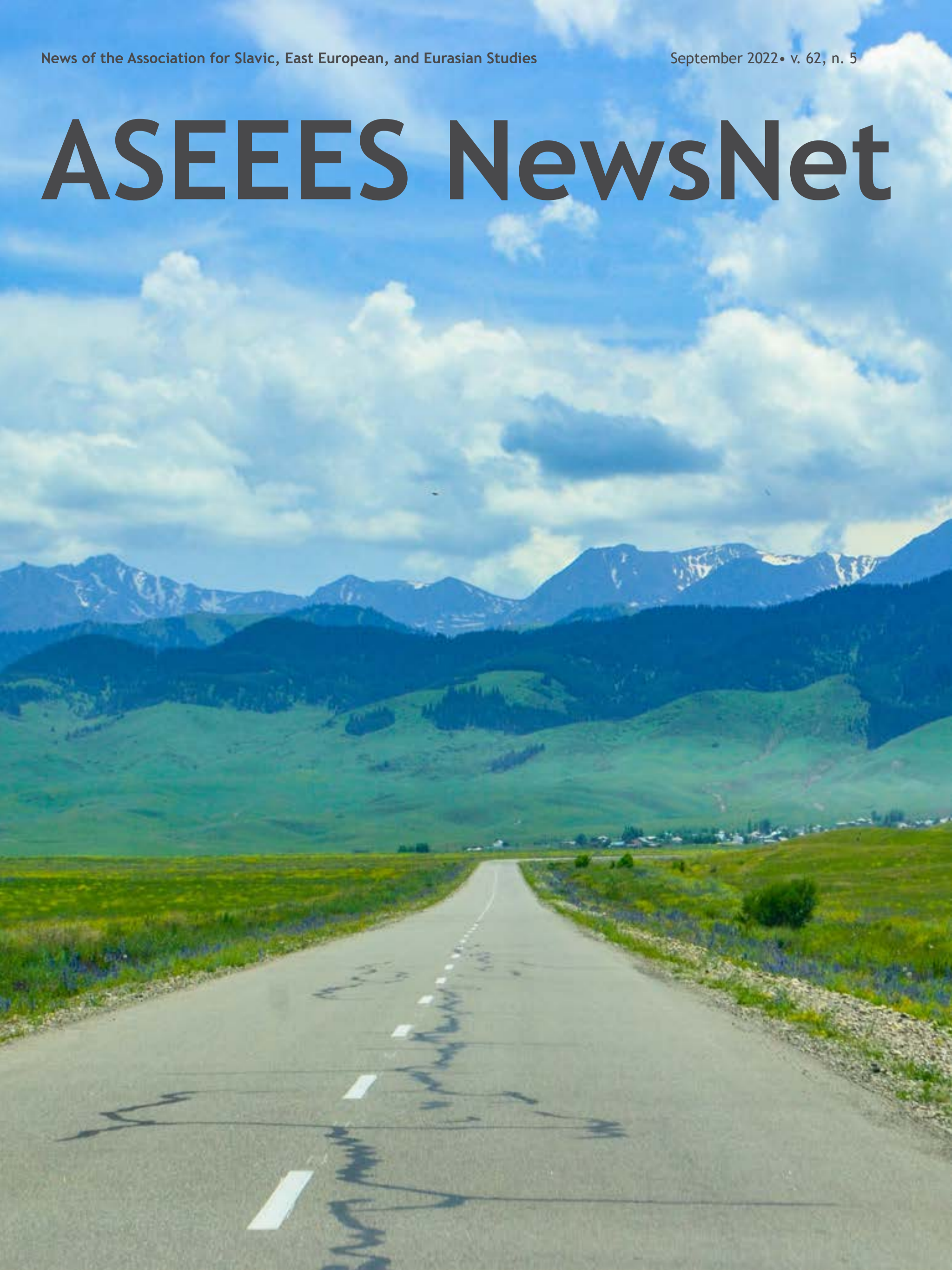


ASEEES NewsNet



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The Association for Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies (ASEES), established in 1948, is a nonprofit, nonpolitical, scholarly society and is the leading private organization dedicated to the advancement of knowledge about Russia, Central Eurasia, and Eastern & Central Europe.

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Editor’s Note: ASEES is pleased to continue our year-long NewsNet series, “De-colonizing Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies.” September’s issue features Caress Schenk’s essay, “Doubly De-colonizing the Syllabus,” a reflection on teaching in Kazakhstan for the past eleven years. Shoshana Keller’s piece examines ways to restructure the early Russian history syllabus, while Leora Eisenberg discusses ways to better integrate studies of Central Asia into our curricula. We look forward to featuring more writing that addresses this process, especially in terms of undergraduate teaching and graduate training. If you are interested in contributing to this series, please contact ASEES Deputy Director and NewsNet Editor, [Kelly McGee](mailto:kelly.mcgee@pitt.edu).

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Note: The views expressed in NewsNet articles are solely the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of ASEES or its staff.



Doubly De-colonizing the Syllabus.

by Caress Schenk, Nazarbayev University (Kazakhstan)

I have struggled to write this reflection on De-colonizing Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies in Undergraduate Teaching and Graduate Training because, in many ways, as a white American it is not at all my role to lead any process of de-colonization. I have started and stopped writing many times because I have questioned how my voice and my experience can and should be located within the discussion of de-colonizing approaches to learning and knowledge production. In the end, I offer reflections on an often stumbling and humbling journey to de-center myself and empower students in and out of the classroom, as I have lived and worked full time in Kazakhstan for the past eleven years.

Let me start with a confession. As an American scholar of Russian politics, I have been complicit in perpetuating hegemonic whiteness both in the form of Westernized and Russified dominance in knowledge production. But I am lucky to have students who push against norms that I never knew I needed to deconstruct. In a discussion with students during my first semester teaching in Kazakhstan in fall 2011, I proposed that we could set a rudimentary baseline for a “modern” country based on whether most people had indoor plumbing. The students’ reactions told me in no uncertain terms that my suggestion had dramatically undermined their experience of the world. I realized then that I had a lot to learn.

The teaching of SEEEES in Central Asia confronts a double de-colonization, both from the hegemonic frames imposed by Russian imperial and Soviet knowledge production and from the dominance of Western theories and “international” conventions that continue to edge out local voices and epistemologies. In the paragraphs that follow, I will share parts of my journey of de-constructing knowledge coming from the North (Russia) and West, as I have learned how I can use my power and position as a white American to empower student voices to tell their own stories and impact the world around them.

A Double De-colonization.

There are two layers we should acknowledge about global hierarchies of knowledge production to de-colonize learning and teaching in and about Central Asia. One layer is the East-West divide, or Western vs. Eurasian. Global knowledge production has remained Western-centric and English-language dominant. While the increase of Eurasian scholars publishing in international journals has helped to interject local voices into global discussions, biases remain against the types of knowledge produced by these scholars (usually characterized with the barely veiled invective of “descriptive”). For Western classrooms, the primary focus often includes more local voices in the syllabus. In Central Asian classrooms, this can be less of an issue because many students are more intuitively oriented towards resources produced in the region and have the language

skills needed to access these tools.

The other layer in need of de-colonization is the North-South divide that pits Russia vs. its historically colonized and currently marginalized. This has both an international component and a domestic one. The international component has direct implications for Kazakhstan and my students. The domestic component has implications for how we teach Russian politics in a way that de-centers the perspective of Moscow, regardless of where we are located and who our students are. I will touch on this second issue later.

Spring semester 2022 was one that my students (and me) will never forget. It started when, just a few days before we were set to return from Winter Break, the country went into a state of emergency after protests in Almaty turned violent, were co-opted by elite rivalries, and the government called in Russian-led troops to regain control and advance the argument that terrorists were responsible for the unrest. During the total internet blackout, we stayed in touch via old-school SMS. While the state of emergency was in place, the government announced that the Winter Break for schools and universities would be extended due to the Omicron variant of COVID-19. When we finally started the new semester (online, because of COVID restrictions) in late January, I came armed with readings on collective trauma and a determination to make space for students’ grief in our classroom. Then Russia invaded Ukraine. And in addition to our shock, disbelief, and sense of powerlessness to help, many also felt an immediate solidarity with Ukraine knowing that Kazakhstan also sits on Russia’s borders and has similar angsts over language and independence from Russia’s sphere of influence.

Our semester was oriented around these questions and the trauma we had all experienced. Let me confess—again—that it was not until this period, an entire decade after moving to Kazakhstan, that I began to understand the post-colonial significance of some of the things students had been telling me all along. When we discussed the role Kazakh language should play in Kazakhstan, I didn’t fully appreciate the anti-imperialist nature of the debate and saw it only in terms of nationalism. When students expressed alarming speculations about Russian encroachment in the northern regions, I also dismissed these as an extreme outside possibility. But after Ukraine, Kazakhstanis no longer have the luxury of readying themselves for possibilities in some sort of rationalistic or probabilistic calculative fashion. A student sat in my office just days ago wondering what the ethnic breakdown would be among fighters if Russia invaded Kazakhstan. Would Kazakhstani ethnic Russians fight for Kazakhstan? Students have grappled with whether their country and its leadership have the inner resilience and unity to mount as kick-ass a campaign as the Ukrainians. These are the issues I need to make space for in my classroom.

Syllabus as Living Document. Classroom as Community.

A de-colonized syllabus is never finished. We're probably all familiar with agonizing over the question of whether to add new readings to a syllabus (making more work for ourselves) or leave it be. I did something even more radical at the beginning of this semester. It started as a mistake. The syllabus for a new course on civic activism simply wasn't ready on the first day of class. But rather than give the students an incomplete syllabus, I shared my messy and incomplete draft as a Google Doc on which they could comment. And they have! They've suggested readings, topics, more nuanced approaches, a shift in attention from certain issues to others, making syllabus creation a truly collaborative process.



During our first class, as I was outlining my own ideas about what I thought was important to understand social change and activism, I suggested we should discuss the idea of complicity using the historical examples of Germany and Australia alongside the contemporary example of Russia. One student interjected, "But why are we still talking about Russia?" Great question. In the ongoing discussion about

de-colonizing Russia, this is exactly the right question. Because even after all the affirmations of Ukrainian agency in the wake of the war, many correctly identify that Russia still takes up way too much space on our intellectual horizons. The student later commented that he didn't think he would have pushed back if I weren't a woman and that maybe that wasn't well done of him. I'm not convinced this is a gender issue, but I think what he was recognizing is that I had made space in the classroom so that whatever authority I have doesn't squeeze out the voice of students. He meant to apologize, but I insisted that the question was exactly the right one and that our questions should always drive us in our learning process.

As I have included texts such as Tuhiwai-Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies* in my courses, I have learned to be much clearer and more up-front about my own positionality with students. I will never forget the first meeting I had with a cohort of MA students after they had read parts of the Tuhiwai-Smith text. I invited them to reflect on my identity as a white American native English speaker as a potentially colonizing force in the classroom. While one student insisted that access to English-language education was an unmitigated good, another was more reflective, quoting the text to confess that "we are already colonized in our minds." I still don't know exactly how to respond to this heavy reality. But I realize that my job is not only to not do harm by imposing hegemonic frames on my students; it is also to help undo harm that has already been done.

