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www.basees.org



British Association for Slavonic
and East European Studies



@BASEES

President's Report

As I write this, I am anxious. I am anxious because Brexit has pulled ahead in the pre-referendum polls. I am anxious about the consequences of the NATO military-exercises in Poland, about the possibility of unstable fingers on nuclear triggers, about the resumption of war in Ukraine, and the electoral advances of right-wing parties in East Central Europe and the Balkans.

The average person on the street should share my anxieties. For those of us in Russian, Eurasian and East European Studies, the potential impact of the geopolitical shifts we are witnessing is of even more immediate concern. On the one hand, the truism holds that, that the less stable the geopolitical situation, the higher the premium placed on scholars with detailed knowledge of the world's troubled regions – only last week (at a workshop in Berlin), a colleague told me about the German government's investment in multiple new posts in Russian and East European studies (Jo Johnson please note). Set against this, we know that unstable geopolitical situations create difficulties for researching the regions involved. The visa problems for non-nationals travelling to research in certain parts of the former Soviet realm are now well-known; dual-nationality passport holders working in the UK and Europe might also soon have difficult decisions to make. Referendum aside, domestic politics in the UK are not propitious either, with university departments subject to 'right-sizing' exercises and research funding in the humanities, arts and social sciences firmly in the government's cost-cutting cross-hairs.

This is a time of big challenges in Slavonic and East European studies. I see my role as President to help steer the Association's responses to them. BASEES is not overflowing with financial resources, but it offers a wealth of human capital. Members of the committee pursue the interests of different sections of our varied community with energy and commitment, representing BASEES at meetings of allied professional associations, the Funding Councils and



other official bodies. Through e-mail circulation, bulletins and social media we also try to involve individual members by alerting them to on-going campaigns. Most recently, in addition to formal BASEES representation, individual members of the Association were among the signatories of the petition against the downsizing of Modern Languages at the University of Nottingham. This pressure contributed to the success of the campaign, as members will know from David Norris's letter in this Newsletter. I encourage members to bring to our attention issues which they believe the Association may help resolve.

BASEES's principal direct means of supporting and developing scholarship in Slavonic and East European studies is the small travel and research grants it makes to members; the support it gives to the growing number of Study Groups; and, above all, in organizing the annual conference, our most visible activity. I recall from the 1980s, when I served as BASEES treasurer, that far from worrying about geopolitics, my anxieties focused on whether the conference would attract sufficient participants for the Association to remain in the black (this was before *perestroika* and the tide of protest in Eastern Europe grabbed the world's attention). This is not an anxiety we have today. The conference now attracts large numbers of participants (407 at this year's event, including 127 student members and 18 personnel manning the exhibitor stands). Encouragingly, many are young and growing numbers are from Europe (please keep coming even if the worst happens on June 23rd). The 2016 conference continued the tradition of a plenary >>

Workshops, Conferences and Calls for Papers

SEMINAR: BASEES 19th-century Study Group

University of Bristol

21 October 2016

The BASEES 19th-century Study Group will host a double seminar dedicated to the 150th anniversary of Dostoevskii's *Crime and Punishment*, featuring talks from Dr Oliver Ready (Oxford), whose new translation of the novel appeared in 2014, and Dr Sarah Hudspith (Leeds), author of *Dostoevsky and the Idea of Russianness* (Routledge, 2004). It will be video-linked with a larger *Crime and Punishment at 150* conference at the University of British Columbia.

