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Editorial information

Please send any news, comments, or contributions to the editor, Muireann Maguire (muireann.maguire@exeter.ac.uk).

Deadline for submissions for the June newsletter is 18 May 2018.

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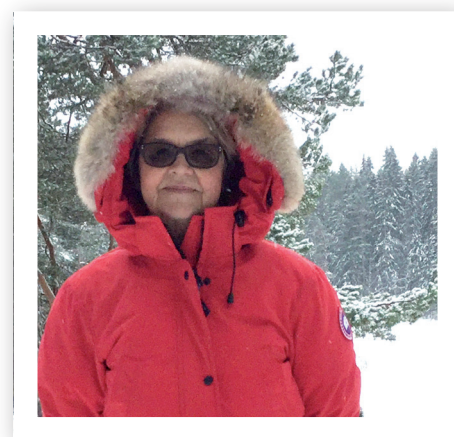
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President's Report

As I write this just a month before the BASEES Annual Conference in Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge (April 14th-16th), I note that recent events have yet again highlighted the need for active, intellectually robust scholarship across our field.

Many of our members have made impressive contributions in various media to discussions about the populist turn in East Central Europe, the presidential (re-)elections in Russia, advances and setbacks in human rights across post-Soviet space, and the observances of anniversaries of revolution or political independence. On my recent visiting fellowship to the Aleksanteri Institute in Helsinki, I was asked to lead a discussion on the state of Russian and East European Studies in the UK. Fortunately, over the last year, I have been visiting both real and "virtual" Area Studies centres across Britain in order to take the measure of current REES teaching and research in this sector.

First, some background for those new to the field (including those born after the 1989/1991 watershed). Russian Area Studies has a long history in the UK. It was founded by Dame Elizabeth Hill, daughter of a British businessman and his English wife, who fled Russia in 1917. Dame Hill introduced Russian Studies at Cambridge University just before World War II. Her approach to teaching Russian was advanced; anticipating later interdisciplinary approaches, she expected her students to immerse themselves in all aspects of Russian culture. Soviet and East European Area Studies proper was a product of the Cold War and the UK's self-perception as a great power (a view which, strangely, it appears still to hold). This conceit has benefited BASEES, as our subject enjoyed its greatest expansion in the 1960s and 70s, when scholars like me and Mary McAuley (who discusses her career in Political Science on pp.4-5 of this issue) entered the field. At that time, university subjects were planned centrally and strategically; in 1961, Sir William Hayter (former British ambassador to the USSR, 1953-57) produced a government report on Area Studies in the



Oriental, African, Eastern European and Slavonic regions, which recommended the establishment or consolidation of five centres of excellence in Soviet and East European area studies at the universities of Birmingham, Glasgow, Oxford, Swansea and London (at SSEES). These centres were to be truly interdisciplinary. Rather than merely combining scholars from different fields, individual scholars were expected to participate in a spectrum of disciplines. Anglo-Soviet cultural agreements took aspiring scholars for year-long study trips beyond the iron curtain, facilitating "deep immersion" in the culture, politics, economics and languages of the countries in the region (see Mary McAuley on her own scholarship experience). The National Association for Soviet and East European Studies (NASEES) was established in 1968 as the professional association for the new area studies, competing with the much older BUAS (the British Universities Association of Slavists). The *sblizhenie* (*rapprochement*) of the two associations led to their *slivanie* (merger) in 1988, when BASEES was born and our 30-year annual occupation of Fitzwilliam College began. A conference highlight was the Saturday evening roundtable, where leading scholars (Alec Nove, Margot Light, George Blazyca, Olga Crisp and others) updated us on events across the region. We will revive this custom at the 2018 conference.

So, what have I discovered about REES Area Studies in my own, post-Radishchev "Journey from London to Glasgow"? I set out feeling pessimistic about the havoc wrought on our sector by the aftermath of the Soviet bloc's fragmentation. Many had thought that Eastern Europe would be reabsorbed into European Studies, with Russia and Ukraine losing all geopolitical significance. And who cared in the 1990s about Central Asia and the Caucasus? Area Studies scholars fled back to their >>

Forthcoming Conferences and Calls for Papers

An international conference on The People's Art School and Unovis in Vitebsk will be held on 19 and 20 April 2018 at Pembroke College, University of Cambridge.

