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Rightward Populist Rebellion in East Central Europe: Anxieties, Proselytization, and the Rebirth of Mythical Thinking

Jan Kubik, Rutgers University/University College London

Editor's note: This article is based on the President's Address at the 2020 ASEEEES Convention. It is not a transcript, rather Prof. Kubik's reflections on a work in progress.

When in early 2019 I proposed the theme of the annual convention, "Anxiety and Rebellion," I had no idea that the topic would become so much more relevant in 2020. The theme reflected my anxiety shared with many observers of the rise of right-wing populism in the world, particularly the increasingly bizarre and frightening spectacle of Trumpism in the US and the ascendance to power of right-wing populist parties in Poland and Hungary, both members of the EU.¹ I expected neither the intensification of protest politics nor the explosion of irrationality, the process I call mythologization.

It is accepted in the literature that the rising popularity of populism and growing support for its political manifestations, most importantly populist political parties, is a reaction to various anxieties. I treat populism as a *form of rebellion* against political, cultural, or economic conditions that generate anxiety, while an intensifying wave of reactions to the populist upheaval is seen as counter-rebellions. If populism is a reaction to rising anxiety among some people, its emergence becomes a source of anxiety for others, and a cycle of reaction and counterreaction, also in the streets, commences.

What is populism? Following several authors, but particularly Cas Mudde, I define it as a type of ideology or discourse. It has two forms: *thin* and *thick*. The former has four features, the latter – five. It is important to assume that all four features of thin populism need to be present to classify a given ideological statement, political program, or discourse as populist. These features include:

1. *Vertical polarization* that sets "the people" against "the elites," which are seen as separate and mutually exclusive groups or categories of people.
2. *Antagonism* exists between the two categories.
3. The whole construct is strongly *Manichean* (i.e., it is based on *fundamentalist moralizing*), which assumes that the essential feature of social/human reality is the struggle of the forces of good and evil and that any conflict/tension between these two groups is an instance of that fundamental struggle. The key implication of Manicheism is that political opponents of populists, construed as champions of the forces of evil, are – by definition – illegitimate or at least defective political actors, whose elimination from the public sphere needs to be rhetorically promoted and, if possible, enacted.
4. Finally, there is the idea that politics should be the

Inside this Issue • January 2021 • v. 61, n.1

Rightward Populist Rebellion in East Central Europe: Anxieties, Proselytization, and the Rebirth of Mythical Thinking by Jan Kubik, Rutgers University/University College London 1	2020 Executive Director's Report by Lynda Park 19
The 2020 Professor Purges in Retrospect: ASEEEES Concerns & Advocacy Plans by Rebecca Mitchell, Middlebury College & Steven Seegel, University of Northern Colorado 7	2021 ASEEEES Board of Directors & Committees 24
Finland Forgotten: A Historical Case of (Unconscious) Cognitive Bias? by Malcolm L. G. Spencer 10	Affiliate Organizations' 2020 Prize Winners 26
Gaming Russian and Soviet History by Barbara C. Allen, LaSalle University 15	Personages 27
	Publications 28
	Institutional Member News 30
	In Memoriam 35
	Affiliate Group News 37

expression of *volonté général* (general will). This idea helps to define and justify attempts to introduce in practice *popular sovereignty*, according to which the substance of (majoritarian) democracy trumps procedures (of liberal democracy). Moreover, the latter are seen as a nuisance if not an obstacle to the exercise of the people's genuine will. This, in turn, opens a way towards the justification of authoritarianism as a form of rule.

If democracy, in a nutshell, is understood as the rule of people constrained by the rule of law, fully-fledged democracy is always liberal democracy.² Ergo, *authoritarianism* can be defined primarily as a strategy of power exercise that removes or minimizes the rule of law and the system of institutional checks and balances.

5. Populists need to define 'the people' and when they offer such a definition populism *thickens*. The most common cultural resource employed in providing such a definition is a conception of national identity, usually derived from the concept of *nativism*. It serves to generate *horizontal polarisation* whose essence is the juxtaposition of 'good' and 'bad' people, the central distinction of exclusionary right-wing populism.

There are several ways to explain the rise of populism, but they all can be reduced to either two or four types of explanations. Inglehart and Norris analyze the dilemma culture or economy, while Eatwell and Goodwin write about four Ds: (1) deprivation (economic insecurity); (2) dealignment (of the political system that no longer properly represents peoples' interests); (3) distrust (particularly of the elites); and (4) destruction (of traditional cultures providing existential security).³

The same analytical scheme applies to sorting out various types of remedies or anxiety-reducing mechanisms that people may rely on to cope with the dramatically changing world. In a nutshell, anxieties can be reduced by: (1) making politics more responsive to people's needs; (2) improving people's economic condition by redistributing wealth more equitably; (3) reorganizing society to help people become more trustful of each other and the elite; and (4) redesigning culture in a way that would help people understand and operate in the increasingly alien world.

Whether and how some cultural remedies may alleviate but also exacerbate anxieties is a hugely important question that I do not have space to address. Instead, I want to focus on another distinction. In the broadly conceived cultural sphere, those who attempt to provide remedies have – by and large – two strategies to choose from: inclusionary or exclusionary. They can try to offer remedies applicable either to a broad and varied range of people or to a narrow,

select category, for example members of "our" race, nation, or religion. Right-wing populists invariably employ the latter – exclusionary – type of strategy.

What do they do exactly? How does it work? By resorting to cultural remedial measures designed to reduce the anxiety, but only among those who can be classified as "us," exclusivist politicians, such as right-wing populists, generate a range of consequential results. They improve their supporters' self-perception by elevating "us," putting "them" down, displacing guilt from "us" to "them," and ascribing blame to "them." They promise redemption. Finally, they explain ruling as an automatic and easy process, as long as the "people" trust the leader who is simultaneously "one of them" and a "chosen one," and knows how to do "just the right thing." A relationship between leaders and followers founded on such convictions inevitably leads to the intensification of authoritarianism in the political system.

There are several conceptual tools that can help us to describe and analyze the way cultural mechanisms employed by right-wing populists can and sometimes do alleviate their followers' anxieties. One of them is what Arlie Hochschild calls *emotion work*; the other is *mythologization*, my sole focus here. The literature on the relationship and contrast between mythological and non-mythological, for example scientific, thinking is gigantic, but worth re-reading as it offers many tools that can help in dissecting mythologization that is so ubiquitous in today's populist politics. I have already dusted off three old interpretive tools. First is the idea that myth is a disease of language.⁴ The second comes from Claude Levi-Strauss who was convinced that myths have "hidden" structures, which can be reconstructed via a systematic comparison of several versions of a mythical story. For example, once we uncover that initially concealed structure, we can see how the "deep story" so structured can help to deal with grand existential questions popping up in the minds of people tortured by anxiety.⁵ Third, it is useful to be reminded that myths pull people away from rational thinking (*logos*) towards evidence-resistant and emotion-ridden intellectual constructions (*mythos*) and this process enhances people's belief in the efficacy of magic.⁶ Fourth, it is always important to remember that even in the most "modern" societies myths circulate in many areas of life, particularly in politics, and are often associated with ritualistic performances.