CONFERENCE: 'Poets and Power: Akhmatova, Gumilyev, Mandelstam, Pasternak, Tsvetaeva'

Moffat, Scotland

21-23 October 2016

The Fifth Moffat Russian Conference is organized by Moffat Book Events with the State Library for Foreign Literature (VGBIL), the Institute of Translation, and the State Museum of Language, Moscow. Confirmed speakers include Mike Basker, Fiona Bjorling, Alexander Etkind, Peter France, Henry Hardy, Andrew Kahn, Andy MacSmith, Lesley Milne, and Alexandra Smith. Speakers from Russia include Dmitri Bak, Oleg Lekmanov, and Pavel Nerler. The Conference will also commemorate the 200th anniversary of the visit by the future Nicholas I to Scotland in 1816. For up-to-date details of the programme and for any further information, see moffatbookevents.com or contact Alan Thomson (alan.thomson25@gmail.com).

CfP: BASEES Conference 2017

Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge

31 March-2 April 2017

Panels, roundtables and papers for the BASEES 2017 Annual Conference are welcome in the areas of Politics; History; Sociology and Geography; Film and Media; Languages and Linguistics; Literatures and Cultures; Economics. The conference especially welcomes participation by postgraduate research students and by young scholars. The 2017 conference coincides with the centenary of the 1917 revolutions in Russia. We will mark the occasion with special key notes and roundtables reflecting on the legacy and study of the Russian Revolution. Delegates are also invited to propose panels and roundtables on related topics. The deadline for panel/roundtable proposals is 30 September 2016, and 16 September 2016 for individual paper proposals. See basees2017.org for more information.

lecture opening – this year, with Professor David Moon's arresting lecture about scientific exchanges between Russian and American agronomists on steppe land ecology, new to most of the audience. A new departure, giving delegates a welcome break from the intensity of panel discussions, was Molodyi Teatr's play 'Bloody East Europeans', which made for hilarious but uncomfortable viewing. We also had an impromptu screening of Evgeny Tsymbal's documentary film *In Search of a Lost Paradise*, in homage to the artist Valentina Kropivnitskaya who took part in the Izmailovsky Park 'bulldozer exhibition' of 1974. This year's Women's Forum panel discussion on 'The challenges of field work in Eurasia', with contributions from Negar Elodie Behzadi, Polly Jones, Ellen Mickiewicz, Siobhan Hearne, and myself, attracted a large audience. The forum's success shows that there is scope and demand for activities which consolidate diversity in the Association; it demonstrates the value of providing varied types of non-monetary support to scholars across the disciplines, particularly those just setting out on their careers. Next year's centenary of the Bolshevik revolution will be reflected in the 2017 conference programme. The call for papers has already gone out (see left).

We expect a large turnout so please submit proposals for panels, papers and posters as soon as possible.

Finally, I am sure that all members of BASEES will want to join with me in thanking Peter Waldron for having steered this Association so well for the past three years. He was an exemplary president; well-organised and energetic in his pursuit of the members' interests. We are fortunate that he will not disappear from the scene. The presidential term, as I discovered too late after I had agreed to be nominated, spills over at both ends of the formal presidency. Before taking office the president-elect stands in for the president if she or he is unable to attend meetings and tags along when a show of force is deemed necessary. The President also takes on a variety of roles after demitting office where continuity and experience are needed, such as serving on the Book Prize committee and, in a new initiative we are discussing, organising a BASEES regional conference. The thanks we extend to Peter are, therefore, for the more-than-four-years-and-counting that he has devoted to the Association. I will do my best to build on the solid legacy he has left me.

Judith Pallot

Letter from Dr David Norris, University of Nottingham

Dear colleagues,

The Department of Russian and Slavonic Studies at the University of Nottingham wishes to thank all those who have sent letters and messages of support in recent months after the announcement of proposed reductions in staffing in the Department and in Modern Languages more generally at Nottingham. It is with great delight that we are able to pass on the news that there will be no compulsory redundancies in any of the Departments of Modern Languages.