De-colonizing the syllabus and de-colonizing knowledge production go hand in hand. I know I still have a lot to learn, but for now I begin all my syllabi with the following paragraph:

4 By taking this course, you are joining me on a journey. It is not one in which I am the teacher, and you are the student. Rather, we are joining into a pact to be co-creators of knowledge

as we wrestle without our own humanity vis-a-vis the theories of Political Science and other academic fields. Don't get me wrong, I don't diminish my role in this process (and ultimately, I will assign grades!). I likely have more experience than you do with the journeying, and I am happy to share whatever wisdom I've gained along the way. But I invite, even insist, that you bring your full selves to the table so that we can also learn from you. I insist that you be willing to change as a part of our learning process. I will commit to the same. I do not care so much *what* you think (e.g., the content of how you arrange thoughts and bases for evidence) but *that* you think and more importantly, that you are willing to re-think. I will promise the same. The assignments we do and discussions we have are not boxes to be checked. They are opportunities to change and learn together.

Instead of imposing concepts on students, de-colonizing demands that concepts that are meaningful to the lived experience and are allowed to confront and de-construct orthodoxy.

Looking at Russia to Teach about Politics in Kazakhstan: What's Wrong with This Picture? Not What You Might Think.

When I first started teaching political science in Kazakhstan, I often used Russian examples to open discussions about students' own experiences of politics. I didn't know at the time whether I could be truly open in the classroom, which led me to an indirect approach towards talking about what Western scholars define as the key problems of authoritarianism: corruption, downward pressure on civil society, lack of election transparency, etc. I've come to realize there are two problems with this approach in addition to the more obvious problems with looking at all Eurasian countries through the lenses of Soviet legacies. First, it imposes concepts on students that are not necessarily meaningful in their experience. Second, and as a direct result, it eschews an epistemology of hope.

Political science theories are often narrowly and obsessively focused on regime type. They teach that authoritarianism is bad, corruption is bad, development and modernization are good, universal human rights are good, and that exercising voice through elections and protests are part and parcel of those human rights. These hegemonic ideas leave students in non-democratic settings with the distinct impression that they are the "other."

Instead of imposing concepts on students, de-colonizing demands that concepts that are meaningful to the lived experience and are allowed to confront and de-construct orthodoxy. Instead of leading with a normative concept of authoritarianism, we can focus on spaces where citizens find voice and solve problems within authoritarian systems. Instead of an undifferentiated concept of corruption that relegates a system to the trash heap of institutionalized and systemic corruption, we can ask how relationships drive all interactions from the smallest to the most political and how the same forces that strip society of opportunity and resources can also create benefits for that same society.

A Western-led political science leaves students outside the West with little redeeming about their political experience if they aren't directly and even violently challenging the regime. This paradigm eschews hope by advancing narrowly conceived ideas—like if

you can't protest, you aren't exercising political voice. As an educator who wants my students to thrive and flourish, I cannot see how encouraging confrontation as the only route to change is markedly, or even at all, better than leveraging context-embedded relationships towards improving life for those around them. An epistemology of hope creates space for community and care to make demonstrable impacts even in the shadows of a repressive state. It is oriented towards seeking out examples of human connection that are meaningful even when they aren't measurable.

I haven't taught the Russian politics course since the beginning of the war. Even before the war, I had changed my approach to one that looks away from Moscow and elite politics to how the everyday lives of people in the regions interact with their political environments. The students grumbled at first when I wouldn't let them discuss major geopolitical developments or anything having to do with Navalny, but we eventually laughed when they realized they knew a surprising number of interesting details about agriculture in Saratov. When I teach the course again, I know we must go even further in the process of turning our gaze towards issues affecting Russia's minorities, such as language rights in ethnic republics or the disproportionate number of ethnic minority soldiers dying in Ukraine, in order to analyze how privilege works within Russia and beyond its borders. In this context, I think it would be appropriate to re-open the debate on Russian complicity and the impossible choices that some of our Russian colleagues are facing. I, for one, cannot give up on the epistemology of hope, even when it comes to the darkest days of Russia's present.

Conclusion

In the end, even a double de-colonization is only a starting place. While my students have a certain position in the global hierarchy of academia, they also have their own positionality they should be aware of. This semester, in the class on civic activism, I am

challenging students to be aware of their own power and privilege as they seek to engage their communities. We are discussing the idea of "composting" our privilege¹ or seeking ways that we can give up something of ourselves for the sake of empowering those around us. Composting privilege embraces the need for perpetual de-colonization.

I still struggle to know how much of the social science orthodoxy my students need to be credibly prepared for graduate programs abroad. But I do not believe that a perpetually de-colonized syllabus will necessarily produce a parochial understanding of their world. It does mean the burden is on me to ensure that young scholars are not crushed under the weight of Western theories or the requirements of international academia and that they have the time and space to develop their own voices. If my former students are the ones that find themselves in your graduate programs making credible critiques of Western theory, I will know that we have succeeded.

Endnotes

1 This idea comes from the work of Dr. Robyn Henderson-Espinoza's writing and speaking on composting supremacy culture.



Caress Schenk is Associate Professor of political science at Nazarbayev University (Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan) with teaching and research expertise in the politics of immigration and national identity in Eurasia. Her book, published with the University of Toronto Press in 2018, is called *Why Control Immigration? Strategic Uses of Migration Management in Russia*. She has a current research project funded by a grant from Nazarbayev University that looks at state-society relations in Kazakhstan during the COVID-19 pandemic. Dr. Schenk is a member of the Program on New Approaches to Research and Security in Eurasia (PONARS Eurasia), and a PI of the CoronaNet Research Project.

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A 2022 Member Spotlight Mini-Series

Russia's war in Ukraine poses serious challenges for Ukrainian scholars and scholars of Ukrainian studies. Internally and externally displaced scholars are facing disruptions to their livelihoods and research. This series showcases the work of Ukrainian scholars of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian studies, and the challenges that they currently face. ASEES is committed to preserving and promoting scholarship of those affected by Russia's war in Ukraine.

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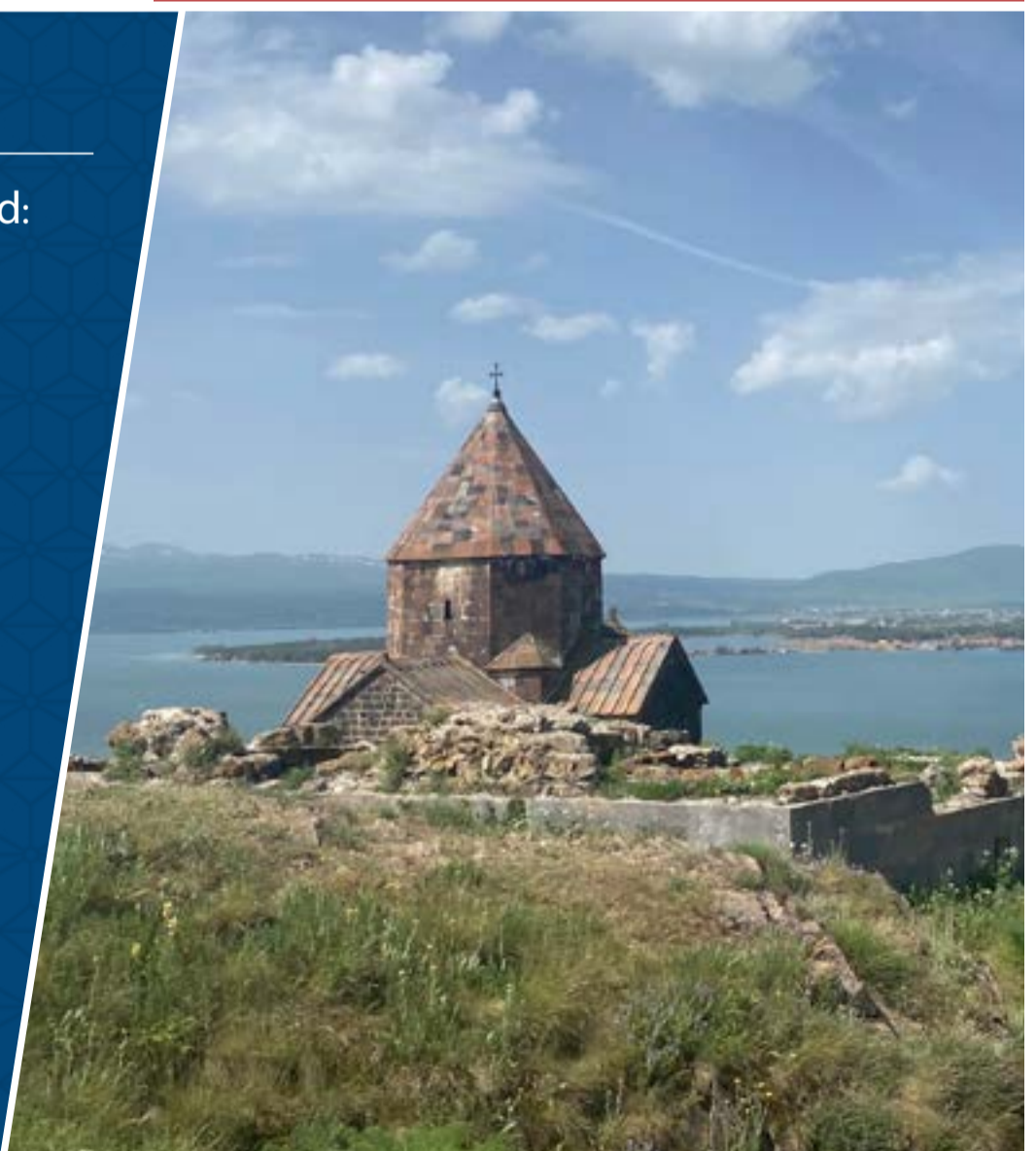
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54th ASEEES Annual Convention
 Virtual Oct. 13-14 • Chicago Nov. 10-13

Registration Deadline
Virtual Oct. 10 • In-Person Oct. 17

Registration

All presenters (panelists, discussants, roundtable members, and session chairs) must pre-register.

All presenters and attendees **must register by October 10**. There is no late registration for the Virtual Convention. A full list of registration rates can be found [online](#).

In-person registration and badge pick-up will be located on the 4th floor next to the Exhibit Hall & Cyber Cafe.

Please review the [Code of Conduct](#).

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Book your stay at The Palmer House Hilton through the [booking site](#) before **October 9** to receive a reduced room block rate.

View the hotel amenities and what to do in Chicago [here](#).

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For those planning to attend the Convention in Chicago, November 10-13, 2022, please review the full COVID-19 guidelines and updates, including the [ASEEES Convention protocol](#) and the [Chicago COVID-19 page](#).

As we navigate this phase of the pandemic, we must work together to create a culture of care. Here’s what we are doing to help mitigate risk for those who join us in person:

- Vaccine expected
- Mask required
- Badge required for all convention spaces

In order to receive your badge at registration, you will need to sign an attestation of your full vaccination status or negative test result within 72 hours.

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The ASEEES Convention App will be available on October 17 from your app store for the Chicago convention.

Follow updates from [@aseeestudies](#) with [#ASEEES22](#).

2022 Highlights:

Films Screenings:

- *Winter Adé*
- *Рознад (Disintegration)*
- *Vulnerable Archives: [Unarchiving] Collections of the Center for Urban History (Lviv)*
- Experimental Films from State-Socialist Eastern Europe: Part I and Part II
- *Spółdzielnia / Cooperative*

I.D.E.A.S. in REEES Undergrad Think Tank Series

2022 Theme: Precarity

For the 2022 ASEEES Convention, we are highlighting Ukrainian studies and the work of our Ukrainian colleagues with over 90 scheduled sessions. You can view the set of highlighted sessions in the [online program](#) by clicking, "Browse Sessions about Ukraine" in the navigation bar.