Not for a moment do I want to suggest that it is easy to cleanly separate mythical and non-mythical modes of thinking, rationality from irrationality, or that it makes sense to periodize social development by delineating various epochs on the basis of the centrality of mythical thinking in them, as was done by early evolutionary thinkers.⁷ Mythical

and non-mythical modes of thought coexist, in various combinations, in all known societies. The *locus classicus* of anti-mythical thinking in the history of the West is the Enlightenment's cult of reason and empirical observation, and yet, as Horkheimer and Adorno demonstrate in their *Dialectic of the Enlightenment*, Enlightenment tends to fall into a trap of its own self-mythologization.⁸ I share their and Leszek Kołakowski's conviction that human societies cannot escape myth and mythological thinking but it is equally obvious to me that some modes of thinking and discourse are more saturated with mythology than others. Humans can *try to* follow paths of learning that respect the rules of rationality and empirical evidence (though these are historically situated and constantly evolve) or they can privilege thinking in terms of mytho-logics that are inimical to reason(ing) and the value of the ever-evolving empirical evidence, as in conspiracy theories. As Christopher Flood argues while comparing (political) theory and (political) myth, they both share "a similar function of enjoining its addressees to action," but in different ways. "Whereas theory characteristically presents itself as logical argument to invite intellectual assent, political myth seeks to stimulate an emotional response through demonstration in the form of narrative."⁹

Right-wing populist and fascist ideologies are shot through with mythological modes of thinking. Right-wing populists are proselytizers who deliberately abuse the human mind's predilection to engage in mythologizing. The definition of right-wing populism, presented earlier, includes at least three characteristics that invite mythologization: (1) the Manichean impulse to construe all conflicts as instances of the epic struggle between the forces of evil and the forces of goodness; (2) the exaltation of *volonté général* whose workings remain un- or under-specified, thus the whole concept becomes susceptible to mythical elaborations; and (3) the very concept of "the people," who are seen as "uninstitutionalized, nonproceduralized *corpus mysticum*,"¹⁰ stripped of the multitude of cleavages and sub-groups that characterize society seen through sociological lenses that – at their best – decrease mythologization.

To illustrate these general points, I will briefly reflect on two instances of mythologization detected in the discourses espoused by Polish right-wing populists.¹¹ The first case

is the transformation of "gender" from a descriptive and explanatory category of social sciences into a rhetorical figure driving the mythological construction of "gender ideology." While more comprehensive analyses of this process are available,¹² I am interested in it only as an instance of mythologization. A preliminary comparative analysis of several versions of the "gender ideology" tale reveals, for example, the existence of a deeper narrative structure, more or less fully realized in concrete retellings, as suggested by Levi-Strauss. The essence of this mythical structure is the relentless (Manichean) binarization of the picture of the world, a central feature of right-wing populist discourses that helps to construe and harden images of various "arch-enemies" of the people, including non-heteronormative people, "infidels," or racial/ethnic aliens.

Despite the overwhelming scientific evidence that gender and non-binary specifications have sometimes varied, depending on a culture or time period, in the mythologized right-wing narrative it is binary, immutable, and inseparable from biological sex. "Gender ideology," is dangerous – as its opponents argue – because its "real" goal is the destruction of "normal" societies, an inevitable outcome of the rejection of the "traditional," binary concept of gender, which is closely linked to the traditional understandings of family and gender roles. It seems that the more popularized the scientific understanding of the complexity and diversity of sex and gender becomes, the more intensely mythologized it is in right-wing discourses. This is poignantly exemplified by associating gender

with a cult of death.¹³ The slogan presented in Illustration 1 reads: "Gender kills identity, soul and body." This case helps to see how mythologization is productively approached as a form of semantic hijacking, or as – as Müller or Barthes would have it – a disease of language.

The second form of mythologization of right-wing populist discourse is associated with the demonization of the LGBT people. A neutral acronym "LGBT," that serves to represent a variety of non-heteronormative and non-cisnormative identities, has been turned into a rhetorical weapon, for example by President Andrzej Duda who in a campaign speech called "the promotion of LGBT rights an 'ideology' more destructive than communism."¹⁴ The influential Archbishop Jędraszewski of Kraków referred to



Illustration 1: Photo by Adrian Grycuk - "Gender is death - it kills identity of soul and body": picketing against gender ideology in Warsaw, November 20, 2014

LGBT as a “rainbow plague.”¹⁵ The use of a dehumanizing metaphor of plague that resurrects an anti-Semitic trope is striking; the construction of a mythologizing narrative around it is even more so. As Levi-Strauss has famously noted, bricolage is the preferred method of mythological construction.¹⁶ The method works more or less like this: let’s grab available symbols or discursive threads and themes, mix them up together, and try to use a new concoction to solve the problem at hand. Jędraszewski, whose goal is the delegitimization of LGBT people’s efforts to constitute themselves as a collective subject in the fight for recognition and equal treatment under the law, acted as a true bricoleur when he linked what he called “rainbow plague” with “red plague.” The latter phrase still has a powerful emotional resonance for many citizens of the post-communist world. It is also related to yet another mythological construct, “Cultural Marxism,” seen by the opponents of “gender ideology” and “rainbow plague” as the driving force behind the plague’s new, “rainbow” phase. In this myth-building bricolage, Soviet-style Communism and Marx end up being responsible for what a Catholic Archbishop sees as an illegitimate mobilization of the whole category of people (LGBT), a mobilization that he interprets as an attack not on tradition alone but also on the nation’s very existence.



Illustration 2: “Fuck off.” A placard from the All-Poland Women’s Strike. <https://plakatnastrajk.pl/>

Since 2015, when the right-wing populist Law and Justice party came to power in Poland, the mythologization of the public discourse intensified. Mythological constructions of “gender ideology” and “rainbow plague” have started influencing the nation’s (political) culture, in my judgement not only to generate a legitimizing cover for the right-wing populist government’s crusade to dismantle many elements of the previously established, liberal-democratic order, but also to sustain the level of anxiety necessary for a continuous support for populist traditionalists in power.

There were several waves of protest against right-wing populism in Poland. The biggest began in the closing months of 2020. On October 22, 2020, the Polish Constitutional Tribunal ruled that one of the three provisions of the already restrictive Polish law regulating access to abortion was unconstitutional. The abolished provision allowed abortion when “prenatal examinations or other medical data indicate a high probability of serious and irreversible disability of the foetus or an incurable life-threatening

illness.” This decision, by the Tribunal whose legitimacy is seen as dubious by many Poles and whose performance in November 2020 was assessed negatively by 59% of respondents (20% - positively),¹⁷ has immediately provoked intense counter-mobilization, arguably the biggest wave of popular mobilization seen in Poland since 1989.¹⁸ This protest wave followed two earlier ones. In the summer of 2017, Warsaw and several other places saw massive marches and rallies in defense of the constitution and constitutional order, threatened by a series of classical populist maneuvers designed to weaken the country’s system of checks and balances.¹⁹ The mobilization under the banners of restoring constitutional order based on legal rationality, rejected many mythologized stories peddled by the government to justify its actions. Earlier, in 2016, when women’s rights to control their own bodies came under attack for the first time during PiS’s term, women and their allies organized massive demonstrations under the banners of the Black March and Women’s rebellion.²⁰

The massive 2020 protest wave surprised observers not only because of its ferocity and national scope, unprecedented since 1989, but also because of the omnipresent, inventive humor and the widespread use of profanity. One of the mildest slogans read: “Could you please fuck off” (“Bardzo proszę wypierdalać”).²¹ (Illustration 2). Days of protest were organized around many performances and displays aimed at rejecting the legitimacy of the ruling party by ridiculing its officials, actions, and ideas in literally hundreds of provocative, slogans.

