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## Editorial information

Please send any news, comments, or contributions to the editor, Ben Phillips (B.G.Phillips@exeter.ac.uk)

Deadline for submissions for the March newsletter is 15 February 2022.

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 British Association for Slavonic and East European Studies

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# President's Report

**As the year 2021 is approaching its end, new clouds have appeared on the horizon with the arrival of the Omicron variant.**

At the time of writing, it is not clear whether existing vaccines will be effective against this new variant, and whether it will lead to more severe illness. But it has already once again raised the prospect of further restrictions that could derail BASEES members' plans to restart fieldwork and return many of us to the dreaded Zoom classroom. Further dark clouds have appeared over academic freedom and civil rights in the Russian Federation in recent weeks. BASEES members will have been shocked and appalled by news that Russia's Prosecutor General has requested that the Supreme Court 'liquidate' Memorial, one of Russia's oldest civil rights organisations. Memorial, which was established in the 1980s in the context of Gorbachev's glasnost and perestroika, has worked tirelessly for decades to document the crimes of the Stalinist regime and commemorate victims of political repression.

BASEES issued a **statement of solidarity with Memorial** on 12 November and subsequently joined a collation of international organisations, amongst them our German and French sister organisations, **calling upon the Russian authorities** to end the assault on Memorial and upon **national governments and relevant EU bodies** to raise this issue with the Russian authorities as a matter of priority. To this end, I wrote on behalf of BASEES to Foreign Secretary Elizabeth Truss on 25 November. There can be no doubt that the dissolution of Memorial would be a terrible blow for historical researchers in our field, and for educational and human rights work in Russia more generally.

Sadly, the legal action taken against Memorial is not an isolated incident, but part of a broader weaponization of Russia's past and an attack on academic freedom in the country. Members have also been alarmed by recent developments at the Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences (MSEES, also known as the Shaninka) which



jeopardise the future of that renowned institution. The Shaninka was founded by the late Teodor Shanin, a longstanding and valued member of BASEES prior to his death last year. Over the last two decades the Shaninka has played a crucial role in fostering collaborative programmes between Russian scholars and international academia. It was therefore with grave concern that we learned in October that the Shaninka's Rector, Professor Sergey Zuev, had been arrested over what are widely understood to be fabricated charges of appropriating money from a state grant. According to colleagues with insight into the matter, the accusation is based on a claim that a state-subsidised project had not performed according to existing standards. Professor Zuev's arrest raises serious procedural questions, and given his very poor health after recent heart surgery, his transfer from house arrest to a remand prison in early November may endanger his life. Colleagues who want to express their support for Professor Zuev and the Shaninka can do so by **signing a letter** drafted by Russian colleagues to Tatiana Mosalkova, the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Russian Federation.

Our concerns about threats to academic freedom are not contained to developments in Russia. We have also witnessed worrying developments in several Central and Eastern European states, and, indeed, here in the UK, as Richard Evans noted in an excellent article, **'Rewritten History'**, for the *London Review of Books* (LRB 43.23, December 2021). The culture wars waged by certain ministers, MPs and quarters of the British press about the writing and representation of history are bad enough. But the government's broader devaluing of the arts and humanities and their place in HE, compounded by a hugely problematic >>

## New Books

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

The BASEES/Routledge Series on Russian 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.

#### New and forthcoming titles in this series...

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Ben Phillips, *Siberian Exile and the Invention of Revolutionary Russia, 1825–1917: Exiles, Émigrés and the International Reception of Russian Radicalism* (December 2021)

Katalin Miklóssy and Markku Kangaspuro (eds), *Conservatism and Memory Politics in Russia and Eastern Europe* (December 2021)

Li Bennich-Björkman and Saulius Grybkauskas (eds), *Moscow and the Non-Russian Republics in the Soviet Union: Nomenklatura, Intelligentsia and Centre-Periphery Relations* (December 2021)

John Kennedy, *Business Culture in Putin's Russia* (November 2021)

Veronica Stoyanova, *Ideology and Social Protests in Eastern Europe: Beyond the Transition's Liberal Consensus* (September 2021)