Virtual Convention Special Sessions:

Vice-Presidential Roundtable: Bringing Students from the Region to North American Graduate Schools

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Chicago Convention Special Events:

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Presidential Plenary: Ukrainian Literature in Wartime

Annual Meeting of ASEEES Members

ASEEES Award Ceremony and President's Address: "Precarity and Possibilities for Reinvention"

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- Vasyakina Glazova Barskova: Contemporary Feminist and Queer Russian Poetry
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NEW FROM SLAVICA PUBLISHERS

Linda Mëniku and Héctor Campos. *Advancing in Albanian*, 451 p. (textbook, ISBN 978-089357-512-0), 324 p.; (workbook, ISBN 978-089357-513-7), \$79.95.

Mëniku and Campos's original introductory textbook of Albanian (*Discovering Albanian 1*, University of Wisconsin Press, 2011) was hailed as "lightening the burden of the instructor, allowing for more productive efforts in designing an effective and modern syllabus," and received the AATSEEL award for best annual contribution to language pedagogy. Now, as Albania prepares for accession to the European Union, Slavica presents the authors' intermediate-advanced textbook to provide enhanced access for students to one of the less commonly taught European languages. The textbook and accompanying workbook are supported by

substantial online downloadable audio files.

Adele Lindenmeyr and Melissa K. Stockdale, eds. *Women and Gender in Russia's Great War and Revolution, 1914–22*, xx + 376 p., 2022 (978-089357-441-3), \$44.95.

This volume brings together scholars from Russia, Great Britain, and North America to examine women's experiences and changing gender norms during Russia's crisis years of World War I, the revolutions of February and October 1917, and the Civil War. Looking beyond rhetoric about women's wartime service and ideological proclamations of emancipation, the authors seek to understand how years of military combat, political upheaval, and social transformation affected lives and redefined concepts of citizenship, patriotism, and gender.



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Three String Books is an imprint of Slavica Publishers devoted to translations of literary works and belles-lettres from Central and Eastern Europe, including Russia and the other successor states of the former Soviet Union.

Anna Starobinets. *Look at Him*, trans. **Katherine E. Young**, xii + 151 p., 2020 (ISBN 978-089357-503-8), \$19.95.

In this groundbreaking memoir, Anna Starobinets chronicles the devastating loss of her unborn son to a fatal birth defect. A finalist for the 2018 National Bestseller Prize, *Look at Him* ignited a firestorm in Russia, prompting both high praise and severe condemnation for the author's willingness to discuss long-taboo issues of women's agency over their own bodies, the aftereffects of abortion and miscarriage on marriage and family life, and the callousness and ignorance displayed by many in Russia in situations like hers.



Miroslav Maksimović, *Pain*, trans. **John Jeffries and Bogdan Rakić**, viii + 104 p., 2021 (ISBN 978-089357-508-3), \$19.95.

The fourteen sonnets of *Pain* deal with a historical event from August 1941, when the entire Serbian population of the village of Miostrah were massacred by their Muslim neighbors. Among the more than 180 slaughtered women and children were all the members of Maksimović's mother's immediate family. Thirteen years of age, Maksimović's mother miraculously survived and joined the anti-fascist partisan forces.

Using her tragedy as a paradigm for a national trauma, Maksimović created a work that both contributes to the Serbian culture of remembrance and oversteps the boundaries of memorial literature as it celebrates the triumph of poetry over historical evil.

Vol. 23, no. 3 (Summer 2022)

Special Issue
Culture, Practices, and Secret Policing
in the USSR and Eastern Europe

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ANGELINA LUCENTO

The NKVD and the Political Origins of Socialist Realism

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Game Over?

FRANZISKA DAVIES

Diversity, Belonging, and Violence
in the Russian and Soviet Empires



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Notes toward Restructuring the Early Russian History Syllabus

by Shoshana Keller, Hamilton College

Since the start of the war Ukrainian historians have challenged us to reconsider the standard narrative of “Russian” history, focused as it is on the rise of a Russian state and empire. There are good reasons for this: the modern discipline of history was developed, largely by French and English scholars, as a tool for the idea of Western European nation-states. As the Russian state strove for respect from Europe, Nikolai Karamzin and his successors wrote histories that demonstrated why Russia was a great nation, too. More prosaically,

When we de-center Russia, however, we can provide students with a more comprehensive understanding of the interactions among East Slavs, Turkic peoples, Lithuanians, Poles, Jews, and others.

the model of origins → rise → flourishing of Russia, with occasional digressions to Cossack rebellions or the wars for the Caucasus, gives us a well-defined story to present to students. However, it is time for us move beyond telling the story of one nation as *the* history of Western Eurasia. As I outline below, we can still provide students with structure by emphasizing the connectedness and reciprocity of Kievan Rus’ and its successors.¹

The nation-state model treats Russia, even a multi-ethnic Russia, as the fundamental ground for our understanding of the entire Western Eurasian region. The rise of one powerful state became the only story worth telling, with other cultures tacked on as the state incorporated them. When we de-center Russia, however, we can provide students with a more comprehensive understanding of the interactions among East Slavs, Turkic peoples, Lithuanians, Poles, Jews, and others. We can also emphasize how these peoples were always inter-connected and how they influenced each other on multiple levels. We should neither ignore the Russian state nor simply “add Ukrainians and stir.” We should, rather, re-conceptualize these polities and peoples outside of the constraints of the nation-state model.

Not everyone begins their survey course with Kievan Rus’, but the 940–1240 period is crucial for understanding later complexities. As we know, Putin justified his 2014 takeover of Crimea, in part, with the tale of a pious Russian Prince Volodymyr’s baptism in 988. Volodymyr was baptized in Crimea, but he was a mid-size Scando-Slavic chieftain looking for a powerful ally and a political tool to tie his fractious group of city-states together more than a spiritual

seeker. In Kievan Rus’ we see a head without a state, or perhaps a little galaxy of power centers, wherein Slavs, Turkic steppe peoples, Finno-Ugric forest-dwellers, Jewish and Frankish traders, and Greek churchmen saw princes as protectors from external threats and keepers of basic internal order and little else.² The Rus’ princes were notoriously fratricidal, and their periodic peace agreements never laid out a general governing vision. A long-term pattern we can emphasize in the classroom is that, as Rus’ grew and fragmented in the 12th century, distinct political cultures developed: in the Western Galicia-Volhynia region princes contended with a powerful nobility; in the northern Novgorod-Pskov area the merchant families and *veche* assembly claimed authority over princes; and in Northeast Suzdalia princes were primarily threatened by each other.

Close examination of a vivid individual life, moreover, will also present students with a broader perspective. Prince Mikhail Vsevolodovich of Chernihiv’s family (1180s–1246), for example, highlights the importance of women in Rus’ as agents of political alliances, as frustrating as it is that we know so little about them. Mikhail’s mother was Polish, his wife from Volhynia, and his sister and one of his daughters were married into the family ruling Suzdalia. Marriage ties did not prevent war: at various points Mikhail fought against and alongside his brothers-in-law and other relatives for control over Novgorod, Kyiv, and Galicia/Halych while allying with the king of Hungary or Kuman nomads (Qipchak Turks), with whom the princes also had marriage ties. He died at the hands of Rus’ warriors who had joined up with the invading Mongols. Mikhail’s life shows the fluidity of boundaries in a world in which “nation” was not yet a concept.³

At the juncture where the Mongol conquest split Rus’, our standard narrative turns to Suzdalia and is built around the question, “How did Moscow rise?” If we ask, instead, “What happened to the peoples of Kievan Rus’?” we can tell a broader and more complicated story about Western Eurasia/Eastern Europe. I suggest that discussing the two Ruses’ development in parallel, then turning to their inter-connections, is a productive approach. Until the late 14th century, Mongol Rus’ and Galician-Volhynian Rus’ developed through different trajectories.⁴ The Northern lands of Suzdalia, Tver’, Novgorod, and Riazan were ruled by Rurikid princes but incorporated into the Jochid/Tatar khanate. The khans chose who would be grand prince, the church recognized the Tatars as patrons, and the princes used the Tatars as allies in their continuing wars against each other. Eventually, the princely line of Moscow learned to use Tatar support to solidify power. In the Southwest, the princes of Galicia-Volhynia, Smolensk, Polatsk, and Kyiv paid tribute to the khans but were not incorporated into the larger empire. Instead, the region

was gradually engulfed by Lithuania and Poland, which continued the political culture of strong landed aristocracies loosely controlled by kings. Orthodox Rus' were often governed by Orthodox Rurikid princes, but Catholic Poles and Pagan Lithuanians were the higher authorities. Lithuanians' stubborn adherence to their own religion drew in the German Teutonic and Livonian crusading orders, while Polish rulers invited Jewish communities to settle in their domains.⁵ In 1385, Jadwiga of Poland married Jogaila of Lithuania, who converted to Catholicism and brought the remaining Pagans with him.

Having established the distinct cultural complexes of the two Ruses, we can show students how they remained connected and how those connections became more robust across the entire region. The Orthodox Church tried to maintain the ecclesiastical unity of Rus' as much as possible, although Lithuanian Rus' eventually got its own metropolis. Moscow's consolidation of power was contested by other principalities: Novgorod and Tver' both established marriage ties with Lithuania to counter Moscow. It appears that Princess Uliana Alexandrovna of Tver' was quite influential with her husband Algirdas of Lithuania.⁶ None of these principalities joined Dmitri Donskoi in the field against Tatar amir Mamai in 1380, and Moscow was forced under harsher Tatar control two years later. In the early 15th century Lithuania was the dominant power. Prince Vasiliï Dmitrivich of Moscow was married to Sophia, daughter of Vytautas of Lithuania. Vytautas alternately sheltered and fought Khan Tokhtamysh of the faltering Tatar khanate. When young Vasiliï II became prince in 1425, his grandfather Vytautas was one of his guardians. Vytautas may have been working to take the remaining Rus' lands and more Tatar servitors under Lithuanian suzerainty, but instead his death in 1430 set off 20 years of bitter war among rival Muscovite princes, Lithuanian princes, and khans of what became four successor states to the Tatar khanate. When the dust settled in the 1450s, Muscovy emerged as a regional power that even patronized its own client khanate, at Kasimov.

The reign of Ivan III of Moscow (r. 1462–1505) marked the beginning of early modern state consolidation in both Ruses. Ivan married Maria Borisovna of Tver' and later annexed the principality. He brutally broke Novgorod's autonomy in the 1470s, and absorbed smaller appanages by more peaceful means. He strengthened the court's bureaucracy, issued an important law code, and created a new military service class that was dependent on him rather than on hereditary family lands. By the 1490s Ivan was seizing Rus' lands from Lithuania and demanding to be recognized as the sovereign "of all Rus'." He also married his daughter Elena to Prince Alexander of Lithuania. Meanwhile, Orthodox Slavic speakers in what we can start to call Ruthenia also saw themselves as "all Rus'," and Muscovy as a foreign power. Lithuania and Poland continued their decentralized political structures, which allowed people in the autonomous lands from Volhynia to Kyiv to develop regional identities defined by religious, linguistic, and political differences with the cultures around them.