Many observers were taken aback by what they saw as excessively provocative and profane behavior of participants, particularly young women.

Observing this massive mobilization and the extraordinary, carnivalesque atmosphere the participants in these events created, I was immediately reminded of Bakhtin’s classical work on the significance of carnival. He wrote:

During the century-long development of the medieval carnival, /.../ a special idiom of forms and symbols was evolved, an extremely rich idiom that expressed the unique yet complex carnival experience of the people. This experience, opposed to all that was ready-made and completed, to all pretense at immutability, sought a dynamic expression: it demanded ever-changing, playful, undefined forms. All the symbols of the carnival idiom are filled with this pathos of change and renewal, *with the sense of the gay relativity of prevailing truths and authorities* (emphasis – JK). We find here a characteristic logic, the peculiar logic of the ‘inside out’

(à l'envers), of the 'turnabout,' of a continual shifting from top to bottom, from front to rear, of numerous parodies and travesties, humiliations, profanations, comic crownings and uncrownings.²²

There can be little doubt that the events of late 2020 in Poland showed that carnival and carnivalesque rituals of reversal have cathartic functions and may become sparks initiating an enduring cultural change, even if the immediate political effectiveness of carnivalesque protest may be low. It is, however, striking that under the impact of these protests and the botched governmental reaction to them, people's positive assessment of the country's top political institutions, such as both Houses of the Parliament and the President, dramatically declined in October and November of 2020.²³

What are the lessons I draw from this brief analysis? First, I am sure that while the rising popularity of right-wing populism can be easily seen as a remedy for cultural anxiety and/or economic insecurity, the rising tide of anti-populist mobilizations indicates that what one group of people sees as an anxiety-reducing remedy can be seen by others as an anxiety-inducing threat. If populism is rebellion, its opponents stage counter-rebellions. As a result, we see, at least for now, the ratcheting up of social tensions fed by the self-perpetuating dialectic of mobilization and counter-mobilization.

Second, I want to emphasize that in Poland, the US, and quite a few other places around the world, right-wing populists not only institute illiberal political solutions, but also engineer an incessant mythologization of their countries' cultures. It is thus imperative that those who fear the collapse of liberal democracy need to find a way to restore people's faith in science, logic, and empirical evidence and thus demonstrate that the confirmation bias inherent in mythological thinking can be resisted.

Third, laughter, mockery, irony, and irreverent anti-authoritarian language laced with profanity are insufficient tools of rebuilding trust in evidence-based and logic-respecting procedures, so central to the proper functioning of liberal democracy. But they constitute an excellent remedy inoculating people against the temptations of mythologization, because they undermine the façade of manufactured certainties and remind us that the uncertainties of reason are much healthier for democracy than the certainties of myth.

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Memory and Commemoration, with Michael Bernhard. He is also the Co-director (with Richard Mole) of two international projects, "Delayed Transformational Fatigue in Central and Eastern Europe" and "Populist Rebellion Against Modernity in 21st-century Eastern Europe" (<https://populism-europe.com/poprebel/>). Kubik served as 2020 President of ASEES.

ENDNOTES

1 Please see, in particular, two projects supported by the European Commission that I co-lead: <https://populism-europe.com/>. Many thanks for Marta Kotwas for her incisive comments.

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4 Max Müller, "The Philosophy of Mythology," in *The Science of Religion* (London: 1872), 353-5. Roland Barthes, "Myth Today," in *A Barthes Reader*, edited and with an introduction by Susan Sontag (New York: Hill and Wang 1982 [1956]), 93-149.

5 Claude Lévi-Strauss, "The Structural Study of Myth," *The Journal of American Folklore* 68, no. 270 (1955): 428-444.

6 Ernst Cassirer, *Myth of the State* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1946).

7 There is a huge literature on this topic. For a useful introduction, see Kwame Anthony Appiah, "Dialectics of Enlightenment," *The New York Review of Books*, May 9, 2019.

8 Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002).

9 Christopher Flood. "André Labarthe and Raymond Aron: Political Myth and Ideology in La France libre," *Journal of European Studies*, xxiii (1993): 143.

10 Müller, *What Is Populism?*, 62.

11 Another case I touched upon in my address is analyzed in Marta Kotwas and Jan Kubik, "Symbolic Thickening of Public Culture and the Rise of Right-Wing Populism in Poland," *East European Politics and Societies, and Cultures* (April 16, 2019): 435-471. We analyze what may be called the narcissistic (self)aggrandizement of a nation, advanced via a mythologizing narrative and enacted in a ritual event called "The Rosary to the Borders."

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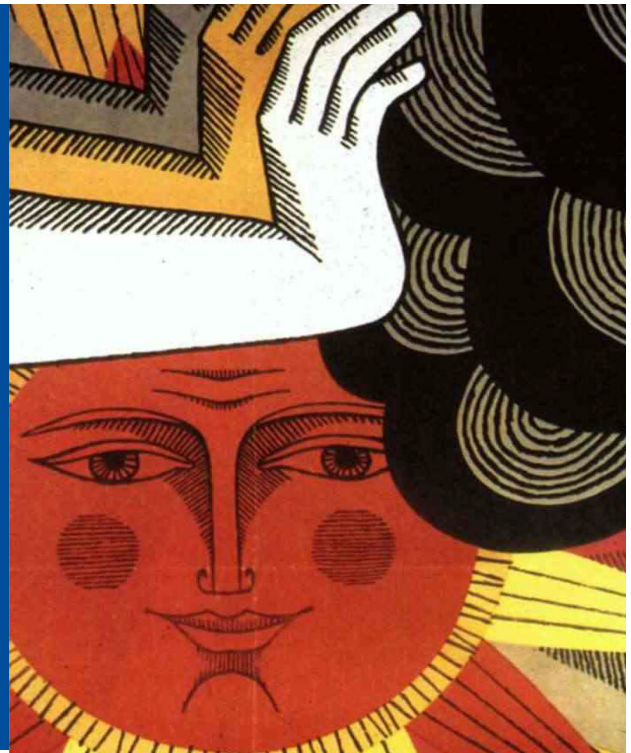
23 "October-December 2020 Polish protests."

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The 2020 Professor Purges in Retrospect: ASEEES Concerns and Advocacy Plans

Rebecca Mitchell, Middlebury College &
Steven Seegel, University of Northern Colorado

Annus Horribilis

Before 2020, we were two professors of history who'd never met. Under pandemic restrictions, living on opposite sides of the United States, we still haven't. It was the tragedy of a small liberal arts college in Buffalo, New York, that brought us together. Canisius College, a 150-year-old Jesuit institution, emphasized ethical learning and values, the study of ideas and the world's religions, social justice and "care for the whole person" (*cura personalis*). This was practiced in core curricula as at Georgetown, Marquette, Boston College, Holy Cross, and the University of San Francisco. Many of the struggles faced by Canisius in recent years are familiar. Persistent sexual abuse scandals, dutifully covered by investigative Buffalo journalists, have dampened enthusiasm for a Catholic-based education; changing demographics have shrunk the prospective pool of new students. Hiring freezes, chronic adjunctization, salaries below the cost of living, "voluntary separations," and terminations of faculty lines appear to be the new normal.