Organised by the Cambridge Courtauld Russian Art Centre (CCRAC) in collaboration with the Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, this event brings together an international line-up of invited scholars to reconsider the exciting experiments of Vitebsk's avant-garde during Russia's Civil War years, spearheaded by artists such as Chagall, Malevich and El Lissitzky. For further information, see www.hoart.cam.ac.uk or contact Isabel Stokholm (is386@cam.ac.uk).

The BASEES Forum for Czech and Slovak Studies in the UK is marking the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Czechoslovak state with Czechoslovakia 100, a Czech and Slovak Study Day held at Cardiff University on 11 May 2018.

Czechoslovakia 100 invites Czech and Slovak specialists (including language experts and postgraduate students) from around the UK, together with Czech and Slovak diplomats, policymakers and stakeholders, to Cardiff, where we will reassess the Czechoslovak state's origins, significance, and legacies in a special 2018 BASEES Study Group Day/Conference timed to mark the centenary of the state's foundation. Czechoslovakia 100 is open to students, academics, diplomats, linguists and policymakers. The 100th anniversary of the founding of the Czechoslovak state is a time to take stock, reconsider, reassess. Contributions (short/longer) are warmly invited from experts in relevant professions and academic disciplines. For further information, contact details and the call for papers, please go to <https://czechoslovakia100.wordpress.com/> Czechoslovakia 100 is sponsored by the British Association for Slavonic and East European Studies, the College of Arts and Humanities and Arts at Cardiff University, Special Collections and Archives, the Embassy of the Czech Republic and the Embassy of the Slovak Republic.

>> disciplinary homes; fewer academics entered the sector (hence the relative absence of the mid-career Russian specialist now). Neoliberal HE policies completed the "perfect storm" for Area Studies, with a negative knock-on effect for posts in our area. My former post in Oxford, for example, the only original Hayter post dedicated to REES geography, was reallocated on my retirement to a German Studies specialist. In 1995, HEFCE funded 33 "new blood" lectureships in Slavic and Eastern European Studies, including linguistics. Funding was for three years only, then universities were supposed to pick up the tab. Not all of them did, and the fragmentation of REES centres in the UK has continued to menace our discipline, paralleling the political fragmentation of the region. Of the five Hayter Centres, Swansea no longer exists and CREES in Birmingham, formerly the jewel in the crown of UK Soviet and East European Studies, has been absorbed into the School of Government and Society. Oxford never was a centre as such – the Hayter posts were scattered between faculties, although post-holders met at the monthly Interfaculty Committee (in my first years in Oxford, this was chaired by Sir Isiah Berlin and later by Professor Sir Dmitri Obolensky and Gerry Smith). Oxford has created new MA courses in REES, while amalgamating regional studies into a catch-all Department of Interdisciplinary Area Studies. I think we were supposed to identify a "core" discipline and start developing joint projects, but I am not sure this has succeeded. There are bright spots: I was particularly impressed by the level of activity in CRCREES, Glasgow, where there is an extraordinary range of international projects, genuinely interdisciplinary programs on offer, and lots of energy. And SSEES in London, which has just welcomed its new Director, continues to provide a hub for anyone in the south interested in interdisciplinary studies across REES.

One source of optimism for our field that I have found on my travels is the spontaneously appearing "virtual centres" of recent years. These virtual centres sport a bewildering range of acronyms, but to judge from the seminars and workshops advertised in the BASEES

Bulletin, they exploit online advertising to maximize their inclusivity. Best of all, they draw in individual scholars from outlier institutions, previously too remote from the Hayter centres to join the Soviet and East European "in-group". Other positive developments now energizing the field include: the number of scholars native to the BASEES region, now holding posts in British universities (not all self-identifying in Area Studies, but many do find their way to BASEES); the cultural turn in humanities and social sciences, challenging disciplinary boundaries and reinvigorating cross-disciplinary dialogue; and the prioritization by research funding councils of interdisciplinarity, where we lead the field. BASEES is looking beyond the UK for research collaboration, such as our forthcoming joint two-day conference with Uppsala University on September 13th and 14th, 2018 on "Regimes and Societies in Conflict: Eastern Europe and Russia since 1956". BASEES members are warmly invited to participate: see more on our website. Other, more general challenges persist; notably, Brexit and the idiotic pay and pension policies which threaten the U.K.'s ability to attract and retain young scholars.