While it is important for students to understand how Muscovy consolidated, in order to make room for the broader history of Rus' we need to focus less on the doings of rulers and more on cultural and religious dynamics. The union of the Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches in 1439, as the Ottomans bore down on Constantinople, led to identity crises and fruitful intellectual competition in Slavic Orthodox communities. The Muscovite church rejected the union, breaking with Constantinople, while the Ruthenian prelates accepted it but did little to make unification

a reality. The Muscovite church came to regard itself as the last true Christian church, and tried to protect its purity from outside influence. Ruthenians had to define and defend themselves against a swirl of religious ideas coming from the collapse of Byzantium and the triumph of Islam, the Reformation, and the Counter-Reformation. The Muscovite church could not completely cut itself off: the "Judaizer heresy" controversy of the 1490s becomes a little more interesting when we consider the chain of transmission of ideas from Jews and Christians cooperating in Kyiv to send texts to Novgorod, some of which ended up in Moscow.⁷

De-centering Moscow gives us an opportunity to cut back on grisly but dubious tales of Ivan the Terrible in order to compare social structures across the region. Both Muscovy and Ruthenia were multi-ethnic and multi-religious. Muscovy in the 16th century annexed the Tatar khanates of Kazan' and Astrakhan and began to reach across Siberia. Ivan IV's government encouraged foreign trade, but barred Jews and most non-Orthodox Christians from settlement. The church began a brutal but failed attempt to convert Muslims to Orthodoxy. Ivan then damaged his government by waging war against the Livonian Order and united Poland-Lithuania. The Ruthenian lands saw the emergence of new communities: Protestantism attracted some Slavs, while the Jewish community was formalized into the self-governing Council of the Four Lands. On the frontiers with the Crimean and Nogai khanates, groups of Tatar-Slavic freebooters (Cossacks) earned a living as frontier guards. The Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth, united in 1569, needed Cossack help because Tatar slave raids carried off thousands of Slavic peasants every year. The Tatars hit Muscovy too, but not as hard as Ruthenia. Both Muscovite and Ruthenian landholders struggled to hang on to their peasant labor force, but Ruthenian nobles used Jewish intermediaries and their own resources to impose varying kinds of control, as opposed to the early serfdom measures issued from Moscow. A broader narrative could also discuss the growing numbers of nobility—of Slavic and Tatar backgrounds—who switched their allegiance from Lithuania to Moscow or vice-versa.

Emphasis on the upheavals of this period as interactions across West Eurasia will give students a deeper understanding of how religion, a new sense of ethnicity, economic pressures, political clashes, and natural disasters all contributed to modernizing cultures.

The 17th century saw Ukrainians, Belorussians, and Russians move further apart culturally and come together politically. Emphasis on the upheavals of this period as interactions across West Eurasia will give students a deeper understanding of how religion, a new sense of ethnicity, economic pressures, political clashes, and natural disasters all contributed to modernizing cultures.⁸ The Russian Orthodox Church became a patriarchate in 1589 while the 1596 Union of Brest created the Greek Catholic Church in Ruthenia, a compromise that attracted many Ruthenian nobility under rising Polish pressure to conform to Rome. The revolts of the Time of Troubles (1598–1613) erupted in lands Moscow had recently taken from Lithuania. Bohdan Khmelnytsky allied with Tatars to slaughter large numbers of Poles and Jews and carve out a short-lived Cossack state, then had to request Russian military protection with the Agreement of Pereiaslav in 1654. Moscow's practice of

viewing all such agreements as acceptance of Russian rule motivated a Ukrainian identification with freedom in opposition to Russian autocracy. Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Rus' Petro Mohyla, alarmed by Cossack and Catholic aggression alike, founded an academy to train clergy to defend Orthodoxy using Catholic intellectual tools. Patriarch Nikon in Moscow invited some of these Ukrainian scholars to assist with reforming Russian liturgical texts, which set off the Old Believer schism and the subordination of church to state, a defining feature of the Russian Empire. The formal founder of that empire, Peter the Great, relied on more Kyivan-trained clergy, especially Teofan Prokopovych, to refine and publicize his aims.

The empire under Peter and Catherine the Great took over all the lands of Kievan Rus', Lithuania, and much of Poland. This should not, however, allow us to turn with relief back to the standard narrative. Ivan Mazepa and Emelian Pugachev reminded the rulers that autocratic control was more of an ideal than a reality. The chaos of a rapidly-expanding empire created a new cultural and political environment, within which the various nationalities and state actors struggled to redefine themselves against each other. The state's agonizing over what to do with the million or so Jews that Catherine had swallowed, along with Eastern Poland, provides a rich case study of these dynamics for the classroom, and there are many others. Teaching the history of this complex region will require new textbooks and new translations of primary sources, unfamiliar to those of us trained as Russianists first. We have a lot of work to do, but the reward for us and our students will be a significantly enriched understanding of this history.

Endnotes

- 1 An excellent example is Scott C. Levi, *The Bukharan Crisis: A Connected History of 18th-century Central Asia* (Pittsburgh, 2020).
- 2 Valerie Kivelson and Ronald Grigor Suny, *Russia's Empires* (Oxford, 2017), p. 27.
- 3 See Martin Dimnik, *The Dynasty of Chernigov, 1146–1246* (Cambridge, 2003). Sergei and Betty Jean Zenkovsky's 1980s translation of the *Nikonian Chronicle* includes the sainted Mikhail's *vitae* and some vivid stories, but these need to be pieced together from separate entries. The translation also assumes that the chronicle is recounting Russian history, and is full of anachronisms. Daniel H. Kaiser and Gary Marker, *Reinterpreting Russian History: Readings, 860–1860s* (Oxford, 1994), contains very helpful chronicle excerpts and essays on culture.
- 4 The terms come from Serhii Plokhy's essential *The Origins of the Slavic Nations: Premodern Identities in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus* (Cambridge, 2006).
- 5 Andreas Kappeler, "From an Ethnonational to a Multiethnic to a Transnational Ukrainian History," in Georgiy Kasianov and Philipp Ther, eds. *A Laboratory of Transnational History: Ukraine and Recent Ukrainian Historiography* (CEU Press, 2009), pp. 51–80 is one of the few scholars to include Jews in this history as a matter of course.
- 6 One could use excerpts from the *Nikonian Chronicle* to generate discussion of these dynamics, since the chronicler was noticeably pro-Lithuania/Tver' and anti-Moscow.
- 7 W. F. Ryan and Moshe Taube, *The Secret of Secrets: The East Slavic Version. Introduction, Text, Annotated Translation, and Slavic Index* (Warburg Institute, 2019), pp. 16–24.
- 8 The first three chapters of Chester Dunning's *A Short History of Russia's First Civil War* (Penn State Press, 2004) nicely put Ivan IV in a comparative context. Paul Bushkovitch, "Change and Culture in Early Modern Russia," *Kritika* Vol. 16, No. 2 (Spr 2015): 291–316 also gives us a great model.

Shoshana Keller is Professor of Russian and Eurasian History at Hamilton College. She has taught a survey of Russian history from Rurik to Putin for 25 years, as well as courses on Central Asian and Middle Eastern history. Her most recent publication is *Russia and Central Asia: Coexistence, Conquest, Convergence* (Toronto, 2020). <https://people.hamilton.edu/skeller>.



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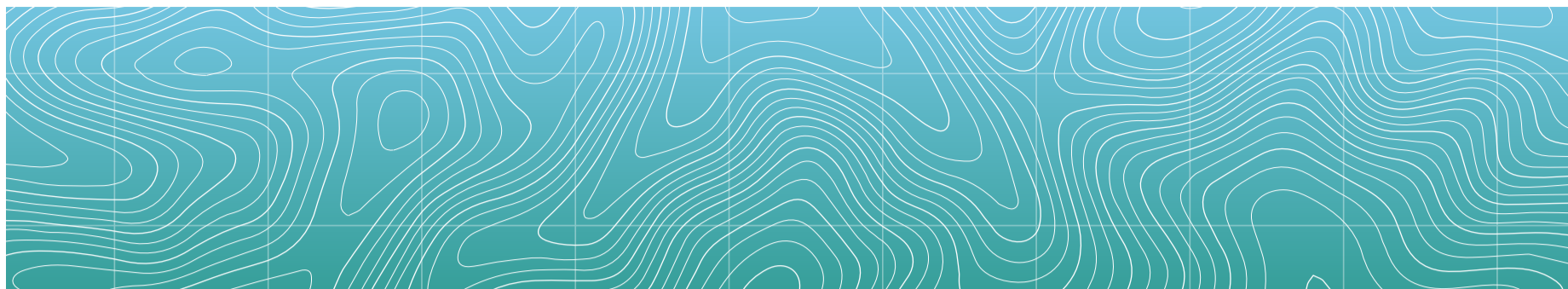
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Making Central Asia (and Other “Peripheries”) More Central

by Leora Eisenberg, Harvard University

The calls to de-colonize the Soviet historiography curriculum have rightly intensified following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. Having traveled to Central Asia for internships and language programs during my undergraduate years, I remember being bothered that the narrative of Soviet history we learned at my home institution revolved around Russia. During my graduate studies, this annoyance turned to frustration: the classics we read in survey courses at my *new* home institution examined phenomena via the example of Soviet republics on the European continent (e.g., the Baltic republics and Ukraine), but generally still focused on Russia. While these studies have an important place in the historiographical canon, I wondered: were there no works on subjectivity and late socialism that examined other republics?

Including recent works in syllabi, like Adrienne Edgar’s *Intermarriage and the Friendship of Peoples: Ethnic Mixing in Soviet Central Asia* and Jeff Sahadeo’s *Voices from the Soviet Edge: Southern Migrants in Leningrad and Moscow*, for example, is a first step towards de-colonizing our curricula. This would entail not only diversifying the geographical focus of our classes, but also ensuring that we grant other regions the topical and analytical attention that Russia receives in standard academic literature on the Soviet Union. As a historian of Central Asia, I interpret de-colonizing the curricula as an effort to integrate “peripheral” regions and their peoples into the broader graduate and undergraduate curriculum. This means allowing for a multitude of analytical frameworks and non-Russian experiences within the broader Soviet history and historiography that we teach our students. Rather than relegating “regional” historiography to one week, as I note below, we should aim to decentralize—and de-Russify—our broader narrative.

My region of study remains largely peripheral to this mainstream Soviet historiography, despite being a major site for the Soviet project. The five former Soviet republics—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan—represent a host of cultures and ethnic identities, as well as vastly different experiences under Soviet rule. Nevertheless, the debate on whether the broader region was a colony remains the primary classroom discussion for graduate students but is no closer to being settled now than when Adeeb Khalid, Adrienne Edgar, Peter Blitstein, and Mark Beissinger’s iconic articles brought this issue to attention in *Slavic Review*. Such pieces are regularly read in the traditional unit on Central Asia in Soviet historiography courses, often accompanied by other seminal studies from that period, such as Douglas Northrop’s *Veiled Empire*.¹ Since then, dozens of books on the region have been published,

invoking a wide range of subjects and analytical frameworks, yet the colonial lens remains central in graduate-level discussions of Soviet Central Asia.

Part of this is simply because sticking to the “center” is often easier given archival access, the infrastructure for learning Russian, and the foundational knowledge that many students gain about the Russian Revolution in school. But in doing so, we risk reifying the center-periphery divide so neatly applied to other formerly colonial milieus: it is precisely this viewpoint that has led to Central Asia receiving its own colonial-centric week in courses on Soviet historiography. Хотели как лучше, as they say, получилось как всегда.