But in 2020, COVID-19 hit. From July 16 to 27, Canisius College President John J. Hurley, his Vice President, and the Board of Trustees used the pandemic as a shock doctrine to "lay off" 23 tenure-track and tenured professors in the Humanities (Classics, Creative and Performing Arts, History, Philosophy, Religious Studies/Theology) and across the curriculum (Teacher Education, Marketing, Communications), alongside 71 staff members. After a decade of mismanagement in which its deficit quadrupled, the college used COVID-19 as an immediate pretext to double down on "profitable" business and STEM fields as well as sports at the expense of its own claimed values. Ignoring faculty handbook protocols and AAUP guidelines, without declaration of financial exigency, and in disregard of shared governance, Canisius leadership unceremoniously informed longtime tenured and recent tenure-track professors of their terminations. These layoffs affected newer hires and tenured mid-career faculty; international faculty; women; and several POC. Together with professors in Religious Studies, Art History, Philosophy, History, and Women's Studies, they fired the Shakespeare literature professor a year before her tenure review and a theologian and bioethicist (at a Jesuit college!) who had lived in Voronezh. For our colleagues at

Canisius, it was devastating. This termination of careers in their prime suddenly deprived students of mentors without warning or explanation. Staff positions that kept the college functioning from day to day were eliminated.

Among those affected was ASEEES member Dr. Steve Maddox, who had joined Canisius College faculty in 2009. A student of Professor Lynne Viola, Steve earned his Ph.D. in Russian/Soviet history from University of Toronto. As tenured faculty who regularly commuted to work from southern Ontario across the Peace Bridge, he is an example of the transnational nature of current US higher education. Steve represented our entire field to his students. Similar stories could be told of his 23 colleagues who similarly lost their positions. This was not thoughtful governance making tough financial decisions to balance the budget. It was a unilateral act by an administration running the college on a faulty business model, with no comprehension of the purpose of a liberal arts education. Unfortunately, it is a model that has become all too familiar in US higher education and politics.

July-August 2020: Reaching Out Shock quickly turned to action, but the path forward was obscure. There was no handbook to follow. We each wrote individual letters of protest to leading administrators. Old-style petitions didn't work, at least not in the way we'd previously thought. Trustees, boards, and college presidents don't respond to emails or petitions – they don't have to. A new kind of organizing was needed. We spammed each other with 4am emails about the disastrous situation of higher education. The grassroots movement to save Canisius quickly took on a life of its own. Social gathering sites cropped up.¹ We forged connections with humanities faculty, dedicated alumni, and students. But we didn't create the protests. Piles of letters, an op-ed, and guest blog posts (Karen Kelsky at "The Professor Is In") about defending *all* faculty against the unethical and potentially illegal actions of corrupt leaders mounted.²

Students, alumni, journalists and local Buffalonians drew on their circles to organize. We relied heavily on professional organizations. With Canisius faculty, we reached out for expressions of broader support for values of tenure, academic freedom, and shared governance in

our field. Letters soon poured in from the AHA, APA, ACPA, and MLA. Canadian organizations with affected members like the Canadian Biblical Society (CBS) and the Canadian Philosophical Association (CPA) also spoke out. Heather Coleman circulated our petition within the Canadian Association of Slavists (CAS, ~800 members). Encouraged by this, on August 11 we submitted a petition to ASEEEES, asking for a statement of concern similar to those issued by other professional organizations. And then we waited.

August-September 2020: A National Tragedy

The victims of the 2020 professor purges are scattered across the USA: Canisius, Ohio University, University of Akron, Adrian College, University of Evansville, Marquette University, Guilford College and many others. According to Dan Bauman in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* in November, “Preliminary estimates suggest that a net of 152,000 fewer workers were employed by America’s private (nonprofit and for-profit) and state-controlled institutions of higher education in September, compared with August, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, which calculates industry-specific employee figures. The net number of workers who left the industry from February to September now sits at around 484,000.”³ By this count, we’ve seen a shedding of 10% of college employees since the pandemic began. Shared governance is routinely violated by trustees’ boards, provosts, and associate deans. Faculty, staff, alumni and allies are fighting cuts through the AAUP and networks and unions.

To our knowledge, the first ASEEEES member to lose a position in this purge climate was Dr. Emily Gioielli, whose tenure-track position in the history department at Missouri Western State University was eliminated in May 2020 as part of what MWSU called “institutional restructuring.” For Dr. Gioielli, a historian of gender who received her Ph.D. from CEU-Budapest, attacks on these disciplines was familiar. In violation of labor laws, the University of Akron in May-June ordered massive layoffs of nearly 100 full-time faculty.⁴ At Ohio University in early June 2020, Associate Professor of Instruction Mila Shevchenko and Visiting Assistant Professor of Instruction Tetyana Dovbnya (both non-tenured), the university’s lone teachers of Russian, were laid off.⁵ The Russian program will be discontinued as of May 31, 2021.

September 2020: Continued Fallout

By September, the multifaceted grassroots movements in support of Canisius faculty had come together. As Canisius administrators pivoted to goat yoga to distract students from the absence of their beloved mentors,⁶ the

change.org petition crept past 6,000 signatures and the gofund.me legal fund for Canisius faculty approached \$10,000.⁷ Canisius became a reference point for us. A highly anticipated AAUP report on tenure and shared governance due in March 2021 lists the college alongside Illinois Wesleyan University (IL), Keuka College (NY), Marian University (WI), Medaille College (NY), National University (CA), Wittenberg University (OH) and the University of Akron (OH) as places where faculty were fired *en masse* in potential violation of protocol.⁸ Institutional predicaments in 2020 are indicative of larger trends.⁹

But where was ASEEEES in this? ASEEEES has advocated for endangered students and journalists in Russia, protests in Poland, detentions in Belarus. Yet, it also has a responsibility to defend its members across American higher education. As time ticked away after submitting our petition, there was a resounding silence. Then, on September 21, we were told that “ASEEEES could not make a statement on this employment issue”. Happily, this was not the final word. On September 27-28, 2020, the ASEEEES Board produced a vital letter on behalf of Steve Maddox and his colleagues.¹⁰

Into 2021: A Suggestion Box

This 2020 experience has led us to reflect on meaningful advocacy. Within ASEEEES in 2017, the first academic freedom and advocacy committee was formed. The ExCom Board has worked harder in public to push for racial justice and decolonization as well as diversity, equity, and inclusion in the profession. The new Working Group for Solidarity in Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies formed as an affiliate, with a central aim to support scholars in contingent positions.¹¹ As an international organization (36% non-US) with between 3,300 and 3,500 members that represents members at different career junctures, however, we believe that ASEEEES can be more proactive.

First, ASEEEES would benefit from having a point person akin to Jim Grossman (AHA) or Paula Krebs (MLA), quick to act and write letters. Reiterating the importance of what we do might seem a small thing, but such a statement has immeasurably more value to members like Steve Maddox whose very livelihoods are under threat than an op-ed in the NYT or WaPo in intelligentsia form. It builds momentum. It puts pressure on boards, presidents, and local corporate media. If as an institution ASEEEES truly supports the importance of what we do in our classrooms, that kind of organizational support should apply whether the institution in question has a large or small “Slavic footprint”.