We still have mountains to climb to convince higher education institutions and research councils to invest in teaching posts and research in our area. Just as the UK's response to the use of nerve agents in Salisbury is claimed to have increased Putin's majority by 10%, I suppose we should thank Putin or Orban for helping us prove that we need more specialists in the BASEES regions. But as I always reiterate, there is far more to Area Studies than providing commentary on current events. Its real strength is providing frameworks for dialogue between scholars on topics of intrinsic interest. I am not sure how attending a panel on 21st-century theatre in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, or on Stalinist architectural projects or on superstition in Imperial Russia, helps my research on Russian prisons today, but I know that it does.

Professor Judith Pallot
Email: judith.pallot@chch.ox.ac.uk

BASEES Conference 2018 Annual General Meeting 14th April 2018

BASEES members attending the annual conference in April are warmly invited to attend the AGM 2018. It will take place during the lunch break on Saturday, April 14th, at 12:45-13:30, in the Reddaway Room. Attendees are welcome to bring their lunch to the meeting. There is also a small cafe on site at which delegates can buy sandwiches, cake and drinks. If you have already booked hot lunch, but would like to attend the AGM instead, please email conference@basees.org.

Book Reviews

Alexander Cooley and John Heathershaw, *Dictators Without Borders: Power and Money in Central Asia*. Yale University Press, 2017. 312 pages. ISBN: 9780300208443. \$25 hardback.

Central Asia is a deeply globalized region, which Cooley and Heathershaw examine from an intriguing new angle: the region's entanglement with global finance and legal arbitration. They also show that this entanglement does not benefit the people; rather, it has helped dictatorships to flourish. Relying on publicly accessible legal records, the authors document that, in all five Central Asian republics, the power of local élites rests on globalized networks. Élites use them to move the rents they reap offshore, into shell companies, money-laundering investments, and hidden bank accounts, and also to stifle political opposition. Thus the book combines two untold stories: how hidden offshore world and financial institutions have become more important than formal trade flows for the region's regimes, and how struggles between local networks are unfolding on a global stage (involving arrests, kidnappings, and murders).

The authors demonstrate that while democratic reforms were largely abandoned (except in Kyrgyzstan), globalized economic integration proceeded swiftly, facilitating capital flight and elite predation. As Western financial brokers and governments continue to be complicit in both processes, the authors make a strong case for regulatory change and increased control.

While it is difficult to fault this daring and important book, two points may be raised. First, research into criminal activity does not easily lend itself to academic analysis, and large parts of the book indeed read like a piece of investigative journalism. There is little quantitative analysis, and contributions to theory are minimal. Second, the authors somewhat overstate the innovativeness of their view of Central Asia, failing to acknowledge that only uninformed policy-makers, mainstream media, and some political scientists view the region as a backwater dragged down by cultural problems. Other disciplines have analyzed the region's global ties for over a decade. This overstatement, however, makes this book no less rewarding to read.

Stefan B. Kirmse

Barbara Havelková, *Gender Equality in Law: Uncovering the Legacies of Czech State Socialism*. Hart Publishing, 2017. 320 pages. ISBN: 9781509905867. £70 hardback.

Havelková provides a unique look at gender equality in Czech society by examining historical legal and social developments under Socialism. In so doing, she seeks to explain the general hostility and scepticism towards anti-discrimination law and gender equality today. She argues that despite membership of the European Union and the adoption of EU anti-discrimination law in the Czech Republic, there still remains a clear division between East and West, which she aptly calls a "Gender Curtain". The basis for this division is the different trajectory of equality experienced by Czech society due to its socialist past, which has in turn weakened public understanding of both inequality and the need for gender equality policies.