Voicu Ion Sucala, *Inside the East European Planned Economy: State Planning, Factory and Manager* (September 2021)

Daria Platonova, *The Donbas Conflict in Ukraine: Elites, Protest, and Partition* (January 2021)

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>> admissions system that often incentivises institutions to over-recruit, is now leading to a wider restructuring of the sector. Colleagues at the History Department at Goldsmiths, University of London (home to the UK's only Research Centre for the Study of the Balkans) have recently been put under the threat of compulsory redundancies. The scale of the proposed cuts could prove existential to teaching and research in our field at Goldsmiths. BASEES issued an open letter to the Wardens back in October stressing its deep concern regarding and opposition to any proposed compulsory redundancies and offering to participate in further consultation. As our [letter](#) stated: 'As the United Kingdom embarks on its post-Brexit strategy of 'global Britain' we will need to have experts ready to understand the world around us and investment into the Arts and Humanities is one way of achieving this, as well as a basis on which to train the future generation of experts. Redundancies in a leading university can undermine this aim and threaten to impinge upon our national interests as well as the more immediate interests of the higher education sector.'

Despite this rather grim situation on several fronts, I am pleased to report that colleagues have been extremely enthusiastic about the prospect of the return of our Annual Conference in Cambridge in April 2022. We received well over 500 proposals - clear evidence of everyone's desire to return to some in-person conferencing and networking.

The arrival of Omicron has, of course, thrown an unforeseen spanner into the works. What travel restrictions we will have to contend with come spring is anyone's guess. For the moment, however, we are still planning to go ahead with an in-person conference, but with expanded hybrid capability, allowing all delegates that cannot travel to Cambridge the option to present remotely.

Finally, an update on some other things the committee and members have been working on in the last few months. First, the BASEES strategic review is progressing steadily and I hope to present the outcome at the next AGM (to be held at the conference in April). Second, in preparation for the revamp of our website, we have expanded our social media presence. Recordings of all BASEES Talks events will now be made available on the [BASEES YouTube Channel](#), while the [BASEES Study Group for Minority History](#) has produced a wonderful podcast series on series on the history of minorities and minority experiences in twentieth-century Central and Eastern Europe (available via [BASEES Podcasts](#) on SoundCloud).

I wish all members and their families a peaceful Christmas and a good start to the New Year. Dark clouds allowing, I hope to see you in sunny springtime Cambridge before too long.

Matthias Neumann

## News of the field

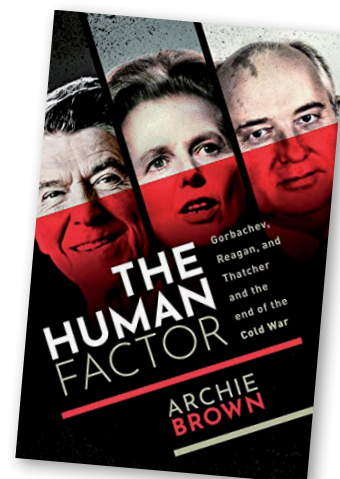
### Archie Brown wins Pushkin House Book Prize 2021

Archie Brown, Emeritus Professor of Politics at the University of Oxford and Emeritus Fellow of St Antony's College, Oxford, won the Pushkin House Book Prize 2021, for *The Human Factor: Gorbachev, Reagan, and Thatcher, and the End of the Cold War* (Oxford University Press). The prize, an international one for English-language books relating to Russia, is awarded each year for 'original, insightful and well-written books and to encourage public understanding and intelligent debate about Russia and its culture'.

Brown has been at Oxford for the last fifty years, having been appointed University Lecturer in Soviet Institutions and elected a Fellow of St Antony's in 1971. From 1989 until his retirement from teaching in 2005 he was Professor of Politics. Elected

a Fellow of the British Academy in 1991, he has been a Foreign Honorary Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences since 2003.