Second, ASEEEES should draw from the successful initiatives of ASEEEES institutional and individual BIPOC activists in the mid-to-late 2010s, and from AWSS advocacy who have endured the Trump era and various anti-gender campaigns.¹² AWSS (now ~285 members, with roughly 1,000 receiving the newsletter and emails) has developed a fine blueprint for advocacy. The expertise is already here, in our institution. We should tap into it.

Third, while soft ambassadorship and polyvocality continues to be important, ASEEEES advocacy should stylize a more robust social media presence. Follow presses, journalists, and activist scholars. Use Twitter, for now. Build networks across the humanities and between humanities and other disciplines. Keep up with editors. Real power in the twenty-first century hinges on developing and nurturing multiple alliances. This is where change happens: #MeToo and BLM movements have shown social media's power.

We should expect further attempts—recently in December, the University of Vermont and University of Colorado-Boulder—to implement austerity measures as well as busting tactics of dubious ethical and legal standing. As an organization, we need to be prepared to speak on shared values, whether they are being challenged at a small liberal arts college, or an R1 institution with a large graduate program. This is not a battle over an individual job. The future of our entire profession, and of liberal arts education as a whole, depends on it.

Rebecca Mitchell is Assistant Professor of History at Middlebury College. She received her PhD in Russian History from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2011. Her first book, Nietzsche's Orphans: Music, Metaphysics, and the Twilight of the Russian Empire (Yale University Press, 2015) was awarded the 2016 W. Bruce Lincoln Book Prize by ASEEEES.

Steven Seegel is Professor of History at the University of Northern Colorado. He was the first graduate of Canisius College (1999) to receive scholarships for ASEEEES-related fields. He is a writer, translator, and an active AAUP member, and he is a podcast host for New Books Network.

Note: ASEEEES seeks member input on the [ASEEEES Advocacy Policy](#). More information will be posted the ASEEEES Website.

ENDNOTES

*** We're grateful to Lynda Park and the ASEEEES Board and all our colleagues for the space to share this 2020 story. We thank everyone who's circulated and signed our petition on behalf of Steve Maddox and sent in generous letters and donations.

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11 AWSS home page: <https://awsshome.org/advocacy/>, accessed December 1, 2020.

12 Kimberly St. Julian-Varnon, "A Voice from the Slavic Studies Edge: On Being a Black Woman in the Field," ASEEEES NewsNet 60:4 (August 2020), 1-5; and Emily Couch, "Beyond Diversity: Integrating Racial Justice into REECA Studies," ASEEEES NewsNet 60:5 (October 2020), 11-13.



Finland Forgotten: A Historical Case of (Unconscious) Cognitive Bias?

Malcolm L. G. Spencer

There is a meme that began circulating among certain internet circles a few years ago. At its centre is the claim that Finland – that small Nordic state sandwiched between Sweden and Russia – doesn't actually exist. It never did. In fact, its entire being was born of international intrigue, the parameters of which were first outlined on the popular media aggregation site, Reddit, in 2014.¹ For anyone averse to such crackpot conspiracy theories, thanks to the quirks of quantitative analysis, the country's population of native Finns can still be written off as a simple, statistical error.² To this author's knowledge, these light-hearted flights of fancy have failed to generate any explicit protest from the Finnish government, or a concerted effort by its neighbours to declare its territory fair-game. Nevertheless, the country has often found its place in international history forgotten; no less so than when the problems of twentieth-century politics become the fodder of twenty-first-century politicians.

As part of Russia's official commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, Vladimir Putin penned a lengthy essay on the lessons of the conflict.³ Published in the American journal, *The National Interest*, the piece is an unapologetic celebration of Russian patriotic feeling, which remains heavily anchored to the memory of the Soviet Union's defeat of Nazism in 1945. In seeking to preserve this memory, Putin boldly asserts the primacy that should be given to the USSR's role in the war – “the fact that the Nazis were defeated first and foremost by the Soviet people” – while extending the purview of his historical survey to include the “challenging pre-war period,” which set the stage for Hitler's rise to power and the descent of Europe into a second global conflict just two decades after the last.

When outlining the root causes of the Second World War, Putin's preoccupation is with the failures of the “Versailles world order” and the inability of the victor powers to create anything more than an extended armistice at the end of the Great War of 1914-1918. Accusing the post-war settlement of creating “fertile ground” for a resurgent and resentful Germany, he sketches out the diplomatic double-dealing and institutional ineptitude that ultimately led to the “Munich Betrayal,” as European leaders tacitly acquiesced to Adolf Hitler's grab for *Lebensraum*. Behind Putin's thesis is a determined effort to defend against any

alternative reading of events that might cite the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the non-aggression treaty signed between Moscow and Berlin in the summer of 1939, as a key precipitant to the shattering of peace, since it opened the door for the German army's march into Poland on 1 September 1939 without fear of Soviet reprisals.

Alert to potential detractors, Putin insists on having set aside the trappings of a political agenda and promises to base his interpretation of events on the available archival evidence. Drawing from a number of diplomatic sources, he points to the insincerity displayed by the dominant powers of the day, Britain and France, when the opportunity arose to come to terms with Moscow in checking Hitler's expansionist aims, and quotes self-serving Polish efforts to secure its interests vis-a-vis Czechoslovak territory in the wider diplomatic wrangling of the late 1930s.

Fostering an air of objectivity, Putin is even willing to acknowledge the infamous secret-protocols attached to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, though he stops short of accepting that they provided a blue-print for the division of Central and Eastern Europe between Hitler and his Kremlin counterpart, Joseph Stalin. Instead, this diplomatic about-turn is presented as an unwelcome but necessary compromise made by the Soviet government, intent on buying time and establishing a forward defensive position for the Red Army in the event of (inevitable and expected) further aggression by Nazi Germany. In an effort to further strengthen the Soviet case for making good on the opportunity afforded them by the pact, Putin points

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to the historical, territorial, and ethnic basis on which Moscow's justifiable occupation of its designated Polish lands could be made, while writing off the subsequent Baltic annexations as legitimate "contractual" agreements, "with the consent of the elected authorities."

For any casual observer, these historical musings might come across as a sincere attempt to present the Second World War from a Russian perspective. The reader may assume that Putin is simply shifting the emphasis away from making a scapegoat of Stalin (whose regime, it should be noted, does not avoid reproach for its repressive treatment of the Soviet people), to one of rightly acknowledging the sacrifice of Soviet soldiers and civilians in the face of the devastating impact of war on their country's sovereign soil. The diplomatic tussles at the end of the 1930s, and the League of Nations' failure to forestall a second global catastrophe, do little to paint the Western Allies in glory, while the stress the Russian premier places on sources that shine a light on this institutional impotence could be viewed as merely ensuring both sides of the story are told.

There is, however, one glaring omission in Putin's narrative: Finland.

Finland, unfortunately, does not fit comfortably into Putin's thesis. The invasion of the Soviet Union's neighbour to the north in November 1939 cannot be easily justified on the basis of buying time and avoiding war – even if an official declaration was never issued by the Kremlin. Nor was the invasion met with tacit endorsement by Western political figures. In contrast, the essay cites numerous comments from prominent British politicians in October 1939, all seemingly willing to condone the Soviet advance across its Polish border. Even Winston Churchill, with his "infamous dislike for the USSR," would insist that same month that there was no reason to foresee a break in Anglo-Soviet relations.

