



THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR
SLAVONIC AND EAST EUROPEAN STUDIES

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comments, or contributions
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the May newsletter
is 15 April 2013.

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BASEES Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2013

Editorial

It occurred to me belatedly that this is effectively my last full editorial as BASEES president (since the May issue of the newsletter traditionally uses the editorial space to accommodate the president's report to the AGM). I have no intention of exploiting the occasion to indulge in a navel-gazing reflection on the highs and lows, achievements and failures of my period in office.

However, on thinking back to my very first editorial, I recalled that it appeared in one of the last issues of the old 'paper' format, before we began the transition to the present, online version. This then brought to mind some of the other small, technologically driven changes that have taken place over the last three years. None of them is especially dramatic or out-of-step with what other professional organisations and learned societies have been doing during the same period (or, in many cases, rather earlier). We now, for example, have an active BASEES electronic mailing list (something which has made communicating with our members an infinitely less cumbersome process than in the past). Booking for our annual conference is handled online. There is a BASEES Facebook profile and a BASEES Twitter account (the latter currently with 330 Followers to its name). We are finally about to take the long-overdue plunge into the world of online membership systems.

In case you were in any doubt, then, BASEES has completed its entry into the twenty first century (and not before time, some of you will mutter, no doubt). In part as a symbolic way of celebrating this fact, we are in the process of commissioning a redesign of the BASEES logo which, we feel, was beginning to look a little anachronistic (any sentimental value that those beloved onion domes may continue to hold is, we feel, rather outweighed by the ever more dubious connotations they have for the East European component in our constituency). With any luck, we hope to unveil the new logo at our conference in Cambridge later this year.

To return to the technology, taken in their totality, the changes should, over a period



of time, amount to a transformation in the relationship between BASEES and its members. They offer the chance for members to engage and network with each other, and with the executive committee, in a much more dynamic, interactive and timely fashion than in the past. There is, for example, no reason why, in the future, groups of members should not set up research discussion networks, link in their blogs (I stop short at a 'presidential blog' on the model of Medvedev!), or initiate forum discussions. We hope, via the online membership system, that we will eventually be able to combine our website, our conference booking system, our social networks (Twitter, Facebook) and the email list in an integrated system which would give us the opportunity to create a clearly identifiable face for BASEES and its various activities on the web for the next 10 years or so. It is not quite BASEES 2.0, perhaps, but it is something our younger members will increasingly expect.

Not everything depends on technology, of course. We have no intention of using the new participatory potential as an excuse to devolve the responsibility for advocacy and support for Slavonic and East European Studies onto our members. Indeed, we remain acutely aware of the myriad new things we could and should be doing to bolster the position of our field, and of individual academics, particularly those in the early phases of their careers, in what is an increasingly uncertain environment. It was in response to suggestions from members that we recently increased the amount of funds available for research and development activities. In Cambridge we will announce a new BASEES prize for 'best published postgraduate article' intended to offer >>

Forthcoming Conferences

3rd Annual Navrus/Noorus Postgraduate Workshop on Central Asia, School of Geography, Politics and Sociology/ School of Modern Languages, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Newcastle University
21-22 March 2013

Authoritarianism and Beyond? – Lessons from Postsocialist Societies, 2013 Annual Soyuz Symposium, Harriman Institute, Columbia University, New York
22-23 March 2013

Far Rainbows – One-day international workshop on Soviet and Eastern European science-fiction cinema, Wadham College, Oxford University
12 April 2013

Material Culture in Russia since Peter the Great – 23rd International Conference of the British-French Association for the Study of Russian Culture, Paris
17-18 May 2013

Russian Classical Literature Today – The Challenges/the Trials of Messianism and Mass Culture, Sofia (Bulgaria)
23-25 May 2013

The Body in Eastern European and Russian Cinema – A two-day conference exploring the body, the senses, affect and texture in Soviet and post communist cinema, University of Greenwich
21-22 June 2013

Fashion, Consumption and Everyday Culture in the Soviet Union between 1945 and 1985, University of Salzburg, Austria
24-25 October 2013

XV International Congress of Slavists, Minsk, Belarus
20-27 August 2013

Briusov Readings – A conference in honour of the 140th birthday of V. Ia. Briusov, Moscow, Russia
10-13 December 2013
For information, please contact:
brusovcabinet@brusov.am

>> the new generation of BASEES members the chance to bolster their CVs in what is a very challenging jobs market. These are all relatively modest steps, hopefully in the right direction. Of a little more significance for some, perhaps, is the report that we have commissioned into the current state of affairs in, and future prospects, for our field. We are confident that this will be published in the near future and that it will contain some useful material for those fighting battles on behalf of Slavonic and East European Studies in their own institutions. In the spirit of 'participatory engagement', I want to take this opportunity to invite members to put forward other ideas or suggestions for ways in which BASEES can improve the service that it provides. If anything occurs to you, big or small, do drop us a line (the more specific you are, the better).