The current inaccessibility of the world’s largest Russian-speaking country, then, presents an excellent opportunity for pedagogues to de-colonize their curricula and for students to intellectually pivot: graduate and undergraduate students will now visit other Russian-speaking countries, largely Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, in order to improve their Russian language skills.

By relegating Central Asia to one week of instruction, we inadvertently solidify its traditional historiographical status as a Soviet periphery and deny it the rigorous attention that we give to the RSFSR throughout the semester, highlighting the need to integrate “peripheral” regions like Central Asia into the story we tell about the USSR. However well-intentioned, this pedagogical decision ensures that graduate students never experience Central Asia as part of Soviet historiography more generally, by considering its role on the Revolution, family life, or WWII. Could we include, for example, Roberto Carmack’s *Kazakhstan in World War II: Ethnicity and Mobilization in the Soviet Empire* in graduate-level curricula on WWII in the USSR? Might Jeff Sahadeo’s *Everyday Life in Central Asia* complement Sheila Fitzpatrick’s *Everyday Stalinism*? Could Adeeb Khalid’s *Making Uzbekistan: Nation, Empire, and Revolution in the Early USSR* be part of regular discussions of the Revolution? This curricular attempt to de-colonize forces us to go beyond the debate over the colonial status of Central Asia and consider more recent academic literature. Of course, the traditional discussion of the region’s status as a colony need not be ignored, but neither can it be the only framework that we use to discuss the region.

The same idea is true for undergraduate history courses: here, too, Central Asia cannot be relegated to one week on the syllabus (and we certainly should not call that unit “Trashcanistan,” as a professor of mine once did—an imaginary region which did, admittedly, include other parts of the former Soviet Union). In order to de-colonize the undergraduate curriculum, possibly most students’ first and only experience with Soviet history, we need to integrate regions like Central Asia into events that we normally discuss in the context of the Russian experience. What did the revolution look like in Central Asia? How did the region participate in WWII? How did the region experience late socialism? Similar questions could be asked of other “peripheral” regions, such as the Caucasus, ensuring that the history of the Soviet Union broadly integrates the regions that we often view as little more than colonies in our literature. In so doing, we give students the agency to *decide* whether they are colonies rather than automatically casting them as such, even if they are not engaging with historiographical debates.

The current inaccessibility of the world’s largest Russian-speaking country, then, presents an excellent opportunity for pedagogues to de-colonize their curricula and for students to intellectually pivot: graduate and undergraduate students can now take this opportunity to visit other Russian-speaking countries, largely Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, in order to improve their Russian language skills. They’ll have the chance to immerse themselves in the Russian language (as well as, potentially, the local language) and a non-Russian post-Soviet environment. Living with host families may help dispel colonial notions formed through cursory exposure to the region in their previous Soviet history classes, and even more importantly, put “peripheral” republics onto their mental maps of the USSR. Upon their return, they may even force their professors to rethink their Russo-centric models of Soviet history and historiography and, hopefully, do the same in their own scholarly work.

While my own introduction to Soviet history largely lacked contact with Central Asia, I am hopeful that the next generation of Soviet historians—who are showing more interest in “peripheral” regions than ever before—will ensure that the same does not happen to their students. Indeed, de-colonizing the curriculum means treating areas like Central Asia—whose status as colonies we debate in the academic literature—not as colonies in the classroom.

Endnotes

1 Beissinger, Mark, Peter Blitstein, Adrienne Edgar, and Adeeb Khalid. (2006). “Forum: The Multiethnic Soviet Union in Comparative Perspective.” *Slavic Review*, 65(2), 231-303.



Leora Eisenberg is a 2nd-year PhD student at Harvard University, where she studies processes of Russification in Soviet Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. She graduated from Princeton University in 2020 *summa cum laude* and is the recipient of such scholarships and awards as the Critical Language Scholarship, Streicker International Fellowship, Labouisse Prize, and others. Most of all, she enjoys learning the languages associated with her research and hopes to learn Pamiri soon.

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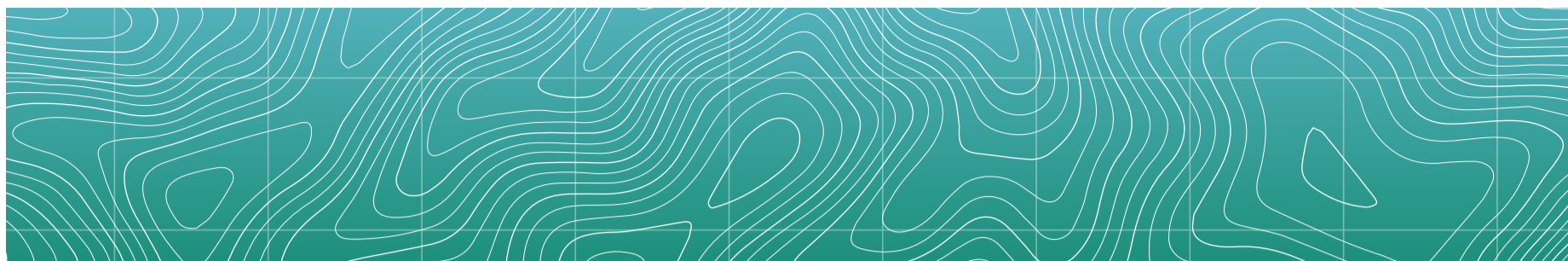
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- Vladimir Gelman, European U at St. Petersburg, Political Science, "The Politics of Bad Governance in Contemporary Russia"
- Karina Khasnulina, European U at St. Petersburg, History, "Transferring the Soviet Model: Global Socialism and Industrial Localities in Early Maoist China"
- Tatiana Khripachenko, Southern Scientific Center, Russian Academy of Sciences, "Negotiating Finnish Independence Inventing Soviet Theory of Citizenship"
- Yana Kirey-Sitnikova, Independent Scholar, "Why Transphobia Fails in Russia: An Analysis of Transphobic Bills that Never Became Laws"
- Anna Maslenova, U of Exeter, Modern Languages, "Vladimir Chertkov vs the Maudes: Precarious Translators of Tolstoi's Religious Works in English"
- Aleksandr Okun, Samara National Research U, History, "Americans in the 'Russian Chicago': Samara as a Place of Russian-American Contacts"
- Pavel Stepanov, U of Cambridge, Modern and Medieval Languages and Linguistics, "Lessons of the World Revolution: Uprisings in the West and in the East in Soviet Film of the 1920s and 1930s"
- Tatiana Tairova-Yakovleva, St. Petersburg Institute of History, Russian Academy of Science, "Mazepa's Policy and Peter's Church Reform"
- Tatiana Tkacheva, NRU Higher School of Economics, "Premature Dismissals of Regional Governors, Protests, and Political Regime Dynamics in Russia: Evidence from 2013-2018"
- Elena Trubina, UNC, Chapel Hill, Global Studies, "'The Ridge of Russia': Between Imperial and Anti-Imperial Discourses"

Regional Scholar Travel Grant

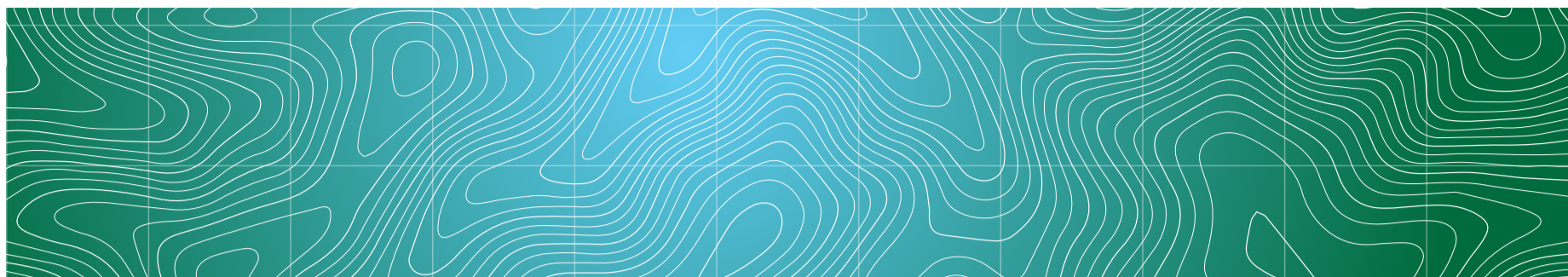
- Ardak Abdiraimova, Academy of Logistics and Transport, History and Social Humanitarian Studies, "Changes in the Quantitative and Qualitative Composition of Employees of Defense Enterprises in Kazakhstan during the War Years (1941-1945)"
- István Miklós Balázs, Polish Research Institute and Museum, "Hungarian Polonists and the Care of Polish Refugees of World War II"
- Tomasz Blaszcak, Vytautas Magnus U, Political Science and Diplomacy, "The Dynamics of Borders in Belarusian-Lithuanian-Polish Triangle Since 1991"
- Lizaveta Dubinka, European Humanities U, Social Sciences, "Sophia of Minsk: Portrait and Epoch"
- Anastasia Felcher, Vera and Donald Blinken Open Society Archives (Blinken OSA), "Regime Change, Transition, and Transformation: Inquiries in Counter-Archival Epistemology"
- Tomislav Galović, "Security vs. Precarity: The Kvarner Islands as a Place of Security for Glagolitic Culture in the Context of the Ottoman Threat (15th & 16th Centuries)"
- Vaida Kamuntaviciene, Vytautas Magnus U, History, "Anticipating a Catastrophe: The Last Decades of the Kaunas Bernardine Nunnery, 1842-1864"
- Katalin Kolozsvári, Geographical Institute, Research Centre for Astronomy and Earth Sciences, ELKH, Budapest, Research Group on Ethnic-Political Geography and Migration, "The Effect of Hungarian Kin-State Politics on the Economic Life of Transcarpathia, Ukraine"

- Claudiu Oancea, New Europe College, "Over the Hills and Far Away: Popular Music Transfers Between Socialist Romania and the Global South"
- Anna Pravdova, National Gallery Prague, "The Wall of a Parisian Jail as a Support for Painting: The Work of Alén Diviš"
- Naira Sahakyan, Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, "Remembering the Civil War: Memoirs of Daghestanis about the Civil War and Sovietization"
- Anca Sincan, Gheorghe Sincai Institute, Romanian Academy, History, "The Writing in the Margins: Construction of Interpretations in Secret Police Files"
- Gulmira Sultangalieva, al-Farabi Kazakh National U, History, "Service of the Kazakhs in the Imperial System of Government as an Opportunity to Maintain Their Status and Privileges (19th Century)"
- Alisher Tleubayev, Suleyman Demirel U, "Short and Medium-Term Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on the Work Outcomes of Men and Women: Empirical Evidence from Central Asia"
- Nikolai Vukov, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, "Anthropology of Verbal Traditions, Labor and Everyday Life of Workers at Industrial Enterprises in Kazakhstan during World War II"