The performance of the Red Army on Finnish soil also did little to shower its soldiers in glory or inspire the kind of patriotic feeling that might unite a people in support of their struggle. The war exposed many of the shortcomings of the Soviet armed forces, which Stalin and his military heads would scramble to rectify in the aftermath of the conflict. These were shortcomings that Hitler and his General Staff could not have failed to notice when deciding on the relative merits of unleashing the full force of the Wehrmacht on Germany's enemy to the East. Thus, to forget Finland, is to overlook a decisive moment in Russian and Soviet history and its experience of this ever-expanding theatre of war.

In the interests of giving Vladimir Putin the benefit of the doubt for this oversight, let me state for the record that the Russian President is not alone in overlooking Finland's part in any grand narrative concerned with unravelling the complex causes of the Second World War.

Since Putin himself alludes to his Leningrad upbringing during the essay's opening preamble, one might even credit the Soviet education system with failing to instill a balanced view of events at the end of the 1930s, while acknowledging that the war – whose frontline stretched across the Finnish frontier just 20 miles from the former Russian capital – has left no significant mark on present-day St. Petersburg. There are no prominent monuments, no great effort to preserve the memory of the conflict in the city's museums, and the commemoration of Russia's part in the Second World War has long centred on the chronological confines of its preferred nomenclature: the Great Patriotic War. The story of that conflict traditionally begins with the initiation of Hitler's "Operation Barbarossa" on 22 June 1941, nearly a year and a half after a fragile peace between Moscow and Helsinki had been restored.

The story of the Soviet-Finnish War, or Winter War, is not an easy episode to integrate into any broader history of the Second World War. Though the invasion of 'Little Finland' produced an international outcry from contemporary audiences, and resulted in the expulsion of the USSR from the League of Nations, the media outrage and diplomatic hand-wringing that followed failed to produce a concerted effort by Western powers to intervene on Helsinki's behalf. The desperate need of Soviet softwood for British aviation production played its part in staying the hand of Westminster from making an outright enemy of the Soviet Union, and the strictly volunteer forces which Britain and France begrudgingly allowed to travel to the Finnish front arrived too late to contribute to the country's determined defence.

In March 1940, as Soviet forces finally began to make military inroads, and only after the mobilization of men and machine on a scale not seen since the Great War, both sides agreed to return to the negotiating table. That Moscow gained little more territorially than it had sought in the protracted and unsuccessful diplomatic struggles with Helsinki that had preceded the outbreak of fighting was now overshadowed by the Kremlin's commendation of Red Army successes in breaking through the Finnish defences along the Karelian Isthmus: the infamous "Mannerheim Line," which Moscow insisted had been developed with the direct support of Finland's European backers.

By the spring of 1940, Britain and France were once more firmly in the opposition camp, as far as the Kremlin's ideological fervour was concerned. Yet, less than eighteen months later, all was seemingly forgiven and forgotten, as the Allied forces welcomed the Soviet Union firmly into the fold as an essential partner in the fight against fascism. As a result, a collective amnesia regarding the events of the winter of 1939-40 is all too often seen as much in Western accounts of the period as Russian ones. As an essential ally, whose sacrifices dwarfed those of other nations joined in conflict against the Axis powers, it became easier to remember the USSR as a late addition to the scorecard than as a pariah power, until circumstances dictated a sudden shift in diplomatic relations once more.

Of course, even this is a simplification of a complex and shifting narrative. Still, it might serve to explain why the absence of Finland in Putin's reading of Russian history need not be immediately credited to a furthering of his present political agenda – or his having fallen victim to a disinformation campaign intent on erasing Finland from the internet's 'frontpage.' Rather, once forgotten, it has seemingly become harder and harder to find a place for the Winter War in any collective memory of the Second World War.

What lessons, then, might we draw out from Vladimir Putin's imperfect attempt to bring some order and meaning to the disparate scenes and inconsistent actors that contributed to the unravelling of peace in Europe?

Though I am myself a historian by trade, I wouldn't claim to have a command of every facet of this period or pretend that any attempt I might yet make to develop a coherent and comprehensive account would be without the risk of leaving some key episode overlooked. For that lesson, I have long relied on the words of Lev Tolstoy. Within the many pages of Tolstoy's epic account of Napoleon Bonaparte's invasion of Russia in 1812, the author wove numerous reminders to the reader that our understanding of such epoch-shifting events is often skewed by our narrow view of proceedings and impartial selection of evidence. Indeed, one could argue that my own insistence on Finland's importance is an arbitrary decision that still brings us no closer to understanding, more accurately, this "continuous movement" of history:

It needs no critical exertion to reduce utterly to dust any deductions drawn from history. It is merely necessary to select some larger or smaller unit as the subject of observation – as criticism has every right to do, seeing that whatever unit history observes must always be arbitrarily selected.⁴

While Tolstoy might not have had access to the language and concepts that we use to describe the cognitive processes human beings rely on in 'selecting' those units of history, he was alert to some of the underlying fallacies to which we too often fall victim.

Unfortunately, the perils of selection bias can overcome even the most concerted efforts to avoid the accusation that one has an underlying agenda in their presentation of the facts. Despite this ever-present danger, human beings have long preferred to think of themselves as rational, intelligent, and clear-thinking individuals. One of the fundamental flaws in this self-assessment is an inability to appreciate that many of the biases we hold are simply blind to us. Thus, the influence they have on the cognitive processes we rely on to gather information and develop a narrative that might help us better understand the world (and its history) remains overlooked. Whether we credit them or not, these biases continue to operate behind the scenes and lead us to see patterns, build theories and select evidence that reinforce fallacies as readily as they might make an uncomfortable truth, or an alternative perspective, clearer to us. Thankfully, following the pioneering work of experimental psychologists like the Nobel Prize winner, Daniel Kahneman, many of the inherent biases that play a key role in choice and decision-making are becoming more familiar and widely appreciated.⁵

Historians, like politicians, are just as susceptible to these errors of judgement. We might seek, as part of our professional toolkit, to develop the skills and self-awareness to constantly check our reading of evidence and building of narrative in a way that is aimed at minimising the influence of such sub-conscious cognitive errors. I still worry that we are too often fighting a losing battle. But at least we strive to open ourselves to the possibility that our ideas can be checked, verified, and corrected by our peers, where necessary. Admittedly, Putin is not operating as a trained historian, even if he makes the claims a good researcher should, as far as relying on sources and not seeking to press a particular program. In the end, he is just as vulnerable as anyone else to a multitude of subconscious shortcuts that help us sit comfortably with our view of the world, and protect us from doubt or a need to reject long-held, and, ultimately, reassuring beliefs and ideas.⁶

Although it would make for an amusing *anekdot*, I also don't think that Putin is someone that readily subscribes to the conspiracy that Finland doesn't exist. Its absence from his essay may not be a work of intellectual intrigue either – though this is not the first time it has been overlooked in his reading of the period.⁷ Instead, I do think there is value

in using his example as a reminder that the past is built from a vast number of complex and often contradictory narrative threads. Our attempt to unravel them, to explain away loose ends, and ultimately weave them once more into an account that offers a more satisfying story to our ears is a natural and universal human endeavour.