The Faculty will make savings through a mixture of procedures involving a greater phasing of reductions, redeployment of staff to other Schools, non-replacement of staff leaving, voluntary redundancy and reduction in contracted hours for some staff. Taken together, these changes address the Faculty Pro-Vice Chancellor Jeremy Gregory's concerns about the cost base in Modern Languages. The scale of reductions in Russian and Slavonic Studies is lower than initially proposed, and we have little doubt that the very strong support from the modern languages community in general, as well as the information which, with your help, we were able to supply about the national importance of the subject and the need for staff-student ratios which are not necessarily pitched at the same level as other subjects, were significant factors in moderating the initial proposal. It is noteworthy that the Faculty PVC has acknowledged the "large number of letters and expressions of support for the affected departments from subject associations and University departments across the world" as "testimony to the very high regard in which our departments are held". Once again, we wish to express our warm and sincere gratitude to everyone who contributed to our petition, to our internet campaign, and we would also like to thank our undergraduate and postgraduate students for their vocal and determined demonstrations of support.

The Department remains very strong and continues to provide a varied menu of Russian and South Slav languages and cultural studies from medieval history to contemporary film and literature. We look forward, after a period of uncertainty, to getting back to our proper employment in providing excellent teaching and producing research of the highest quality.

Sincerely

All in Russian and Slavonic Studies at the University of Nottingham

Dr David A. Norris, david.norris@nottingham.ac.uk

BASEES Prizes

We are now accepting nominations for next year's BASEES prize awards. Nomination forms are available on our website and all nominations should be submitted by 1 July 2016. Please do submit any eligible publications for consideration. The awards are:

The Alexander Nove Prize for scholarly work of high quality in Russian, Soviet and post-Soviet studies. For the 2016-17 cycle, the Nove Prize scheme is accepting nominations for books published in 2015. The deadline for nominations is 1 July 2016. Items eligible for nomination are singly or jointly authored monographs, and two or more related journal articles or book chapters. The authors of nominated works must at the time of nomination be members or associate members of BASEES. The 2014 Nove Prize was awarded at the 2016 conference to Madeleine Reeves for her book *Border Work: Spatial Lives of the State in Rural Central Asia* (Cornell University Press, 2014). For more details and to submit your nomination please see: basees.org/nove-prize.

The George Blazyca Prize for scholarly work of high quality in East European studies. This is taken to include those countries of Eastern Europe that were formerly under communist rule that were not part of the Soviet Union. For the 2016-17 cycle, the Blazyca Prize scheme is accepting nominations for books published in 2015. The deadline for nominations is 1 July 2016. Items eligible for nomination are singly or jointly authored monographs, or two or more related journal articles or book chapters. The authors of nominated works must at the time of nomination be members or associate members of BASEES. The 2014 Blazyca Prize was awarded at the 2016 conference to James Dawson for his book *Cultures of Democracy in Serbia and Bulgaria: How Ideas Shape Publics* (Ashgate, 2014). For more details and to submit your nomination please see: basees.org/blazyca-prize.

The Postgraduate Prize – The BASEES Prize for the Best Scholarly Article by a Postgraduate Student is offered annually for a scholarly, peer-reviewed article of high quality in any of the disciplinary and geographical areas which fall within the BASEES remit. The term 'article' can be taken to include a chapter in an edited volume. For the 2016/17 prize award we are accepting articles published in the calendar year preceding 1 July 2016. The deadline for nominations is 1 July 2016. The authors of nominated works must at the time of nomination be members or associate members of BASEES. The 2016 prize was awarded to Yulia Kiseleva (KCL) for her article *Russia's Soft Power Discourse: Identity, Status and the Attraction of Power* in *Politics* 35:3-4 (2015), pp. 316-29. For more details and to submit your nomination please see: basees.org/postgraduate-prize.



Interview with Dr Andrea Gullotta Lecturer in Russian at the University of Glasgow

Tell us about your research and your career prior to your recent appointment in Glasgow.