By examining legal statutes, discourses, and practices during State Socialism, Havelková discusses the existence of, and attitudes towards, gender equality. She reveals patriarchal assumptions present in Czech society, in particular an essentialist understanding of differences between men and women, and a belief that the law should not intervene in gender matters. In her meticulous examination of recent anti-discrimination cases, Havelková reveals the tools Czech legislators and judges use to avoid anti-discrimination judgements even in what she believes are straightforward cases. She even claims that, although the EU has the tools to pursue countries for breaking treaties, doing so in cases of gender discrimination could prove counterproductive in Czech society by creating a further backlash.

This book is an excellent work of feminist legal genealogy, bringing a useful contribution towards our understanding of the relationship of equality, gender and the law, as well as discrimination and rights. It also shows the limited impact of anti-discrimination law if it is not underpinned by general social acceptance of the need for gender equality in all spheres, something that the current #MeToo campaign has made relevant also in the West.

Jana Nahodilová

BASEES Study Groups Conference Announcement and Call for Papers Plagiarizing Posterity: Reading The 19th Century Backwards

Did you know that Voltaire plagiarized Conan Doyle? Or that Maupassant anticipated Proust, or that Shakespeare nicked T.S. Eliot's best ideas? The notion of 'plagiarism by anticipation', first defined by the French Oulipo group in the 1960s, is both quaintly ludicrous and unexpectedly fecund, by turning familiar notions of literary adaptation (and anxiety of influence) upside down. As a character in David Lodge's novel *Small World* protests, "...[W]ho can read *Hamlet* today without thinking of *Prufrock*? [Or]... Ferdinand in *The Tempest* without being reminded of 'The Fire Sermon' section of *The Waste Land*?" French scholar Pierre Bayard has isolated four criteria of 'plagiarism

by anticipation': similarity (the original and the plagiarism must resemble each other), dissimulation (the plagiarist must not acknowledge the theft), temporal inversion (the plagiarism must pre-date the original, sometimes by decades or centuries), and dissonance (the plagiarism must appear distinct, in style or content, from its context). We invite scholars of Russian literature, cinema and culture to explore how Russian writers of the 19th and early 20th centuries can be said to have plagiarised (or anticipated) their posterity in various media, up to the present day.

The BASEES Study Groups for Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century

Literature and Culture have combined to co-host a one-day conference at the University of Exeter's Streatham Campus on June 8th, 2018. Keynote speakers will include Professor Ilya Vinitzky (Princeton) and Professor Timothy Langen (Missouri). Proposals for papers of no more than 15 minutes' duration should be submitted by May 4th, 2018, to Muireann Maguire at muireann.maguire@exeter.co.uk. The organizers intend to publish selected proceedings, subject to peer review, as an edited volume.

The organisers extend their thanks to BASEES and the University of Exeter for their generous assistance.

Honorary Life Member Mary McAuley

The first in a series of BASEES *Newsletter* interviews with Life Members about their careers



What drew you initially to Russian, and later to your specialization?

My interest in Russia was first awakened at school, through history and literature, and the revolutions of 1917 dwarfed everything else. My time at Oxford (1957-61) coincided with the emergence in Britain of the New Left: a broad intellectual coalition of socialists of different generations and persuasions. Khrushchev's Secret Speech of February 1956, and then the Polish and Hungarian uprisings, produced endless discussions. But what kind of society and politics characterized the Soviet Union? American textbooks suggested a society of terrorized and indoctrinated individuals, whereas in Soviet publications a society of equals worked, danced, and improved their educational levels. Both versions seemed to me highly dubious. I decided I ought to find out.

Baffled after a National Union of Students' visit to Moscow, Leningrad, and Kiev in 1959, I bought a copy of *Teach Yourself Russian* and arranged with a fellow student that he give me a lesson a week in return for half a bottle of whisky a term. So now I could read Russian. Fairly clear that both western capitalism and Soviet communism were deeply flawed, perhaps, I thought, the Yugoslavs with their workers' councils had found the way to end alienation and a hierarchical system of power? In 1960, following a chance meeting in the Yugoslav consulate with a Serb engineer, I headed for Belgrade and its factories where, sipping *slivovitsa* and Turkish coffee, I discussed the workers' councils with their representatives. By now I knew the question I wanted to ask – was

Marx right in claiming that the type of ownership and control in the workplace determines the character of the social and political order? Perhaps studying the settlement of labour disputes in the Soviet Union would provide an answer.