There are undoubtedly some initiatives that can be undertaken at relatively little cost in terms of the extra pressures they impose on the BASEES Executive Committee and on BASEES resources (having recently increased our subscription rates, incidentally, we are not minded to raise them further in the near future if we can avoid it).

Others may incur 'up front' costs which are eventually recouped through the increased revenue that they generate, or the benefits that they bring. Others still can be accommodated by a rejigging of priorities. And there may be those that are simply so important that they just need to be done, regardless of the cost. Whatever the case, we consider nothing out of bounds and will treat all proposals seriously. We look forward to discussing some of them at the forthcoming committee meetings in Cambridge.

I will close by issuing two ritual exhortations. Please do not forget to send us the name (or names) of anyone you wish us to consider including in the next round of nominations for the Academy of Social Sciences in June (we will need to receive suggestions by no later than the end of May). Details of the process are easily accessible online at the Academy's website. And finally, please ensure that you make your bookings for our conference in good time. This year will be an unusually large event and college accommodation may not be available if you leave it too late.

Stephen Hutchings

Reform Communism



Papers from a BASEES-supported conference have just been published in the latest issue, No. 42, of *Socialist History*. The conference, on "Reform Communism since 1945 in comparative historical perspective" and held at the University of East Anglia, Norwich in October 2011, brought together historians and, political scientists, Marxists and non-Marxists, former communist activists, and outspoken critics of the communist project from across Europe. East European scholars, from Hungary, Croatia and Bulgaria, were well represented.

Nineteen papers on the experience of reform, and on reforming currents and pressures within the post-war European communist movement, were presented and discussed in plenary sessions over two days. Of these papers, four have been selected for publication. Hans Asenbaum of Vienna University discusses the imagined alternatives to the late Soviet system that emerged in society during the perestroika years. He presents some of his field research – interviews with former activists conducted in Moscow in 2011. >>

Publications

Special offers for BASEES members

SLAVONICA

BASEES members are offered a special subscription rate to Slavonica. The annual rate for a print and online subscription for BASEES members is £27. Further details can be found on the journal's website: maneypublishing.com/index.php/journals/sla

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

To celebrate the publication of the *The Polish Revolution and the Catholic Church, 1788-1792*, by Richard Butterwick, Oxford University Press is pleased to offer BASEES members a special 20% discount on all related titles in Soviet and East European studies. This offer is available exclusively online until 31 December 2020. For more details, follow link on BASEES homepage.

EUROPE-ASIA STUDIES

Special reduced subscription rate to Europe-Asia Studies for BASEES members. The annual rate for BASEES members is £52 (\$86) for ten issues. Full details can be found in the small print under "pricing information" on the subscription page of the journal's website: www.tandfonline.com/action/pricing?journalCode=ceas20

BASEES/ROUTLEDGE SERIES ON RUSSIAN AND EAST EUROPEAN STUDIES

Routledge is proud to publish this series on behalf of BASEES. The primary aim of the series is to publish 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. Works of synthesis, reference books, and student textbooks will also be considered. Submissions from prospective authors are welcomed, and should be sent in the first instance to the series editor: Professor Richard Sakwa (R.Sakwa@kent.ac.uk), Dept. of Politics & International Relations, University of Kent, Canterbury CT2 7NX.

>> Making extensive use of source material which has recently become available, Vasil Paraskevov of Shumen University traces the political manoeuvring behind the relatively gentle demise of communist rule in Bulgaria. Hugo Radice of Leeds looks at the relationship between reform communists and Marxist dissidents in Eastern Europe, particularly in Hungary, where for decades there were intensive and wide-ranging flows of ideas, information and even personnel between the two groups.

The collection is rounded off by a piece by Mike Waite in which he attempts to take stock of the whole experience of reform communism and address the most important question – was it actually possible? The threads of the discussion are all drawn together in an extensive introduction by Matthias Neumann, one of

the conference organisers and the guest editor of this issue of *Socialist History*.

Support from BASEES was of great help in making the conference as accessible as possible, enabling us to make attendance free of charge and even offer postgraduate presenters a small contribution towards their accommodation expenses. The organisers would like to express their gratitude to BASEES for this assistance.

Issue 42 of *Socialist History* can be obtained via the website of the Socialist History Society, www.socialisthistorysociety.co.uk/shop.htm, for a special price of £6.00 post-free within the UK. It is also available from the publisher, Rivers Oram Press.

Matthias Neumann

International Norms of the Right to Health

Zuleykha Mailzada, a PhD student from the University of Glasgow, discusses her BASEES-funded research trip to Baku, Azerbaijan.

In October 2011, I was awarded BASEES Research and Development funding to assist with the expenses of conducting field work in Azerbaijan. The award of £600 contributed to my travel costs and the overall purpose of my fieldwork was to carry out a number of interviews with local and international organisations that are involved in the process of the realisation of the right to health in Azerbaijan. During my two weeks in Baku, I also took the opportunity to visit the State Archives of Azerbaijan.