It is a pleasure and an honour to be here in the UK and to be a member of BASEES. I got here directly from Italy: I obtained my degree in Palermo, my PhD in Padua and I have also taught and worked as a research fellow in Venice (Ca' Foscari). My main research area is Gulag literature: besides a book on literature produced within the Solovki prison camp (coming soon from *Legenda*, www.legendabooks.com/titles/isbn/9781909662452.html), I have published extensively on many aspects of Gulag writing. I am also interested in contemporary Russian literature and autobiographical studies: Claudia Criveller (University of Padua) and I are the founder-editors of *Avtobiografija: Journal on Life Writing and the Representation of the Self in Russian Culture* (avtobiografija.com). We would be delighted to receive proposals from BASEES members!

How does British (or Scottish) research culture compare with Italian? What appeals most, and what's the least attractive aspect?

They are both excellent research cultures, but rather different. I assume that much of this difference is because my British colleagues tend to publish more in English, while Italian colleagues publish extensively in Russian or other languages – but not in English, and therefore are less well known internationally: it is a shame, some of their contributions are outstanding. In British research culture, I appreciate the many opportunities for research funding and the fair amount of time left between semesters to exclusively research. If I have to find something to change, this would be the approach towards PhD students. I have the impression that British PhD students should be pushed a bit more into the big arena: in Italy they publish extensively and attend many conferences, and for the most brilliant of them this is a great chance to become research leaders.

Tell us about CRCEES. By organizing such an active lecture series in 2015-16, you've really put Glasgow Slavic Studies back on the map after a difficult period in the university's relationship with the discipline. Can you discuss your experiences with CRCEES? How did local audiences react?

The Centre for Russian, Central and East European Studies was established in 2006 and gave a wonderful push to CEES in Glasgow. When my colleagues' jobs were under threat, it managed not only to survive difficult times, but to keep Slavonic Studies at a high standard. Unfortunately, this year it received its final funding. With my colleagues Margaret Tejerizo and Shamil Khairov, who have been wonderful partners, I organised the seminar series. It was a great experience; our speakers (both from the UK and overseas) were all amazing and covered many areas. Turnout varied, but we've had such a good reaction overall that we recorded most of the seminars and will put them on Youtube. It was the perfect forum for preparing to celebrate the centenary of teaching Russian at the University of Glasgow (in 2017). You'll hear from us soon!

What teaching responsibilities does your job entail, and how do Glasgow students react to Slavic Studies?

I am currently on a reduced teaching load as I am still rather new to the British system. I teach language at undergraduate level and literature, culture and cinema at both undergraduate and postgraduate. We have a wonderful community of students. There are also many students in Czech, Polish and/or in courses that have a Slavonic component (we have started teaching Croatian too). There are three very active student societies related to CEES. We're all very proud of our students.

Professional News

Professor Craig Brandist's (University of Sheffield) *The Dimensions of Hegemony: Language, Culture and Politics in Revolutionary Russia* has just appeared in paperback (ISBN: 9781608465576). See haymarketbooks.org/pb/The-Dimensions-of-Hegemony for more information.

Robert Chandler is running a monthly translation workshop at Pushkin House, Bloomsbury. All translators, at any stage of their careers, are welcome to attend this Russian-to-English workshop; the only requirements are fluent English and a good reading knowledge of Russian. Each evening begins with an open forum; participants can ask the group for help with problems in their current work, followed by a collaborative translation. See pushkinhouse.org/events for more information.

Professor Greville Corbett (University of Surrey) has co-edited a new book, *Archi: Complexities of Agreement in Cross-Theoretical Perspective* (eds. Oliver Bond, Greville G. Corbett, Marina Chumakina, and Dunstan Brown), in the OUP series Oxford Studies of Endangered Languages (ISBN: 9780198747291). Archi is spoken in the highlands of Dagestan, and boasts the usual complexities of languages of that areas, with a large phoneme inventory, huge paradigms of nouns and verbs, and challenging syntax. This book, the result of an AHRC project, takes the agreement system as a test-bed to compare major competing theories of syntax, with contributions by Robert Borsley, Maria Polinsky, Louisa Sadler and Peter Sells, in addition to the editors. More information on the project is at smg.surrey.ac.uk/projects/competing-theories.