The Chair of the distinguished panel of judges, Dr Fiona Hill (former Senior Director for European and Russian Affairs on the US National Security Council) [commented](#) that the book 'represents the very best in western scholarship on Russia and comparative politics' and contains 'a lifetime's achievement of wisdom and insight', representing 'the culmination of Archie Brown's long and distinguished career as a scholar and writer'.



## Conference Report: Being a Minority in Times of Catastrophe

*Being a Minority in Times of Catastrophe* served as the BASEES Study Group for Minority History's inaugural event. Although our original intention had been to host it in hybrid form, with those outside the UK taking part via video link, the ongoing uncertainties surrounding the public health restrictions led to us deciding to divide the event into two parts. The first involved a two-day remote symposium comprising a keynote and five research panels, which took place from 25-26/06/2021. The second was an authors' workshop for participants who had expressed interest in having their paper feature as part of a post-symposium publication. This subsequently took place at the Wiener Holocaust Library in central London on 22/10/2021.

Given the symposium's theme, it now feels somewhat fitting that the process of setting up the Study Group for Minority History took place during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in May 2020. Indeed, our decision to explore the consequences of historical crisis and natural disasters stemmed in part from what has unfolded over the last two years. Surveys by the British Medical Association and similar organisations in other countries report that people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds have suffered disproportionately during the pandemic, both in health and economic terms. Although it is still too early to draw long-term conclusions, we wished to explore historical parallels in which minority groups were similarly affected by sudden or prolonged periods of crisis and uncertainty. Among the symposium's main themes, we were especially eager to explore the impact such developments had on intercommunal relations, how minority communities organised themselves in response to crisis and the long-term consequences for relationships between the state and its citizens.

These issues quickly emerged as the central focus of the online symposium, which began with a keynote by Dr Mark Levene (Emeritus Fellow in History, University of Southampton) on the possible consequences of climate change for minorities and other historically vulnerable groups across Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe. The rest of the first day was given over to panels exploring the impact of public health emergencies and famine and natural disasters.

Continuing with these themes, day two featured panels discussing how minority communities have attempted to mitigate the impacts of various crises, the role of the state in seeking to impose 'modernity', and the propensity for more openly visible minorities to find themselves as the targets of cultural 'othering' during and after periods of violent upheaval.

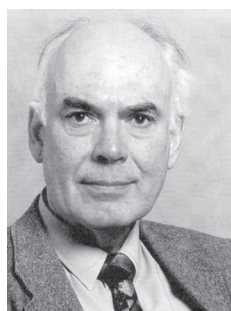
Despite the online format, the symposium proved extremely successful in facilitating lively and intelligent debate. Equally heartening was the representation of participants based outside of the UK, further demonstrating the continued importance of international scholarly collaboration.

Alongside Dr Levene's keynote, papers presented by Oleksii Chebotarov (University of St. Gallen), Anca Filipovici (Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities), Igor Vukadinović (Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts), the Wiener Library's Barbara Warnock and Elise Bath and our co-organiser Samuel Foster have been selected for publication in the international journal *Yearbook for the History of Eastern Europe*. Our recent workshop in London followed the initially planned hybrid format and granted the contributing authors an opportunity to receive peer-review feedback on their draft articles. Both events were made possible through the assistance of BASEES, including a generous conference grant that helped us fund travel and accommodation for those attending the authors' workshop.

On behalf of the Study Group and its growing body of affiliated members, we wish to thank our parent organisation for its continued support.

**Dr Samuel Foster**  
(Study Group Co-organiser)  
University of East Anglia/UCL-SSEES

## In memoriam: Paul Dukes, 1934-2021



Paul Dukes, Emeritus Professor of History at the University of Aberdeen, died on 25 August 2021 after a short illness. Best known for his many works on Russian history, he published widely

on a range of other subjects, including Europe, the Anthropocene, Manchuria, the Superpowers, and the long-standing connections between Scotland and Russia. He possessed a remarkable breadth of historical vision and a rare ability to distil enormous amounts of information into accessible yet thought-provoking studies.