The focus of my PhD is to explore the new networks, processes and actors in post-communist societies that are emerging in the process of realisation of the right to health after the collapse of communism, and I am using Azerbaijan as a case study. I am interested in how different actors/institutions negotiate the norms and conditions for the realisation of the right to health in new economic and political regimes, as well as under the emerging politics of global health governance and global health security. While the former Soviet Union was considered to be a leader in the promotion of universal health care, apart from studies on Russia there is little research done on

how other republics were also engaged in the process. The interviews allowed me to draw some comparisons with the past and understand the new perceptions of the right to health, by talking to a diverse range of international and national actors in the health care reforms. This phase of my research was particularly important because I was able to embrace primary source archival information to support my findings.

This particular visit was one of a few I organised last year to suit the childcare arrangements I have while conducting the PhD research at Central and East European Studies, the University of Glasgow. BASEES financial assistance was much appreciated in addition to the fieldwork funding I received from the Graduate School in Glasgow. I was glad that my application was approved because having two children I was required to travel to Baku more frequently for shorter periods, which incurs much higher research costs. As a researcher with childcare responsibilities, help such as this is invaluable to me. I will be presenting findings of my fieldwork at the BASEES annual conference in April 2013.

For more information on the BASEES Research and Development Committee, please consult the website: www.basees.org.uk/resdev.shtml

The December issue of *East European Politics* is available online and can be viewed here:

www.tandfonline.com/toc/fjcs21/current

The issue includes a themed symposium entitled *A New Look at Social Movements and Civil Society in Post-Communist Russia and Poland*, edited by Kerstin Jacobsson and Steven Saxonberg. The symposium articles are available with FREE ACCESS.

Kind Regards and Happy New Year,
Adam Fagan and Petr Kopecky
Editors, *East European Politics*

Record number of additions to UTREES thesis database

The annual updating of UTREES, the online bibliographical database for British and Irish university theses in Russian and East European studies, has seen a record number of 236 recently accepted theses added. Supported by the Modern Humanities Research Association (MHRA), the database now holds the particulars of over 4,350 doctoral and selected masters' theses from 1907 to 2012. Subject coverage extends over the whole of the humanities and social sciences as they relate to Russia, the entire area of the former USSR, and Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. The database has advanced search facilities and can be accessed free of charge at: utrees.mhra.org.uk

We want UTREES to be as complete and accurate as possible. Please have a look at it and let us know of any additions or corrections at utrees@mhra.org.uk.

Gregory Walker
Editor, UTREES

The Slavonic and East European Medieval Studies Group (SEEMSG)

The last meeting of SEEMSG took place on Saturday, 3 November 2012 and we had the opportunity of listening to papers by Alexander Bobrov (St. Petersburg), 'The Musin-Pushkin *sbornik* with the Igor Tale, its Origins and Fate', Johannes Reinhart (Vienna), 'Croatian Glagolitic Miscellanies', Francis Thomson (Brussels), 'Does Translation Mean Reception? The Case of Symeon the New Theologian', and Agnes Kriza (Budapest) 'Byzantine sources on the theology of icons in Medieval Rus – a case study of old Russian "intellectual silence"'. Our next meeting will take place at Jesus College, Cambridge on 16 March 2013.

The variety of topics of this and previous meetings may be looked up in our new webpage, www.seemsg.org, where abstracts of previous papers can also be found.

SEEMSG, therefore, continues with its activities to promote open and enriching dialogue between young and established scholars, both in Great Britain and abroad, on research areas of Slavic history and culture; the same aim with which the group was established in 1974.

Susana Torres Prieto



BASEES and ICCEES European Congress 2013: *Europe: Crisis and Renewal* Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge, 5-8 April 2013

The processes of political, economic, and cultural change in Europe have had a particularly strong impact upon the countries of Eastern Europe and their neighbours in the east. It is timely to reflect on and debate the ways in which Europe and the former Soviet Union has experienced and coped with crisis in all its forms, past and present.

The process of change in Eastern Europe since the fall of communism at the end of the 1980s, the accession of 10 Eastern European states to the EU and the continuing work of European integration in the former Yugoslavia make this an appropriate time to reflect on the experience of Eastern Europe, Russia and the former Soviet Union. The congress theme 'Europe: Crisis and Renewal' provides a focus to allow reflection on contemporary challenges - political, economic and social - as well as on the history of Central and Eastern Europe, Russia and the former Soviet Union.

The conference programme is now available to download.

Confirmed Keynote Speakers

- Professor Jörg Baberowski (Humboldt-Universität Berlin, Germany)
- Professor Richard Sakwa (University of Kent, United Kingdom)
- Professor Simon Dixon (University College London SSEES)
- Professor Sabrina P. Ramet (Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim)
- Aleksey Popogrebskiy (Film director and screenwriter)
- Luke Harding (The Guardian) in conversation with Stephen White (University of Glasgow)

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN
via the website:

www.euroiccees2013.org

For special rates, register before
1st March 2013.