider the anniversaries of the translations of John Updike's works into their language, and do bring copies with you. At the end of the meeting we will donate these copies to [The John Updike Childhood Home](#) in Shillington, Pennsylvania.

Proposal Deadline: January 31, 2018

One-page proposals for 15- to 20-minute papers on all aspects of Updike's life and work and especially suggested topics should be sent, along with a brief one- or two-paragraph bio, to conference director Biljana Dojčinović:

jus5thconference@gmail.com and cc: jus5thconference@fil.bg.ac.rs

Successful proposals will be acknowledged within two weeks of receipt. To present a paper or moderate a panel at the conference, participants must be members of The John Updike Society and sign up for the full conference registration. Those who have papers accepted can join when they register for the conference.

For membership information and additional information about The John Updike Society, see the society's website at <http://blogs.iwu.edu/johnupdikesociety>. For general questions about the society, contact James Plath, jplath@iwu.edu

SCHIFF TRAVEL GRANTS

Thanks to the generosity of The Robert and Adele Schiff Family Foundation, the John Updike Society will award up to FOUR \$1500 travel-to-conference grants for scholars under 40 to be able to attend the Serbia conference. Applicants need not be members at the time, but must join before grants can be paid.

In addition, up to THREE \$1000 travel-to-conference grants will be awarded to society members needing assistance to be able to participate in the conference.

Both grants are merit- *and* need-based, and interested scholars should **apply by November 30, 2017.**

To apply, send a one-page proposal for a 15- to 20-minute paper appropriate for the conference, along with one paragraph about yourself, what grant you are applying for, and why the grant is important to you, to society president James Plath (jplath@iwu.edu). The selection committee will make their decisions and announce successful applicants by the end of the first week of December 2017.



CONFERENCE FEES

Full Registration—\$90

Includes all academic sessions, Belgrade tours and receptions, along with dinner in Zemun and a closing dinner in Skadarlija, where the Updikes dined. A commemorative conference t-shirt will be given to all full registrants.

Membership—\$30 regular, \$25 for students and retirees

Required in order to present or moderate at the conference, but everyone is encouraged to join the society. Membership includes all issues of *The John Updike Review* published during the calendar year. The society is inclusive and welcoming, with both academic and non-academic members.

Social Registration—\$75

Intended for spouses and traveling companions who accompany a society member to the conference and do not want to attend academic sessions, but would like to join the registrant for social events and tours. Social registration includes the Zemun and Skadarlija dinners, all receptions, Belgrade tours, admission to the Tesla Museum, coffee/cake at Hotel Moscow, and admission to the McEwan keynote and the program at the National Library (which are open to the public).

Sunday Bus Trip—\$45

Registrants have the option of exploring Belgrade on their own or taking this all-day bus tour of Serbian sites: Viminacium (Roman ruins, mammoth park), Smederevo Fortress (Built 1427-30, capital of Serbia in the Middle Ages), Tarposh winery and restaurant (lunch and a sampling of wines included), and a visit to Oplenac (St. George's Church, Karadjordje's Museum, Royal Winery). Admissions are included in the fee.

PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE



DAY 1—Friday, June 1

5:30-7:15 p.m.—Registration open

6:00-7:15 p.m.—Reception hosted by the Faculty of Philology (pictured above)

7:30-7:40 p.m.—Welcome by the Dean of the Faculty of Philology and society president

7:40-9 p.m.—Opening keynote: Ian McEwan (talk, questions, booksigning)

DAY 2—Saturday, June 2

8:30 a.m.-1 p.m.—Registration open

8:30-9:20 a.m.—Plenary Session: Translating Updike (panel)

9:45-11 a.m.—Academic Sessions (two concurrent, three papers each + moderator)

11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.—Keynote: Prof. Alexander Shurbanov

12:30-2 p.m.—Visit to the Writer’s Union Club (lunch there or in area, on own)

2:30-5:30 p.m.—Tour of Tesla Museum (pictured below)



6-8 p.m.—Reception at the residence of U.S. Ambassador Kyle Randolph Scott (may be changed or cancelled, given the fluidity of world events)

DAY 3—Sunday, June 3

Optional all-day bus tour of Serbian sites: Viminacium (Roman ruins, mammoth park), Smederevo Fortress (capital of Serbia in the Middle Ages, built 1427-30, pictured below), lunch at Tarposh restaurant and winery (included), and a visit to Oplenac (St. George’s Church, Karadjordje’s Museum, Royal Winery); those not taking the tour have a free day.



DAY 4—Monday, June 4

8:30-11 a.m.—Registration open

8:30-9:20 a.m.—Plenary Session: On Meeting Updike Abroad (panel)

9:30-10:45 a.m.—Academic Sessions (two concurrent, three papers each + moderator)

11 a.m.-12:15 p.m.—Academic Sessions (two concurrent, three papers each + moderator)

12:30-2 p.m.—Lunch on own

2:15-3:30 p.m.—Academic Sessions (two concurrent, three papers each + moderator)

4-5:30 p.m.—Tour of Belgrade Fortress and Kalemegdan Park

5:30 p.m.—Boat or land taxi to Zemun (on own)

6-11 p.m.—Tour of Zemun, dinner at Reka, Saran, or Salas (included)



DAY 5—Tuesday, June 5

8:30-9:20 a.m.—Plenary Session (Michael Updike: Slides from the family's year in London and abroad after the publication of *Couples*)

9:30-10:45 a.m.—Academic Sessions (two concurrent, three papers each + moderator)

11 a.m.-12 p.m.—John Updike Society membership meeting

12:30-2 p.m.—Refreshments

2:30-3:30 p.m.—Visit to the Hotel Moscow with coffee/cake (included)

4-4:30 p.m.—Visit to the Church St. Sava (pictured above) via bus

4:30-5 p.m.—Tour around National Library

5-6:30 p.m.—Public plenary at the National Library: Updike and Politics

7:30 p.m.—Closing dinner at Skadarlija

REGISTRATION FORM

Name

Phone

Address (street, city, state/country, zipcode)

Email

Dietary restrictions

Please indicate number of registrations and amount for each, then total.