Graduate Student Travel Grant

- Alexandra Birch, UC Santa Barbara, History, "Conservatory to GULAG: Mikhail Nosyrev's Capriccio for Violin"
- Courtney Blackington, UNC, Chapel Hill, Political Science, "Anger, Fear, and Hopelessness in Polish Pro-Choice Protests"
- Margarita Delcheva, UC Santa Barbara, Comparative Literature, "'Glasnost? Zaumnost!': Rea Nikonova and Understanding Mail Artists through the Historic Avant-garde"
- Meruyert Doskaliyeva, al-Farabi Kazakh National U, History, "Working Conditions and Labor Organization in Defense Enterprises in the Rear during the Second World War (on Examples from Kazakhstan)"
- Charlotte Dowling, U of Oxford, Medieval and Modern Languages (Russian), "Linguistic and Stylistic Innovation in Russian 'Trans*Stories'"
- Samuel Driver, Brown U, Slavic Studies, "Blurring Boundaries: Nonconformist Art and the Evolution of the Photographic Image"
- Severyan Dyakonov, The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, International History and Politics, "Cold War in Neutral Spaces of International Organizations: The Soviet Red Cross and the International League of the Red Cross in the 1950s-1960s"
- Ruth Ennis, Global and European Studies Institute, Philosophy, History, Cultural Studies, "The 'Migrant' and her Jewish 'Trafficker' (1868-1880)"
- Kamal Gasimov, U of Michigan, Middle East Studies, "Contestation of Religious Authority among Salafi Networks in Azerbaijan"
- John Gillespie, Vanderbilt U, History, "In the Name of Beer: Multinational Disputes over a National Cultural Commodity during the late Cold War"
- Aleksandra Gintowt, U of Wrocław, Faculty of Letters, "Between Economic Modernization and Cultural Anti-modernization: The Podhale Regional Movement (1873-1939)"
- Isidora Grubacki, Central European U Budapest, History, "Household Work, Education, and Labour Coercion: The Case of Yugoslav Interwar Women's Movement and the Education of Peasant Women and Housewives"
- Grigory Hakimov, U of Massachusetts Amherst, Political Science, "Monitoring the 2021 State Duma Election in Exile: The Vote Abroad Movement"

- Khrystyna Holynska, Pardee RAND Graduate School, Research, Analysis, and Design, "Weak Enough to Bully but Strong Enough to Pose a Threat: Narratives on Ukraine in the 'Vesti Nedeli' Show during the Escalation of Russia-Ukraine Conflict"
 - Aleksandra Jakubczak, Columbia U, History, "'A Trafficker of Women or An Immigrant-Smuggler?': The Morris Baskin Affair as a Window into Migratory Practices of Polish Jews"
 - Anne Kluger, U of Münster, History, "Precarity as Challenge and Opportunity: The Development of Postwar East German and Polish 'Slavic Archaeology,' 1944-1960"
 - Maria Kościelniak-Woźniak, U of Wrocław, Faculty of Letters, "Between Economic Modernization and Cultural Anti-modernization: The Podhale Regional Movement (1873-1939)"
 - Danielle Leavitt-Quist, Harvard U, History, "'A Long Life Will Be the Soviet Victory': Aleksander A. Bohomolets and the Prolongation of Life"
 - Margarit Lerman, Hebrew U of Jerusalem/Leibniz Institute for Jewish History and Culture, Jewish History and Contemporary Jewry, "'Dealers of Souls': Jewish Criminals in the Habsburg Empire at the Fin de Siècle"
 - Jonas Loeffler, U of Cologne, Germany, Musicology, "Popular Music in Tiflis/Tbilisi around 1900: Between Cosmopolitanism and the Nation"
 - Ana Lolua, Ilia State U, History, "Exhibiting People's Friendship and Great Patriotic War in Post-Stalinist Georgia"
 - Oliver Pejic, European U Institute, History, "Unpacking the 'Ethnic Boxes' of the Habsburg Education System: Textbooks and Ideological Fragmentation in the Late Habsburg Empire"
 - Ivana Polic, UC San Diego, History, "'Dajem ti srce, zemljo moja': Music as an Instrument of National Unity in the Aftermath of 2020 Petrinja Earthquake"
 - Antoni Porayski-Pomsta, Clare College, U of Cambridge, History, "Governance of Urban Outskirts in Late Nineteenth Century Russian Poland (c. 1880-1914)"
 - Dafna Rachok, U of Indiana Bloomington, Anthropology, "On the Importance of Being Earnest: Moral Economy in the Building of a Sex Worker Community"
 - Natalia Radziwillowicz, U of Nottingham, School of English, "Naming the Other: How Medieval Writers Conceived of the Baltic Peoples"
 - Tabitha Redepening, Herder Institute for Historical Research on East Central Europe, Map Collection, "Urban Authenticity in Szczecin: A Modern or a Historic City from a Tourist Perspective"
 - Jake Robertson, U of Oxford, Medieval & Modern Languages, "Reviews with No Names: Patronage, Performance, and Precarity in the Gulag Theater of Vorkuta"
 - Angus Russell, U of Cambridge, Modern and Medieval Languages and Linguistics (MMLL), "Institutional Genealogies in Post-Mongol Moscow"
 - Roman Sacharov, U of Lodz, Department of Slavic Philology, "The Language of War: The Ukrainian-Russian Conflict Reflected by the Russian Pro-Government Media"
 - Anna Safronova, U Sorbonne, History, "Who Owns the Cooperatives? The Paradoxes of the Cooperative Enterprise the Tsarist Russia and in Early Soviet Period, 1890-1930"
 - Ecem Saricayir, Cornell U, Architecture, "Constructing Hygiene and Settling the Border: The Russian Imperial Architecture in the Russo-Ottoman Borderlands"
 - Anya Shatilova, Wesleyan U, Music, "Nizovaia Traditsiia and The Great Russian Orchestra: National Identity & Music in Late Nineteenth-Century Russia"
 - Mary Shiraef, U of Notre Dame, Department of Political Science, "Hoxha's Experiment: the Minority Identity Engineering Process in Communist-era Albania and its Intergenerational Impacts"
 - Egor Shmonin, Concordia U, Film Studies, "Precarious Materiality: Strategies of (In)visibility of Postsoviet Objects in the Baltic States"
 - Ewelina Sikora, Central European U, History, "Taste(s) of Poland-Lithuania in the 17th Century"
 - Sofia Simoes Coelho, U of Oxford, History, "Holy Foolery (Iurodstvo) and the Transformations of Sixteenth-Century Rus"
 - Meredith Stukey, Purdue U, History, "The Tsar and The German Princess: The International Reputation of Alexandra of Russia in the First World War"
 - Rachel Trode, European U Institute, History and Civilization, "May 1906. Rethinking the Nature of late Habsburg Rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina"
 - Alexandre Zaezjev, McGill U, U of Geneva, Russian Studies, "From Postutopian Conceptual Art to Post-Soviet Retrotopias: The Case of Ilya Khrzhanovsky's DAU"
 - Ivana Mihaela Žimbek, Central European U, History, "Socialization and Modernization of Household Work in Socialist Yugoslavia, 1940s-1960s"
 - Julia Zimmermann, Freie Universität Berlin / Institute for East European Studies, Economics, "Enemies within the Gates: Evidence from Stalin's Ethnic Cleansing Campaigns"
 - Yacov Zohn, U of Wisconsin-Madison, History, "Moscow Defends Soviet Prestige: The USSR's National Football Team in the 1950s"
- Catherine Nepomnyashchy Travel Grant**
- Julian Pokay, Harvard U, Slavic Languages and Literatures, "'The Last Poet on Earth': Roal'd Mandel'shtam and Unofficial Culture in Leningrad in the 1950s"
 - Elena Vasileva, U of Toronto, Slavic Languages and Literatures, "A Modernist in Hindsight: Valentin Kataev's Memoirs and Modernist Heritage in the Late USSR"
- Convention Opportunity Travel Grant**
- Adalyat Issiyeva, McGill U, Music, "Ethnic Minorities and their Musical Instruments: Cultural Hierarchy on Display"
 - Kristina Kovalskaya, Independent Scholar, "Translating Orientalism in Russia"
 - Dominic Leppla, Sarah Lawrence College, Film History, "Postsocialist Transition as Metastasis on Celluloid: Polish and Czech Auteur Cinema of the Early 1990s"
 - Victoria Malko, California State U, Fresno, History, "The Ukrainian Intelligentsia as the First Target of Soviet Genocide"
 - Tatjana Schell, Independent Scholar, "Exploring the Persecution of Ethnic Minorities in the Soviet Union through Archival Documents on Ethnic Germans from the 1940s – 1950s"
 - Ilaria Sicari, Ca' Foscari U of Venice, Linguistics and Comparative Cultural Studies, "Books as Ideological Weapons of the Cultural Cold War: Political Aims and Target Reader of RFE/RL's Book Distribution Programs (1956-1991)"
- Ukrainian Scholar Travel Grant**
- Myroslava Antonovych, National U of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, International and European Law Department, "International Law Issues of the Qualification of the Holodomor in Ukraine"
 - Antonina Berezenko, National Technical U of Ukraine "Igor Sikorski Polytechnic Institute," I.Kuras In-t for Political and Ethnical Studies, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Ukrainian Language, Literature, and Culture, "Today's Russia Discursive Shifts: Rise of 'Nation of Nations'"
 - Oleksandra Borodiyenko, Institute of Higher Education, National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine, "Development of University Education in Ukraine during the Post-war Period"
 - Maksym Klymentyev, Independent Scholar, "A Give over as a Takeover - Russia's Ultimate Crimean Gift Gamble: Notes on Symbolic and Commemorative Implications of 2014 Takeover of Crimea"
 - Iuliana Matasova, Taras Shevchenko National U of Kyiv, Foreign Literature, "Volatile (Dis)engagements: The 1990s and the Poetics and Politics of Precarity in Ukrainian Women Singer-Songwriters"
 - Maria Mayerchuk, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Social Anthropology, "Theorizing Slavic Bawdy Folklore: Sexuality and Coloniality of Knowledge"
 - Alina Oprelianska, Tartu U, Taras Shevchenko National U of Kyiv, Estonian and Comparative Folklore, Folkloristics, "The Hero and The (A) gendered Reward: Social and Beliefs 'Othering' of Children in Ukrainian Folk Wonder Tales"
 - Oleksandra Osadcha, "Landscape as Symptom: From the post-Soviet Visuality to the War-Torn Cityscapes of Ukraine"
 - Oleksii Rudenko, Central European U, History, "Laboratories of Knowledge and History-Writing: Aristocratic Libraries in the Sixteenth-Century Grand Duchy of Lithuania"



Why I Traveled to Ukraine

by John C. Swanson, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

At 4:34 AM on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, I was awakened by the sound of an air raid siren. I was not sure what to do. Of course, I knew that I should go to a shelter, a basement, or at least to a windowless room, but did I really need to do that? I was still half asleep and beginning to wonder if it was a mistake to travel to Ukraine. I checked the air raid app on my phone. Yes, Uzhhorod, where I was, and the entire region of Transcarpathia was under air raid alert. Still not sure what to do, I went back to sleep.

Before Russia attacked Ukraine on February 24, I had planned to spend a few weeks this summer conducting research and visiting friends in Transcarpathia (a region of Ukraine that borders Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania). Before February I had an obvious reason to visit the country. I am a historian working on a project about the Jewish communities of this region during the twentieth century. There were archives to visit and people to talk to. The war changed my plans. Like many scholars, my new role as a historian interested in Ukraine was to help Ukrainians and their country; to inform people about what was happening; to educate them about the history of Ukraine and the wider region; and to fight against Russian propaganda that still dominates much of our knowledge.