To acknowledge such a truth might also bring us closer to recognising and understanding why the present, too, is so full of such complex and contradictory stories; of conflicting viewpoints and inconsistent actors. That it often proves so impossible to reconcile the views held by those individuals, and the groups of like-minded people that develop a further sense of reassurance from their shared identities – whether right or left, blue or red, black or white – with their apparent or actual agenda is a reality of life. But by being alert to our own assumptions and implicit biases, we might take the first step towards finding the space for more reasoned debate and possible compromise; towards a dialogue that is less coloured by ideology and the pre-conceived ideas that are not always clear even to those who hold them.

And as a final thought, if the history of our current global struggle against an unseen enemy is still being written and debated 75 years from now, I sincerely hope that it will not be exploited for political point-scoring in the way that the present pandemic, regrettably, has been. In the global fight against a virus that has the capacity to kill irrespective of one's national, ethnic, racial, political, sexual or gender identity, a collective response that set aside all these differences and embraced the experiences of a broad and diverse global community – Finland included⁸ – should have been forthcoming to best safeguard our entire species from threat. Instead, the striving for self-preservation (or lack thereof) has been infected with political rhetoric, nationalist fervour, and blind bigotry. Once again, it has been easier to take cognitive shortcuts than think deeply and carefully about how best to understand our present predicament. And as a still-developing historical narrative, it already makes for an uncomfortable lesson in human behaviour.

Malcolm L. G. Spencer is an early career researcher and historian of Russia and the former-Soviet Union. His work to date has centered on exploring continuity and change in the ideological and institutional connections between the USSR and the broader international communist movement during the interwar period. His first monograph, Stalinism and the Soviet-Finnish War, 1939-40: Crisis Management, Censorship and Control, was published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2018, as part of their well-established 'St Antony's Series' on global and regional issues. He received his DPhil in Modern History from the University of Oxford in 2016.

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10TH ICCEES WORLD CONGRESS

Considering the global pandemic and its impact on international travel, and after consulting with ICCEES and with registered participants, the Organizing Committee announces that the ICCEES 10th World Congress 2021 will be a virtual event from August 3-8, 2021.

ICCEES is working hard to ensure a stimulating, enriching World Congress experience for all participants. The virtual Congress will comprise panels, roundtables, and keynote events. In addition to the main program, participants will have diverse opportunities for virtual connections, informal discussions, and consultations. Other activities will include: film screenings, an art exhibit, and an exhibitor fair. The World Congress will also host workshops on: Academic Publishing, Academic Job Search, Practical Applications of Digital Archival Collections, and others.

The Organising Committee of the 10th ICCEES World Congress (August 3-8, 2021) has reopened the [Call for Submissions portal](#). The deadline is February 1, 2021.

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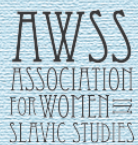
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Gaming Russian and Soviet History

Barbara C. Allen, LaSalle University

Will your students prevent the Bolsheviks from seizing power in 1917 or will they transfer all power to the soviets? Will their negotiations bring a peaceful end to the Cuban Missile Crisis or let loose nuclear conflagration? Which city of Rus will the Mongols target next for complete destruction or exaction of tribute? How will Emperor Paul redirect Russia's foreign and domestic policy after the death of Empress Catherine the Great? Can the British and Americans save Eastern Europe from falling under Soviet control at the Yalta Peace Conference? These vital questions have no predetermined answers in the games which students play in classes based on *Reacting to the Past* (RTTP) and other gaming pedagogy. While students must adhere closely to the ideas of the characters they play, the outcomes derive from players' persuasive, evidence-based rhetoric, interpersonal dynamics, and contingency.¹

Several years ago, I transformed my instruction through RTTP pedagogy.² Specifically designed for higher education, RTTP games employ role play, writing, speaking, and debate and encourage students to take leadership roles, cooperate, compete, and innovate. Students assume the roles of historical characters representing philosophical, scientific, cultural or ideological perspectives and must attempt to achieve goals specific to their character. In factions composed of characters with similar views, students work together to accomplish their objectives. Some students are indeterminates who vote independently of factions on issues but may join a faction of their choice by the end. Instructors operate on the sidelines and grade work while students run class sessions; sometimes they intervene to keep a game from going off the rails. Students do not operate according to a script. Contingency, individual personalities and group dynamics influence voting, so the result of a game can differ from historical reality. Nevertheless, students' grades depend on representing their character's views faithfully.

Game play is preceded by days or weeks of preparation, during which instructors guide students through the historical background and primary sources. A counterfactual element in each game facilitates confrontation between characters professing different ideas. Following the game's highly fraught conclusion, a postmortem class dissects how historical reality compares to how events unfolded in the game. Reading and writing

requirements for the games vary, according to whether a class is introductory or advanced. Games usually unfold over three to four weeks of classes but can be compressed or expanded in order to fit a class schedule. Short games (including those in Norton's Flashpoints Series) can be played within two weeks. Microgames which require no advance reading are available as well but may lightly cover context and intellectual currents. The "game manual" (textbook) comprises a historical narrative, an introduction to *Reacting*, game rules, a schedule of topics, an overview of factions and individual roles, and "core texts" (primary sources) for students to read and cite in their speeches and papers. Unpublished materials in the password-protected online *Reacting* Library include an instructor's manual for each game, detailed role sheets, factional advisories, and handouts. Instructors should bring to class dice, name cards, and other accessories. A game usually begins with a liminal moment, such as the pig sacrifice in the Athens game.

My students at all levels have proved very receptive to RTTP and have enthusiastically assumed leadership roles, exercised creativity, and debated one another. In anonymous surveys students expressed near-universal agreement that they learned more from immersive role play than from lectures and discussion. In an article our university student newspaper ran about the class, students were quoted saying: "I absorbed a lot more than I would have in a regular lecture-style classroom, because we were immersed in the subject and had to think like the characters;" "These role-plays were beneficial because we were actively engaged; we had to write, present, use our creativity, and discuss historical events which is different from the typical history class;" and, from a male student, "Never in my life has being a woman pretending to be a man been so fun and educational."³

The games I initially deployed in my first-year Honors Western Civilization class are recommended for beginners: "Threshold of Democracy, Athens in 403 BC" and "Rousseau, Burke, and Revolution in France, 1791."⁴ I trained by playing compressed versions in the *Reacting* Summer Institute for Faculty. Having gained experience, I added unpublished games to my curriculum. Because game designers share unpublished materials for free with instructors, it cuts down on textbook costs for students.

Dr. Sally A. Boniece, Professor of Russian History at Frostburg State University, shared with me materials of a game she has developed, “The February Revolution and Dual Power in Petrograd, 1917.” After that was a striking success, I expanded my use of Reacting to non-honors first year seminars and upper-level Russian history classes.