In 1960, with Hugh Clegg, a labour relations specialist, as my supervisor, I started work on my thesis, and by September 1961, on the British Council and Soviet Ministry of Higher Education programme of 10-month research visits for graduate students, I had become a graduate student in the Law Faculty at Leningrad University. Industrial relations lay somewhere between sociology and economics in the UK (sociology did not then exist as a discipline in either Oxford or in Russia), and in the USSR, labour relations were regulated by law. All graduate students spent time in the courts and in the factories. The consequence was that while, even then, politics and Soviet history were the fields that interested me most, I always retained an interest in what was happening in the workplace and in the courts. In the nineties I liked nothing better than attending factory meetings, and spending time with those setting up legal clinics, or with procurators and prison governors.

What challenges did you face along the way as a female academic?

I was not aware of facing challenges as a female academic until I had children. My topic was quite normal for a woman in Leningrad. If my appearance at courts or factory committee meetings caused any surprise it was because I was English, not because I was a woman. Nor do I think it stood in the way of my getting appointments in British universities. In 1963 Alec Nove (very British, but still with a trace of Menshevism) was appointed to head the Institute of Soviet and East European Studies at Glasgow University. Its journal, *Soviet Studies*, had been set up in 1949 by Jack Miller (ex-Communist Party, a Moscow veteran from the 1930s) and Rudolf Schlesinger (expelled from the Austrian Communist Party and from Moscow 1936, but still at heart a member of the Comintern). Now it had advertised for an assistant editor, and I got the job. Alec Nove and Rudolf Schlesinger are the scholars, and individuals, to whom I owe most. I wanted to write like Alec Nove, but about Soviet politics.

In 1968, at an interview for a lectureship at the Essex University Department of Government (still all-male), I was prepared

for the question as to how, with two small children, I would cope. From living in Russia, I said, I know how tough it can be; from living in America, I know about washing-machines and fridge freezers, and we shall have an au pair girl. It was tough with two, and then three, children. It was difficult to be away on trips to Russia. I could not have done it without Alastair, my husband, sharing the load, and without colleagues at Essex helping out at times of crisis. By the time I moved to Oxford (in 1985) the children were older, and St Hilda's was used to its women fellows having children.

What about being a woman specialized in politics?

No, I can't say that presented any special challenges. Nor for prison studies. After all it was (Baroness) Vivien Stern who suggested I become an Associate of the International Centre for Prison Studies, and in both the UK and in Russia practitioners and academics, men and women, worked in the field of juvenile justice.

What are your current views on the state of the profession, including any views on the work of BASEES and its forerunner, NASEES?

I know too little about the current state of the profession to comment. NASEES, until the merger into BASEES, was home to the social scientists and historians working on the Soviet period and was heavily dominated by economists - Bob Davies (Birmingham), Peter Wiles (LSE), Alec Nove (Glasgow), and Michael Kaiser (St Antony's). Leonard Shapiro (LSE) and Hugh Seton-Watson (SSEES) did appear at the annual meetings but (at least when I was on the committee and worked on the NASEES monograph series) did not play a leading role in the association. Nor did John Ericson (Edinburgh), although he was highly respected. E.H. Carr, a revered figure, made one appearance at the annual conference.

The political "affiliations" of the different centres were clear in the early sixties. St Antony's was M15, with the exception of Michael Kaiser; SSEES was FCO; Birmingham was left, ex-CP; the Glasgow Institute, with the appointment of Alec Nove, became more catholic in its composition. As for the LSE, Peter Wiles defied categorization but Leonard Shapiro was still, one felt, a Kadet at heart. My description of civil-war Petrograd in a >>

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

The BASEES/Routledge Series on Russia and East European Studies comprises original, high-quality, research-level work by both new and established scholars on all aspects of Russian, Soviet, post-Soviet and East European Studies in humanities and social science subjects.