Dukes was born in Wallington, Surrey, on 5 April 1934. As an Exhibitioner in History at Peterhouse, Cambridge (1951-54), his primary interest was in American history. His interest in Russian history developed during his period of national service (1956-58) when he learned Russian at the Joint Services School for Languages in Crail, Fife. From 1959-64, he studied for a PhD in Russian history at SSEES under the guidance of Hugh Seton-Watson and John Keep. In 1964 Dukes moved as a lecturer to the University of Aberdeen, where he remained for his entire career, apart from visiting positions at Auckland (1974) and Cornell (1988). In the 1990s he directed the Centre for Russian, East and Central European Studies at Aberdeen, which became an important focal point for building links and collaborations with historians in post-Soviet Russia. Upon his retirement in 1999, he was elected to a fellowship of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. He continued to publish and remained a frequent visitor to Russia, travelling to Moscow, St Petersburg, Ekaterinburg, Arkhangelsk, Orel, Ryazan, and Vladivostok to participate in conferences and establish academic connections. At home, he was a regular host and guide to dozens of guests from Russia as well as other parts of the former USSR and beyond.

Dukes' first book, *Catherine the Great and the Russian Nobility* (1967), examined the relationship between crown and nobility under Catherine through the materials of the Legislative Commission of 1767, and remains a standard work on the subject. The following year, he presented the inaugural paper to the first meeting of the Study Group on Eighteenth-Century Russia and remained a regular contributor to the group and its annual conferences until recent years. His status as an authority on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Russia was cemented by his contribution to the Longman History of Russia series, *The Making of Russian Absolutism, 1613-1801* (1982), which stressed the importance of Peter the Great's predecessors to the emergence of modern Russia.

Dukes brought a wider comparative and global perspective to the understanding >>

# News of the field

>> of Russian history. Russia, he insisted, was not a country to be considered in 'exceptionalist' isolation, but an integral part of world history. This approach was reflected in his series of comparative studies of the USA and Russia, *The Emergence of the Super-Powers* (1970), *The Last Great Game: USA versus USSR* (1989), and *The Superpowers: A Short History* (2000), which brought an innovative perspective to our understanding the Cold War. His *History of Russia* (1974) was also intended 'to reveal the limitations of an exclusively national approach to Russian history and to contribute to its analysis in a comparative framework'. He also brought a Braudelian *longue durée* approach to several of his works, setting events in a broad temporal perspective and downplaying the role of individuals in history, as in *Great Men in the Second World War: The Rise and Fall of the Big Three* (2017).

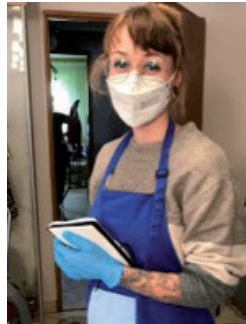
Dukes developed an interest in the history of connections between North-East Scotland and Russia, which resulted in a series of articles and a monograph, *Stuarts and Romanovs: The Rise and Fall of a Special Relationship* (2009, co-authored with Graeme P. Herd and Jarmo Kotilaine). With colleagues from the Russian Academy of Sciences, he also oversaw the publication of the diary of Patrick Gordon of Auchleuchries (6 vols, 2009–16), a leading general of Peter the Great.

Throughout his works, Dukes insisted that history should be considered a scientific discipline which, if carefully handled, can help to tackle the world's many problems. His steadfast conviction in the value of history meant that he was a passionate advocate of bringing it to wider readerships. He was a long-standing member of the *History Today* editorial advisory board and a member of the International Commission on the History of the October Revolution.

Dukes wore his formidable knowledge lightly and always exuded a quiet modesty. He was an avid fan of cricket and football, supporting Aberdeen, Scotland and Crystal Palace. His kindness, generosity, hospitality and sense of humour will continue to inspire everyone who knew him. He is survived by his children, Daniel and Ruth, and his wife Cath.