In May I again began to rethink my plans. A few friends and acquaintances had already either returned to their homes in Ukraine or traveled there to visit. Maybe, I thought, I could also go—not to conduct research in archives or libraries—but just to go.

Friends in Transcarpathia had written that the situation there was “calm.” Most of the shelling was happening in the east of the country and only sporadically in central and western Ukraine. It seemed true. Transcarpathia had been bombed one time: on May 3 an electric substation in the town of Volovets was hit. The Russians had also targeted a railway tunnel near Transcarpathia on June 2, but the

tunnel was not damaged in the bombing. Other parts of western Ukraine, especially Lviv and the Lviv region, had experienced more shelling.

When I told one of my Ukrainian language teachers—who herself had fled to Poland days after the attacks started—that I was thinking of visiting Ukraine in July, she was obviously not happy. It was not that she was unhappy; I think she was frustrated with me. She asked, “John, what does “calm” mean to you?”

Language lessons with my other teacher, who had remained in Lviv, had helped me understand what was happening in Ukraine. We had a lesson on the evening of February 24, when no one knew anything, other than that the Russians had launched a full-scale invasion of the country. I remember lessons when her husband entered the room to make sure she turned off all the lights, because it was after 10 PM—the beginning of the curfew. Many times our lessons were interrupted by air raid sirens, which were always louder coming from her phone than from the streets. We had many lessons since the end of February, during which she sat in the bathroom, away from any windows. Once or twice she sat in the hallway next to the refrigerator.

In addition to talking to friends in and outside of Ukraine I had also experienced difficult situations in Northern Israel in the late 1980s. I spent five months on a kibbutz near the border with Lebanon. There were many nights we went to bed with helicopters flying overhead and red flares lighting up the Israeli-Lebanon border, which was visible from my room. I also remember hearing the sound of katyushas flying overhead at night. It did not happen very often, but one time one of these Soviet-made missiles landed just on the outskirts of the kibbutz. Years before I lived there, a katyusha had landed a few meters from my building. The patched hole in the pavement was still visible in the late 1980s.

*I was in a country where everyone knew
that they were a target of someone
else's aggression.*

With this knowledge and experience, and still thinking about why I wanted to go, I left for Ukraine on the morning of July 8. I traveled with a Ukrainian van service that picked me up in Budapest and took me across the border to Uzhhorod, directly to the apartment I rented. I had used the service a few times during the last couple of years. This time the driver was a woman and all the passengers, other than myself, were women. Ukrainian men between 18 and 60 years of age are not permitted to travel outside of the country.

It would be incorrect to say that I was not nervous. I expected questions at the border concerning the reasons why I wanted to enter a country at war. I still did not know what to say. The Hungarian border guard, however, only wanted to know why someone with a name like “Swanson” spoke Hungarian. At the Ukrainian border I was prepared to give them names of people I would visit and the address of the apartment, but the guard only asked where I was going. It was the same question they asked before the war.

Upon arrival everything seemed to be like before. Stores and restaurants were open. People were walking on the streets. I saw no immediate signs of war. It was calm. Yet, in an inexplicable way, it was not the same as before. I had also forgotten about trying to articulate a reason for being there.

I met with friends. I shopped at the market. The Hungarian-speaking farmers, whom I often bought from before, were still there. I went to my favorite restaurants, even to a new restaurant that had just opened in the last couple of weeks. I knew that a month or so earlier Ukrainian salt mines had stopped working because of the bombings. There had also been a lack of black tea since Russia controls a great deal of that market. But in July I found salt and tea in the stores even though prices were higher than usual.

On my fourth day in Uzhhorod I was awakened early in the morning to my first air raid siren. There had not been sirens in that region for six days, since July 6. I did not react as I should have, partly because I was not sure how to react. Eventually the air raid alert ended with the second sounding of the alarm. I reminded myself that I needed to ask someone what to do next time.

Russia had tried more than once
during the twentieth century to wipe
out the Ukrainian people. We have
now entered Russia’s twenty-first
century war against Ukraine.

It seemed that I had arrived in Ukraine for “the season of air raid sirens”—a comment that a friend wrote me on July 12. For the next six days there were sirens every day and frequently twice a day. I figured out what I should or at least what I could do when the sirens sounded. There were bomb shelters. My apartment also had a bathroom with thick walls and no windows. But in a way I had become numb to the sirens even before I got there.

One day, when I was walking with two friends looking for a place to have lunch, the sirens went off. One friend commented in English: “Fucking Russians.” This disrupted our lunch plans, since most restaurants do not serve food when the sirens are active. They legally may not be allowed to. We, however, did find a place to have lunch.

It was not true that the people around me ignored the sirens. When the sirens went off, they often looked at an online map to see which regions of Ukraine were under air raid alert. They then made a judgement call whether they should go into hiding or go on with their day. I never went into a bomb shelter, but my ears were always listening for sirens. There were many times (even after I left Ukraine) that a weird sound triggered the thought that I needed to make a decision whether to hide or not to hide. Even if I may not



have realized it, I was on edge most of the time. I have to admit that I enjoyed it when the students in the music school next to my apartment continued to practice during the sirens. The loud, fast piano playing provided a nice diversion. Sometimes I did not even hear the second siren.

Even if some things seemed to go on as they had before the war, there was clearly a certain, uncomfortable vibe in the air. There was a sense of war—a sense of being attacked, of being hated, of being the target of someone’s aggression. Russia had tried more than once during the twentieth century to wipe out the Ukrainian people. We have now entered Russia’s twenty-first century war against Ukraine.

I was in a country where everyone knew that they were a target of someone else’s aggression. Ukrainians were dying all the time. On my second day in Uzhhorod I visited the section of the city cemetery where they were burying the local men and boys who had died. My friends laid flowers and lit a candle at a grave of a friend who died on March 6 at the age of 31. Life was definitely not normal and not necessarily “calm.”

Transcarpathia did not get hit during this season of air raid sirens, but other parts of the country were hit. It was a bad week. On July 14 a Russian submarine near Crimea fired Caliber missiles that hit Vinnytsia in central Ukraine. At least 23 people died and another 100 were wounded. On July 15 a volley of Kh-101 missiles, fired from a Russian aircraft flying over the Caspian Sea, hit the city of Dnipro. The list goes on and on. Every day brought news of death and destruction caused by Russian bombing.

The question as to why I was in Ukraine—or why I went to Ukraine—never went away. I had forgotten about the question; yet friends outside of Ukraine wanted to know. They wanted me to provide them with a reason for my visit.

I never had a good answer. It was obvious that I could not do any research; then again, would I want to do research at a time when the country was at war? I sometimes said that I wanted to show solidarity to the people of Ukraine. Since they were under attack by Russia, I thought that I should demonstrate my support—to show that I am willing to stand there with them.

Since Russia launched its full-scale invasion of the country, I tried to find ways to help Ukraine and Ukrainians. I have to admit that I have many friends and acquaintances who have done so much more than I have. At the very beginning I tried to think of ways to help coordinate the transportation of supplies across the border, but

it never worked out. The best I could do was to assist in directing financial support to various individuals, mainly to refugees.

When I decided to travel to Transcarpathia in July, I tried to figure out if I could carry supplies across the border or whether that was now really necessary. I looked into the work of a couple of NGOs, and in the end a friend of mine suggested that I contact one of his graduate students, who had been working to ship medicine and medical supplies to Ukraine. This graduate student, along with some of his friends, had formed an NGO and had been active since the beginning of the war. I reached out and was immediately put in touch with a Ukrainian medical student who was in Budapest at the same time I was. The NGO wired me money, and I made rounds to the pharmacies in Budapest. Together we bought boxes of medical supplies that the NGO would arrange to ship to parts of Ukraine where they were needed.

The student and the NGO also helped me buy a smaller amount of medicine that I boxed up and carried with me in the van from Budapest to Uzhhorod. Through one of my friends, I was able to hand off that box to a soldier who was at home in Uzhhorod but returned to the front the day after I met him.

The soldier said that all medicine was needed. Actually, everything was needed at the front. It is common in the Ukrainian military that

friends and relatives try to supply soldiers with needed goods and clothing. With some additional money from the NGO I purchased a pair of boots and a military belt that we were able to send to a friend who was stationed near the Belarusian border.

Maybe there were reasons for my visit to Ukraine, but when people asked, I usually just said that I wanted to go. Did I really need to give an answer? The guards at the border did not ask me why I was entering the country, and perhaps more interestingly no one in Ukraine asked me. Sometimes I told people that I had brought medicine across the border, but I usually did not provide a reason. Maybe at a time of war you do not need a reason to visit.



John C. Swanson is Guerry Professor of History at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. His recent book, *Tangible Belonging: Negotiating Germanness in Twentieth-Century Hungary*, won the 2018 Barbara Jelavich Book Prize as well as the 2019 Hungarian Studies Association Book Prize.

His research has been supported by the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies, the Humboldt Foundation, the Gerda Henkel Foundation, Fulbright, and numerous other organizations. He is also active as a documentary filmmaker.

Announcing the James Bailey Endowment Fund and Research Grant in Folklore Studies



Professor Natalie Kononenko

ASEEES thanks Professor Natalie Kononenko, Kule Chair Emerita in Ukrainian Ethnography at the University of Alberta (Canada), for creating the James Bailey Endowment Fund and Dissertation Research Grant in Folklore Studies. Prof. Kononenko is a highly regarded senior scholar whose published works include the award-winners *Ukrainian Minstrels: And the Blind Shall Sing* and *Ukrainian Epic and Historical Song: Folklore in Context* plus other works. She has established this grant in the name of her mentor, Prof. James Bailey.

Prof. Bailey received his doctorate from Harvard University's Slavic Department in 1965 and joined the faculty of the Slavic Department at University of Wisconsin, Madison where he worked until his retirement in 1995. He held a variety of positions, from Departmental Chair to Head of the Russian Area Studies Program, and Head of the Folklore Program, an initiative he helped to establish. Professor Kononenko recently shared her reasons for founding the award:

"The basis of this award is Jim's dedication to folklore and the tremendous energy he exerted in the promotion of the field. It was on Jim's initiative that SEEFA, the Slavic East European Folklore Association, came into being. As this organization struggled, as most young organizations do, it was Jim's energy and his prodding

that kept us going. Jim realized how important folklore is for the understanding of culture and human thought in general. It is in recognition of Jim's dedication to folklore that this award is granted. We hope that it will nurture a future generation of scholars who share Jim's understanding of the importance of folklore and his dedication to the field."



The James Bailey Dissertation Research Grant in Folklore Studies will be awarded to a doctoral student in the US or Canada starting in 2024. ASEEES sincerely thanks Prof. Kononenko for her generous support for the future of Folklore Studies.



Professor James Bailey

Regional Affiliate News

The State of our Association: A Look at Regional Conferences

By Robert Niebuhr, Arizona State University

One of the strengths of our community at ASEEES is that we have opportunities to gather in collegial settings, share ideas, and collaborate on projects. We also have an array of regional affiliates that serve the same goals but on a smaller, more intimate scale. This short spotlight is meant to remind us about these affiliates, discuss what has changed, and what the future holds.

Traditionally, the regional conferences have provided opportunities for us to engage in smaller venues with colleagues about our research. Additionally, the regional meetings have been supportive environments for graduate students to gain confidence and enhance skills, which better prepares them for a successful ASEEES presentation.