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Post-Soviet Armenia, The New National Elite and the New National Narrative, by Irina Ghaplanyan

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The Decline of Regionalism in Putin's Russia, Boundary Issues by J. Paul Goode

Georgia after Stalin, Nationalism and Soviet Power, edited by Timothy K. Blauvelt and Jeremy Smith

Russian Foreign Policy under Dmitry Medvedev, 2008-2012 by Valerie Pacer

The Radical Right in Late Imperial Russia, Dreams of a True Fatherland? by George Gilbert

The EU's Eastern Neighbourhood, Migration, Borders and Regional Stability, edited by Ilkka Liikanen, James W. Scott and Tiina Sotkasiira

Communicating Climate Change in Russia, State and Propaganda by Marianna Poberezhskaya

Nation, Ethnicity and Race on Russian Television, Mediating Post-Soviet Difference by Stephen Hutchings and Vera Tolz

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>> seminar presentation brought the mild rebuke that on his childhood walks with his governess he had seen no violence. It intrigued me how polite, even friendly, the bitterest of political enemies were to each other. There were occasions when Alec Nove angrily called for an end to tittering, saying "Let Rudolf speak!" as Schlesinger waxed eloquent in his colourful English. But Rudolf would cheerfully greet Leonard with an embrace. The "political" dividing lines began to blur as the decade progressed, as the government put money into the new universities, and as a younger generation saw the task to be that of studying the USSR or Eastern Europe within the new disciplines of political science and sociology. By the end of the sixties, there were new centres – Swansea, Essex, and Lancaster – and Birmingham had recruited Moshe Lewin and Teodor Shanin, two "newcomers" of an older generation, with a knowledge of the Soviet

Union that few could match, and with the skills of a social historian and a sociologist.

What are your current views on Russia?

I can't do this in a few sentences. I'd suggest a different question: Is studying Russian politics today as exciting and interesting as it was in the sixties and in the nineties? The answer, for me, has to be no. But nor are we back in the stagnant years of 1968-1988 when I made a detour into social history, the most exciting new field at the time. Today, perhaps I would make a small foray into anthropology until the political scene opens up again. When might that be? Given the unpredictable state of the wider world, it's very difficult to say.

Mary McAuley

Mary McAuley was a Fellow in Politics at St Hilda's College, Oxford until 1995, with earlier posts at the universities of York and Essex. From 1996 to 2002 she ran the Ford Foundation's Moscow Office. Her books include *Soviet Politics 1917-1991* (Oxford University Press, 1992), *Russia's Politics of Uncertainty* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), and *Human Rights in Russia* (I.B. Tauris, 2015).

Ten years of updates to UTREES thesis database

The UTREES online database, which lists British and Irish university theses in Russian and East European studies, has been given its tenth annual update, with 227 new entries added.

The total number of theses recorded now stands at 5,396. The variety of subject-matter is as wide, and often as unexpected, as in previous years. Among other topics, there are treatments of Sovietology in post-Mao China, pop art in former Yugoslavia, digital activism in the Russian-language Twitter, Eastern European heavy metal, and post-war Polish photography. Sixty institutions are listed as contributors.

UTREES is supported by the Modern Humanities Research Association (MHRA) and can be accessed free of charge at www.utrees.mhra.org.uk.

A paper by Gregory Walker, 'Doctoral Research in Russian and East European Studies: Trends and Realities from the UTREES Database' (2017), can be accessed at: www.mhra.org.uk/pdf/utrees-paper.pdf

Additions and corrections are always welcome. Please send them to the Editor at gpmwalker@btinternet.com.

Gregory Walker
Editor, UTREES

Books received (reviews will appear in the June and November 2018 issues)

Richard Sakwa, *Russia Against the Rest: The Post-Cold War Crisis of World Order* (Cambridge University Press, 2017)

Vicky Davis, *Myth Making in the Soviet Union and Modern Russia: Remembering World War II in Brezhnev's Hero City* (I.B. Tauris, 2017)

Louise Hardiman and Nicola Kozicharow, eds., *Modernism and the Spiritual in Russian Art: New Perspectives* (Open Book, 2017)

Mary Buckley, *The Politics of Unfree Labour in Russia: Human Trafficking and Labour Migration* (Cambridge University Press, 2018)

Prospective reviewers are invited to contact the Editor at muireann.maguire@exeter.ac.uk.