**Murray Frame**  
University of Dundee

## Fieldwork report: Kelsey Weber



As part of my PhD in Social Anthropology I recently completed an 18 month long fieldwork (funded by a BASEES R&D grant) in the Podlasie region of

Poland, primarily based in Białystok along with additional research in the nearby villages of Sokolka, Kruszyniany, and Bohoniki, among others. My research was undertaken among the Polish Tatars, a small group of Muslims who have lived on the Eastern border of Poland since around the 16th century. I am particularly interested in the formation of group boundaries and how community belonging is differentially constructed, maintained and/or (re)produced around varying axes of identity (particularly ethnicity, religion and gender). I try to understand the interaction between differing understandings of identity, focusing on one hand on essentializing discourses tied up with images of kinship and blood, and performative understandings expressed through events and rituals. I am hoping to elucidate this tension, showing the cracks, fissures, and overflows between conceptualizations of belonging that focus on stasis and continuation through blood ties, and those which allow for greater movement between and among identity(s). Utilizing the lens of the body, I hope to understand the ways in which identity among Polish Tatars flows and sticks to places and people at varying times, and what this says about how we can understand how group boundaries are created, maintained, and constructed, and what it means to belong.

I started my fieldwork in August of 2019 by focusing on studying the language and becoming acclimated to my surroundings. This was a time of both confusion and excitement, as I embraced my new life in Białystok and the process of "doing" anthropological research, while also feeling overwhelmed by novel experiences and homesickness for my friends and family. I began attending events among the Polish Tatar community, including religious lessons, Friday prayers, and book



launches. In between, I traveled to events outside of my home in Białystok, making connections to Tatars in other cities and the wider non-Tatar Muslim community. At this time I also began conducting group and one-on-one semi-structured interviews, ultimately completing over 30 interviews. A few months into my fieldwork as I was hitting my stride, the news began to be filled with information about a new virus: COVID 19. I jotted down my thoughts and experiences during this time, writing on March 12th, "I hope this situation blows over soon." Unfortunately this turned out to not be the case and we soon had our first lockdown. The borders were shut down and we were confined to our houses, with police on the street policing the mandatory stay at home order. I had to find a way to do my research under these new circumstances and thus transitioned my fieldwork to the digital sphere, focusing on how people connect via technology and doing interviews over the phone or Skype. Due to the new situation, I extended my original 12 month fieldwork to 18 months in order to try to collect more data and become accustomed to this new normal. It wasn't until the end of my fieldwork that the situation slowly started to improve, and events were once again held, though outdoors with social distancing and limited participation.

I returned to London and have started the process of going through my notes, transcribing interviews, and organizing my thoughts into the chapters of my thesis. Looking back over my time, I am overcome with a profound appreciation of the time I spent among the Polish Tatars in Podlasie and the opportunity I had to do research, which I hope will contribute to social anthropology in a meaningful way.

**Kelsey Weber**  
Department of Anthropology, UCL

# Book Reviews



**Katalin Fábian, Janet Elise Johnson, and Maria Lazda, eds. *The Routledge Handbook of Gender in Central-Eastern Europe and Eurasia*. Routledge, 2021. xxxii + 554 pages. ISBN: 978-1-138-34775-5. £133 hardback/£27.99 eBook.**

This new compendium of essays on the methodology and historiography of gender studies in the nations of Central and Eastern Europe, as well as Central Asia and the former Soviet Union, is both timely and courageous. Courageous firstly because, as the six-part Table of Contents demonstrates, this is a vast and intimidatingly intersectional field: it sprawls from the politics of reproduction to the politicization of queerness, and from women's involvement in national politics to the anti-genderism of contemporary neoliberal and nationalist regimes. No surprise when, as Maria Bucur's opening essay 'Between Regional and Transnational Contexts' reminds us, the geographical territory of Central-Eastern Europe and Eurasia 'contains both the world's largest landmass and is home to over half a billion people' (p. 9). And secondly, many of the contributors courageously tackle topics which are (sometimes violently) contested in many parts of that vast region. Consider, for example, Jill Irvine's essay on strategies of 'governance feminism' undermining gender equality in eastern Europe; Judit Takács's discussion of historical progress made in decriminalizing queerness, or indeed the chapters by Cynthia Werner on Central Asian bride-napping and Lauren A. McCarthy on human trafficking in Russia.