The following regions are currently affiliated with ASEEES: the Western Association of Slavic Studies, the Northwest Regional Conference for Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies, the Central Slavic Conference, the Midwest Slavic Association, the Southern Conference on Slavic Studies, and the Northeast Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies Conference. Some regions cover a broader expanse of territory. For instance, the Western Region covers California to Texas and Montana to Arizona, while Northeast Slavic typically brings out scholars in the New York City area and environs. Each region has its own organizational structure and meets either on its own or as part of a larger conference. Midwest Slavic and Southern Slavic host their own meetings, including arranging accommodations. Meanwhile, the Northwestern Region and Northeastern regions are hosted by universities (University of Washington and New York University, respectively). The Western Region holds its conference as part of the World Social Science Association, whose annual meeting historically draws about 1,000 participants from across disciplines.

The Status of Regional Conferences since the Pandemic

There is good news on the horizon in terms of rediscovering the regional affiliates and reengaging with each other in professional settings. This is perhaps especially important, as it seems that with the ubiquity of Zoom for office hours and faculty meetings, hallway culture is still lacking at our institutions compared to before the pandemic and lockdowns. While it might be more convenient to hold meetings with our colleagues and students over Zoom in the near future, we should really make an effort to be together again in person to talk about our research.

For those of us still unsure about travel funds or are hesitant to travel, the regional conferences are still holding meetings with hybrid options. For instance, Central Slavic held its last meeting virtually and is planning on moving towards an in-person conference next year; additionally, the Western Region had its first in-person meeting this April in Denver, Colorado. While attendance was lower than pre-Covid and the Western Region had only a handful of panels, it was a great reminder of what conferences used to be. I was the Slavic Section coordinator and was glad to see participants come from all

over: Texas, Arizona, Oregon, and Indiana; additionally, outside of our panels, which covered language, history, and current events—including the war in Ukraine—we had a dinner during which participants and spouses gathered and socialized for several hours. It was a welcome return to the sorts of combinations of formal presentations and informal social events that build collegiality.

Moving Forward into 2023

Sharing ideas and engaging in conversation is a cornerstone of our success as scholars. ASEEES will continue to serve us but we can also count on participating at regional conventions. Each region will have offerings for this next season of conferences and everyone is welcome at any or all of them. There will be the possibility to participate over Zoom or a similar platform in addition to participating again in person. The regional meetings are also great places to encourage graduate students, or even advanced undergraduates, to attend. I can gladly report success with undergraduate honors thesis presentations at the Western Region meetings. These groups are especially in need of the socialization that will help them when they search for careers, and regional affiliate meetings are accessible and less intimidating for our future colleagues.

Finally, we can envision ways to make the regional meetings even better. We can have more flexibility with types of events, talks, panels, and can more easily embed professional development. We welcome greater participation—from seasoned veterans to those of us who have never had a chance to go a regional meeting. Together we can move forward and make our profession and, by extension, ASEEES stronger and more durable in the future.



Robert Niebuhr is a Senior Lecturer and Honors Faculty Fellow at Arizona State University. Recent books include *The Search for a Cold War Legitimacy: Foreign Policy & Tito's Yugoslavia* (2018) and *¡Vamos a avanzar!: The Chaco War and Bolivia's Political Transformation, 1899–1952* (2021). His current book project examines the intersection of Yugoslavia and China from 1948 until 1978.

Upcoming Meetings and Important Dates

Western Association of Slavic Studies: **April 12-15, 2023**, Tempe, AZ. In-person conference with limited online connectivity. **Call for paper deadline in December 2022.**

Northwest Regional Conference for Russian, East European and Central Asian Studies: **April 20-22, 2023, University of Washington.**

Central Slavic Conference: **October 21-23, 2022, St. Louis, MO.** Meetings will be hybrid meetings, conditions permitting. The virtual format of the conference will enable people from overseas, and a different mix of universities, to participate.

Midwest Slavic Association: **April 2023.**

Southern Conference on Slavic Studies: **March 30-April 1, 2023, University of Florida, Gainesville** in-person. Mark Galeotti will deliver the annual John Shelton Curtiss Lecture, the keynote address at our annual banquet.

Northeast Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies Conference: **April 2023.**

Institutional Member News

Congratulations to the 2022-2025 Grantees for the [US Department of Education Title VI National Resource Centers and FLAS](#)

- **Arizona State University**, The Melikian Center
- **Harvard University**, The Davis Center
- **Indiana University**, The Robert F. Byrnes Russian and East European Institute
- **Indiana University**, Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Center
- **Ohio State University**, Center for Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies
- **Stanford University**, Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies
- **University of California**, Berkeley, Institute of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies
- **University of Illinois**, Russian, East European, and Eurasian Center
- **University of Kansas**, Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies
- **University of Pittsburgh**, Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies
- **University of Texas at Austin**, Department of Slavic and Eurasian Studies
- **University of Wisconsin-Madison**, Center for Russian, East Europe, and Central Asia

Congratulations to the 2022-2025 Grantees for FLAS

- **University of Michigan**, Weiser Center for Europe and Eurasia
- **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**, Center for Slavic, Eurasian and East European Studies

Affiliate Member News

**Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America
Call for Nominations**

Deadline: November 15

The Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America is accepting nominations for five awards. Each award will receive a \$1000 prize and will also be recognized during the PIASA's annual conference at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, June 9-11, 2023.

To see full award criteria visit: <https://piasa.org/awards/>

The Anna M. Cienciala Award for Best Edited Multi-Author Scholarly Volume

Eligible books must be edited multi-author collections of scholarly articles or essays in the various fields of Polish studies broadly understood. Editors and contributors need not be members of PIASA.

The Oskar Halecki Polish and East-Central European History Award

This award recognizes a scholar in the field of Polish and East-Central European history who has written a book of particular value and significance dealing with the Polish experience or including the Polish experience within a larger East-Central European context. The book or body of work should represent exemplary historical research and writing.

The Wacław Lednicki Award in the Humanities

This award recognizes the most outstanding book or creative work published, produced or presented in any of the fields encompassed within the Humanities as defined by the National Endowment for the Humanities, to include fine arts, history, languages, literature, philosophy, religion, etc. However, since Polish history has its own PIASA award, works in this field are ineligible.

The Bronisław Malinowski Award in the Social Sciences

This award recognizes a scholar in one of the fields of the social sciences who has written a book or seminal publication of particular value and significance dealing with an aspect of the Polish experience.

The Rachel Feldhay Brenner Award in Polish-Jewish Studies

This award is given annually to the author of the best English-language book on the history and/or culture of Polish Jews.



Personages

Elena I. Campbell is now the Director of the Ellison Center at the University of Washington.

Cassio de Oliveira was awarded tenure at Portland State University, and is now Associate Professor of Russian in the Department of World Languages and Literatures.

Alexey Golubev was promoted to Associate Professor of Russian History at the University of Houston.

Victoria Khiterer was promoted to a Professor of History at Millersville University.

Jenny Kaminer was promoted to Professor of Russian at the University of California Davis, where she currently chairs the Department of German and Russian.

Sunnie Rucker-Chang has become Associate Professor at the University of Cincinnati.

David Wolff, Hokkaido U (Japan), has been selected to receive a Carl Friedrich von Siemens Research Award of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.



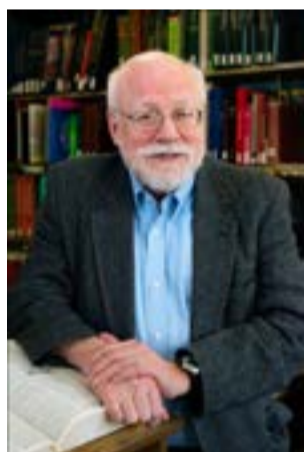
In Memorium



Vladimir (Volodia) Padunov was born on 4 June 1947 in a displaced persons (DP) camp in Aschaffenburg (Germany). His family lived in the DP system until 1952 when they gained passage on a ship for the U.S. Volodia attended Brooklyn College (BA 1968) before being drafted by the U.S. Army to Thailand. After military service, he held a DAAD Fellowship at Freie Universität Berlin (1975–76), as well as teaching positions at the University of Iowa (1976–78) and Hunter College (1979–85). He completed his doctorate in Comparative Literature at Cornell University (1983).

In 1984, Volodia moved with his partner, Nancy Condee, to the Soviet Union. There, they were affiliated with the Gor'kii Institute of World Literature (Moscow) and stayed on to work in a publishing house. Returning to the U.S. in 1986, he taught at Wheaton College (Norton, MA). In 1990, Volodia joined the University of Pittsburgh faculty, where he served as Film Studies Associate Director (2002–13). His research appeared in *The Nation*, *New Left Review*, and *October*, as well as in the leading Russian journals *Iskusstvo kino*, *Voprosy literatury*, *Znamia*, *Seans*, and the independent Russian newspaper *Novaia gazeta*.

Together with Nancy Condee, he organized the Working Group on Contemporary Russian Culture, a series of four weeklong meetings (held in Moscow, Berkeley, and London) on contemporary Russian cultural politics. In May 1999, Volodia founded the Russian Film Symposium, the longest-running U.S. forum for contemporary Russian and regional cinema, including films that had been refused screening certification in Russia. The Symposium drew media attention for its readiness to broach controversial themes, screening over 300 films from Central Asia, Ukraine, Chechnya, Russia, and elsewhere. A gathering in his memory was held in autumn 2022.



Owen V. Johnson was born on February 22, 1946 in Madison, WI and grew up in Pullman, WA, where he fostered a lifelong interest in journalism as editor of his high school newspaper and sports editor for the Pullman Herald. He worked at KWSC Radio and TV while attending Washington State University, where he earned a BA in history. He received an MA and PhD in history from the University of Michigan with a certificate in Russian and East European Studies. After teaching for a year at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, he joined the Ernie Pyle School of Journalism at Indiana University in 1980.

He taught a variety of journalism and history courses. He loved to engage with his students as fellow learners, was delighted to support them and celebrate their accomplishments when they left his classroom, and was a favorite professor of many. Elected to leadership positions in several academic organizations, Johnson also held administrative positions at IU and had visiting professor appointments to several foreign universities. When he retired from IU in 2014 and was granted emeritus status, he continued to research, write, and make public and scholarly presentations.

Johnson wrote prolifically on a variety of topics, including a book on World War II correspondent Ernie Pyle, and another on education in Slovakia during the interwar period. More than 37 scholarly journals in North America and Europe published his work. Johnson's work included dozens of articles, letters, and programs for more general audiences such as National Public Radio, the New York Times, and local public radio. He appeared in one episode of PBS' History Detectives series about Ernie Pyle, and managed a Facebook page for the Friends of Ernie Pyle on which he posted daily quotes written by the author.



Charles Schlacks Jr was born on February 20, 1931 in Detroit. He attended the University of Detroit where he graduated with a degree in Philosophy. In 1952 he enlisted in the Army where he learned Russian in the Military Police Academy and 3 years of service eavesdropping on their communications during the Cold War.

Schlacks continued his education with an MA in Eastern European Studies from the University of Michigan and a PhD in Russian history from the University of California Berkeley. He transitioned into teaching and shortly thereafter began publishing. He enjoyed a half century of notoriety as a publisher of over 20 journals and books devoted to Russian and East European studies in the humanities and social sciences.

He also loved to travel and would drive cross country to attend an annual Slavic convention out east and then "swing by" Detroit to stay with relatives and enjoy the holidays with family.