Dr Julie Fedor (University of Melbourne) invites submissions for the *Journal of Soviet & Post-Soviet Politics & Society (JSPPS)*, a new bi-annual companion journal to the *Soviet & Post-Soviet Politics & Society* book series. Like the book series, the journal provides an interdisciplinary forum for new original research on the Soviet and post-Soviet world. Individual articles and proposals for guest-edited special issues and scholarly book reviews or review essays are welcome. Abstracts (300 words) of proposed articles should be sent to the General Editor: julie.fedor@unimelb.edu.au. All articles submitted to the journal undergo double-blind peer review by at least two referees. For more information see jspps.eu.

Dr Ivan Gololobov (Warwick University) is seeking funds via Kickstarter to translate into Russian and publish Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*. Read more and support the project at kickstarter.com/projects/1360587138.

Dr Kasia Lech (Canterbury Christ Church University) is co-producing with Polish Theatre Ireland a play called *Bubble Revolution* at the Edinburgh Fringe (4-28 August 2016). Billed as 'a manifesto of thirty-year-old Poles, the biggest group that emigrated to the UK and Ireland after May 2004' and produced through intercultural collaboration, with multimedia and elements of immersive theatre, the play promises to evoke Polish experiences and memories in a way so they resonate with and are shared between Polish and non-Polish audiences. See bubblerevolution.com for more details.

Books Received

Rosalind P. Blakesey *The Russian Canvas: Painting in Imperial Russia 1757-1881* (Yale University Press, 2016). ISBN: 9780300184372.

Josef Jedlička *Midway upon the Journey of Our Life*, translated by Alex Zucker (Karolinum Press and University of Chicago Press, 2016). ISBN: 9788024631271.

Jason Vaughn *A Socio-Political Model of Lies in Russia: Putin Against the Personal* (University Press of America, 2016). ISBN: 9780761867630.

Reviews will appear in the next issues of the Newsletter.

New Books in the BASEES/ Routledge Series on Russian and East European Studies

East European Diasporas, Migration and Cosmopolitanism

Edited by Ulrike Ziemer and Sean P. Roberts

Following the demise of the USSR in 1991, and the ensuing collapse of communist regimes in Eastern Europe, widespread population movements took place across Central and Eastern Europe. This book explores some of the many different facets of diasporic life and migration across Central and Eastern Europe by specifically employing the concept of cosmopolitanism.

June 2016 (Paperback). 9781138205628
£30.99

For more information, see:

routledge.com/products/9781138205628

Democracy versus Modernization: A Dilemma for Russia and for the World

Edited by Vladislav Inozemtsev and Piotr Dutkiewicz

This book seeks to 're-think democracy'. Over the past years, there has been a tendency in the global policy community and, even more widely, in the world's media, to focus on democracy as the 'gold standard' by which all things political are measured. This book re-examines democracy in Russia and in the world more generally, as idea, desired ideal, and practice.

June 2016 (Paperback). 9781138205611
£30.99.

For more information, see:

routledge.com/products/9781138205611

The EU-Russia Borderland: New Contexts for Regional Cooperation

**Edited by Heikki Eskelinen, Ilkka Liikanen,
and James W. Scott**

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, there were high hopes of Russia's 'modernisation,' and rapid political and economic integration with the EU. But now, given its own policies of national development, Russia appears to have 'limits to integration'. Today, much European political discourse again evokes East/West civilisational divides and antagonistic geopolitical interests in EU-Russia relations. This book provides a carefully researched and timely analysis of this complex relationship and examines whether this turn in public debate corresponds to local-level experience – particularly in border areas where the European Union and Russian Federation meet.

June 2016 (Paperback). 9781138205734
£30.99

For more information, see:

routledge.com/products/9781138205734

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