With their timescale extending from the late Austro-Hungarian Empire to the present day, the three co-editors sensibly don't impose a single long introduction on their volume. Instead, besides a short, lucid preface, each of the *Handbook's* six parts opens with a brief

essay summarizing and contextualizing core themes, such as tensions and overlaps between feminism and women's political activism (played out today in organizations like Ukraine's FEMEN, who feature in Jessica Zychowicz and Nataliya Tchernalykh's joint paper in Part 2). While emphasis is overwhelmingly placed throughout on women's history, the tenuous construction of post-Soviet masculinity is not overlooked: Eliot Borenstein's chapter reviews the spectrum of contemporary Russian manhood, from the exaggerated virility of Putin memes to the terrifying self-mutilation practiced by postmodern artists like Petr Pavlenskii.

This *Handbook* makes an excellent supplement to recent edited volumes in the same field, notably Melanie Ilic's 2017 *Palgrave Handbook of Women and Gender in Twentieth-Century Russia and the Soviet Union*. Its bulk and diversity would be impossible to navigate without the energetically cross-referenced index; and for those keen to read more on specific topics, each essay has a detailed bibliography. Oddly enough, the index lacks any entries under 'motherhood' or 'maternity', although 'single motherhood in post-Soviet Russia' fits between 'Sholokhov' and 'Slovakia'. Ominously, some of the longest sub-lists come under 'neoliberalism', 'human trafficking', and 'anti-gender movements'. Finally, and concerningly for the CEES gender studies field, the contributors are overwhelmingly female.

**Muireann Maguire**  
University of Exeter



***Russia is Burning: Poems of the Great Patriotic War*, ed. Maria Bloshteyn (Smokestack Books: Ripon, 2020), ISBN 978-1-9160121-1-0, £13.99;**



**Konstantin Simonov, *Wait for Me: Selected Poems*, trans. Mike Munford (Smokestack Books: Ripon, 2020), ISBN 978-1-9161392-3-7, £8.99;**



**Alexander Tvardovsky, *Vasili Tyorkin: a Book about a Soldier*, trans. James Womack (Smokestack Books: Ripon, 2020), 978-1-9160121-0-3, £10.99.**

These three volumes will provide readers who want to find out more about what Russian poets wrote about the Second World War with a wealth of material. In all three the Russian poems are presented in parallel with English translations, many of which are new.

Maria Bloshteyn's anthology is a comprehensive introduction to Russian poetry about the war. It assembles work that appeared in print in the wartime Soviet Union, in a section entitled 'Voices Heard'. Here readers will find the lyric poetry by front-line correspondents that was eagerly received by readers who recognised their own thoughts and feelings about being separated from loved ones, about the destruction and suffering that was visited on the whole country, and about a shared sense of an ordeal that had to be endured. This is followed by a section containing poetry written in wartime which only became available to Russian readers later, whether because it was written by poets living in emigration, by poets in the Soviet Union who knew there was no point in attempting to publish their work at the time, by inmates of Stalin's prisons and labour camps, and by poets who in one way or another found themselves aligned with, or supporting, the Germans.

Konstantin Simonov and Alexander Tvardovsky are among the poets that feature in the 'Voices Heard' section of >>

# Book Reviews

>> *Russia is Burning*. Readers who want to explore their work further would be well advised to turn to the other two books. Mike Munford's selection of lyric poetry by Simonov centres on the love poems written in wartime to the actress Valentina Serova, including 'Wait for Me', which was copied out and shared in correspondence between the home front and the front line. The widespread appropriation of Simonov's poem makes it clear that he was able to create works that, readers felt, spoke for them or to them. While many of his most popular poems were about love, a theme that had been placed firmly on the margins of 1930s poetry, Simonov managed to tread the line between conveying messages that were both appealing to readers and acceptably patriotic, and tipping over into formulaic propaganda. This selection includes 'An Open Letter' to a soldier's wife who has written to her husband to announce she has found another man (the soldier did not live to read it). The poet replies with an extensive dressing-down on behalf of the officers of the regiment, who 'Wish to express sincere contempt /For who you are and what you do' (p. 81). 'The House at Vyazma' offers an excellent example of the way that front-line comradeship and mutual trust was elevated above Party loyalty, but shows that bonds forged in wartime may not last: those who break this trust will face trial, and a chance to redeem themselves. Munford's introduction reminds readers that Simonov began life as a misfit in Soviet society: his aristocratic origins made him suspect. This collection helps to demonstrate why it was that Simonov succeeded in turning himself into a celebrated and genuinely popular Soviet poet.