_____ Full Conference Registration (Includes all academic sessions and receptions, along with dinner in Zemun and a closing dinner in Skadarlija, where the Updikes dined, as well as a commemorative conference t-shirt. Size:

_____ Medium

_____ Large

_____ Extra Large

_____ Membership (\$30 regular, \$25 students/retirees; required to present or appear on a panel at the conference)

_____ Social Registration (\$75, intended for spouses and traveling companions who accompany a society member to the conference and do not want to attend academic sessions, but would like to join the registrant for social events and tours. Social registration includes the Zemun and Skadarlija dinners, all receptions, Belgrade tours, admission to the Tesla Museum, coffee/cake at Hotel Moscow, and admission to the McEwan keynote and the program at the National Library (open to the public).

TOTAL _____ (sorry, no checks not drawn on U.S. banks)

Make **check** payable to John Updike Society and send to: James Plath, 1504 Paddington Dr., Bloomington, IL 61704. Via **PayPal**, send payment to johnupdikesociety@iwu.edu

LODGING INFORMATION

Hotels in Belgrade book quickly; to guarantee a room you MUST register for the conference and book a hotel by MARCH 1, 2018.

HOTEL PALACE BELGRADE—Although John Updike and his wife, Martha, stayed at the Hotel Moscow, the society chose Hotel Palace Belgrade as the conference hotel because it is affordable and close to the University, good restaurants, and the main shopping streets in the heart of Belgrade. Breakfast is included.



Hotel Palace Belgrade website: <http://www.palacehotel.co.rs/en/>
You can register online or by telephone (+381 11 262 7 330); mention The John Updike Society in the comments section and use the code JUS5.

KRALJ ALEKSANDAR I RESIDENCE HALL—Another option, especially for younger people, is the University residence hall located at 75 Bulevaru Kralja Aleksandra St. It is about \$30 per night. Breakfast is not included, but there are great bakeries and little cafes in the area. It is a 30-minute walk or 10-minute bus ride to the Faculty of Philology, where

sessions will be held. The rooms are rudimentary but cozy, and most university guest lecturers stay there. The rooms have desks, chairs, lamps, cupboards, shelves, kitchenettes, bathrooms, and cable Internet and television. Within the hall there is a student restaurant and a commercial restaurant.



Kralj Aleksandar I Residence Hall website:

<http://www.sc.rs/sc/index.php?run1=32&run=dom&lang=eng>

To reserve a single or double room contact Biljana, who will book the room for you: biljanadn@gmail.com

More expensive hotels in the vicinity of the Faculty of Philology:

Belgrade Art Hotel—<http://belgradearthotel.com/>

Hotel Envoy—<https://www.envoy-hotel.com/and>

Square Nine—<http://www.squarenine.rs/>

Belgrade Courtyard Marriott—

[https://www.google.rs/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#q=belgrade+courtyard+marriott&*](https://www.google.rs/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#q=belgrade+courtyard+marriott&*>)

About Belgrade and Serbia

Belgrade is two hours from so many places in Europe, and up to four times daily there are planes to Vienna, Austria. You might consider planning a vacation around the conference and traveling before and/or after the conference, either in Serbia or to any number of European destinations.

Slideshow announcing Serbia as the conference site:

<https://blogs.iwu.edu/johnupdikesociety/2016/10/17/see-you-in-serbia-john-updike-society-members-look-toward-2018/#more-3501>

BBC Travel article on “Serbia: The Place to Be; A Rich History and Culture” (includes link to “The Perfect Belgrade Itinerary”):

<http://www.bbc.com/storyworks/travel/serbia-the-place-to-be/serbia-a-rich-history-and-culture>

A *Vogue* magazine article touting Belgrade as the “new Berlin”:

<http://www.vogue.com/article/belgrade-travel-guide-the-new-berlin>

An interactive map of Belgrade:

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1q9yawK07opVeM9JMbWg5CeeAUyc&ll=44.84486602914878%2C20.38588249999998&z=13>

Biljana's students' research on Updike in Belgrade:

<https://blogs.iwu.edu/johnupdikesociety/2017/05/28/students-research-updike-in-belgrade-1978/>

Teaser: Come to Belgrade:

<https://blogs.iwu.edu/johnupdikesociety/2017/05/23/come-to-belgrade-a-fifth-biennial-john-updike-society-conference-teaser/>

CIA World Factbook on Serbia:

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ri.html>

U.S. State Department, Bureau of Consular Affairs page on assistance for U.S. Citizens (valid passport but no visa required):

<https://travel.state.gov/content/studentsabroad/en/beforeyougo/csi/serbia.html>