For Alexander Tvardovsky, social origins also created a significant obstacle on the path to success in the Soviet literary world. Tvardovsky, as a young Komsomol member, was faced with the choice of expulsion from that organisation or disowning his father, who had been labelled a kulak. Tvardovsky opted for the Komsomol and the chance of a career as a writer. Once he had produced his Stalin Prize-winning epic 'Strana Muraviia' in 1936 he tended to avoid writing about the Soviet countryside, yet his peasant origins were arguably crucial to his invention of the character Vasilii Terkin, the resourceful and down-to-earth soldier at the centre of the episodic narrative poem that appeared at intervals during the war. The poem was a huge success, spawning a mass of 'fan

fiction' as readers composed additional episodes: among its admirers were the émigré writer Ivan Bunin and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. James Womack's translation goes a long way towards explaining the poem's appeal. As translator, Womack has made the choice to offer overall formal equivalency in terms of meter and rhyme, but is not doctrinaire about reproducing every last masculine or feminine rhyme. Instead, he has created a text in which the voices of the narrator and his hero speak to the reader straightforwardly, conversationally, yet with variations in tone to match the mood of Tvardovsky's text as it shifts from lighthearted to reflective. The drama of the episode describing the failed river crossing is beautifully judged, as it shifts from confusion and horror to Terkin's miraculous return from the other side of the icy river to report that all is not lost. With this task completed, it is only to be hoped that Womack produces an encore and translates the sequel, 'Terkin in the Other World', a tale of death and mistaken identity that satirizes the Stalinist system relentlessly. While Tvardovskii could not have contemplated taking such liberties with the wartime Terkin, he did create a hero who, as some critics towards the end of the war noted, hardly looked like a Soviet man at all, having more in common with the ordinary Russian soldier of earlier times.

These two volumes demonstrate in greater depth and detail what Russian poetry published in wartime was able to do, in spite of institutional and self-censorship. *Russia is Burning* fills in parts of the picture that could not be seen until relatively recently, in the second section, 'Muted Voices'. Here, poems by émigré writers sit alongside work by Soviet poets that had to wait decades for publication, since it revealed aspects of the war that did not fit with the official image of heroic endurance and self-sacrifice. In 'We Brought Back Victory' (pp. 282-87), Georgii Obolduev gives voice to embittered and wounded veterans insistently demanding money from passers-by. The editor's note reveals that he had attempted to make the poem acceptable for publication by claiming that the speaker was a British former soldier. That this subterfuge did not succeed suggests that the sentiments in the poem were all too recognisable as part of Soviet life. The final section, 'The War Remembered', traces the war's poetic legacy, including work by contemporary poets such as Polina Barskova and Irina Mashinski.

Maria Bloshteyn has created a remarkable anthology, not only compiling the poems, translating many of them, but also providing invaluable contextual information to help readers understand the poems' significance. Her introduction explains what she has set out to do by putting the anthology together. At the end of the book is an insightful essay on Russian poetry of the Second World War, which makes it clear that her project is to expand readers' knowledge of what was written about it, while questioning the assumptions on which the established canon of war poetry has rested (p. 451). While the victory of 1945 continues to play such a prominent role in the narratives of Russian identity, it remains important to understand the breadth of experience and response to the war in the work of Russian poets. These three books can only contribute to greater knowledge and understanding, and are very much to be welcomed.

**Katharine Hodgson**  
**University of Exeter**

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