In addition to Reacting games, I have used microgames developed by Dr. Ray Kimball of West Point – “Mongol Matrix,” “After Catherine,” and (with Dr. Kimberly Redding of Carroll U) “Eyeball to Eyeball, 1962: The Cuban Missile Crisis.” I obtained Core Committee approval to offer a first-year academic seminar called “Gaming the Past: People, Ideas, Events” in Fall 2020. The onset of COVID-19 forced me to rapidly switch game play to asynchronous remote modality in Spring 2020. During and since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, RTTP instructors and game designers have collaborated on the fly to create asynchronous and synchronous online versions of the games.⁵ By Fall 2020, I had trained and prepared sufficiently to run games synchronously on Zoom. For reasons of space, here I will focus on my favorite game.⁶

February Revolution, 1917

“The February Revolution and Dual Power in Petrograd, 1917,” designed by Dr. Sally A. Boniece, unfolds in Soviet Executive Committee meetings during the first half of 1917. Character roles are drawn from the major socialist parties, from worker and peasant social groups, and from soldiers and sailors. Socialist politicians in revolutionary defensist, moderate internationalist, and extreme internationalist factions debate whether the Soviet should cooperate with the Provisional Government or replace it, and whether Russia should continue the war or withdraw from it. They seek votes from students playing the indeterminate roles of peasants, workers, soldiers, and sailors, who ask questions ranging from simple to sophisticated. The instructor, acting as game master, introduces breaking news releases to invigorate debate and create suspense. Like developments in 1917, those in the game are turbulent; characters radicalize during the course of play. Student players draw upon translated primary sources to inform their speeches, questions, and comments.⁷ Because some peasant and soldier characters are illiterate, socialist intellectuals, workers and sailors educate them politically. The game highlights peasant, soldier and worker roles in turning events and gives voice to Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks as well as to Bolsheviks, countering the traditional textbook emphasis on Bolshevik hegemony.

The context, background, and ideological nuances were difficult for students to master. I coached them, but

their struggles also reflected those of historical actors in a rapidly changing context. While preparing, my students took the Arzamas quiz “Who are you in 1917 Russia?” (<https://arzamas.academy/materials/1269>) to test how well they understood their character’s views. This game is particularly meaningful to me because Alexander Shlyapnikov, whose biography I wrote, is in the game. I always feel nervous and excited when choosing a student to play his role.⁸ This game transferred very smoothly to asynchronous online play. Breaking news releases helped tremendously to sustain momentum and keep students engaged remotely. When I run the game face-to-face, the extreme internationalists (Bolsheviks and leftist SRs) achieve all power to soviets in a successful July uprising, but in asynchronous play, students in indeterminate roles paid closer attention to the moderate internationalists’ (Sukhanov and Martov) argument favoring an all-socialist coalition government and the moderates prevailed.

Conclusion

Because faculty can adapt the Reacting method to a range of courses from introductory surveys to specialized upper-level classes for majors, RTTP contributes to multiple opportunities through a student’s years in university for high impact, engaged learning activities, thus supporting retention, persistence, and graduation rates. Research has shown that higher student engagement in general education classes can support retention. A 2015-16 survey of students who had taken Reacting classes at Middle Tennessee State U showed that student engagement was higher in general education classes employing Reacting than in those that did not.⁹ A 2008-9 Eastern Michigan U study showed that the retention rate of students who had taken Reacting versions of introductory history classes was 10% higher than those who had taken non-Reacting intro history courses.¹⁰ Students who had taken Reacting in their first year at Indiana U South Bend “showed increased self-efficacy” in academic and social skills at the end of the semester; women’s self-efficacy increased to match that of men. Self-efficacy is more important than self-esteem to academic success, because it is based on “people’s judgments that they can succeed on specific tasks.”¹¹ A follow-up survey of Reacting students at Eastern Michigan U showed that in comparison with a control group, the Reacting students reported greater teamwork skills, public speaking confidence, better understanding of cultural differences, and higher engagement.¹² So far during the COVID-19 pandemic, my students have agreed that the games create a sense of community online. Students collaborated with me in finding creative solutions to adapt face-to-face games to the Zoom environment. My

first semester freshmen have made friendships in their Zoom classes that they did not expect to form in a remote educational environment.

Barbara C. Allen is Associate Professor of History at La Salle University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She earned her Ph.D. in Russian and Soviet history at Indiana University Bloomington.

ENDNOTES

1 This article draws upon the roundtable “Gaming Russian and Soviet History: Reacting to the Past in the Classroom,” 51st annual convention of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies, San Francisco, California, November 23-26, 2019. I am grateful to fellow panelists Rebecca Jane Stanton, Sally Boniece, and Amy Forster Rothbart and to audience members for feedback.

2 Mark C. Carnes, Professor of History at Barnard College, originated the method which has been adopted by faculty at hundreds of institutions of higher education in the U.S. and abroad. See <https://reacting.barnard.edu/> and Carnes, *Minds on Fire: How Role-Immersion Games Transform College* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2014).

3 Alina Snopkowski, “Students Time Travel for Innovative Classroom Games,” *The La Salle Collegian*, February 6, 2020, page 9.

4 Josiah Ober et al, *The Threshold of Democracy: Athens in 403 BCE*, 4th edition (NY/London: W.W. Norton, 2015); and Jennifer Popiel et al, *Rousseau, Burke, and Revolution in France, 1791*, 2nd edition (NY/London: W.W. Norton & Co., 2015).

5 RTTP instructors and game designers share information in a private Facebook group.

6 For a section I composed about other games but could not include here, please contact me by email. For published game materials pertinent to Eurasian history, go to the following publisher websites: <https://wwnorton.com/reacting-to-the-past> and <https://uncpress.org/distributed-press/reacting-consortium-press/>. Access unpublished game materials through the password-protected Reacting Consortium Library (<http://reactingconsortiumlibrary.org/>) or by contacting game designers. Dr. Ray Kimball has posted his game materials here: https://www.academia.edu/43159121/The_Mongol_Matrix_Game; https://www.academia.edu/43159137/After_Catherine_The_Russian_Imperial_Court_Microgame; https://www.academia.edu/43129455/Eyeball_to_Eyeball_The_Cuban_Missile_Crisis_Simulation.

7 *Fighting Words: Competing Voices from the Russian Revolution*, edited and translated by Michael C. Hickey (Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2011); *Leaflets of the Russian Revolution: Socialist Organizing in 1917*, edited and translated by Barbara C. Allen (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2018); and *Voices of Revolution, 1917*, edited by Mark D. Steinberg and translated by Marian Schwartz (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001).

8 Barbara C. Allen, *Alexander Shlyapnikov, 1885-1938: Life of an Old Bolshevik* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2015; Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2016).

9 Dawn McCormack et al, “Impact and Perception: Reacting to the Past at Middle Tennessee State University,” in *Playing to Learn with Reacting to the Past: Research on High Impact, Active Learning Practices*, edited by C. Edward Watson and Thomas Chase Hagood (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), p. 27.

10 Carnes, *Minds on Fire*, p. 352, n. 38.

11 Carolyn A. Schult et al, “Strengthening Students’ Self-Efficacy Through Reacting to the Past,” in Watson and Hagood, pp. 75-6, 79-80.

12 Jeffrey L. Bernstein et al, “What Happens After Reacting? A Follow-Up Study of Past RTTP Participants at a Public Regional University,” in Watson and Hagood, pp. 144-148.

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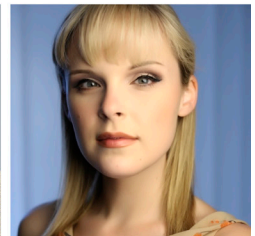
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2020 Executive Director's Report

Lynda Park

2020 was an unprecedented and challenging year for all of us due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I am, however, glad to report that we at ASEEES were able to carry out our programs while changing directions and developing new ways of doing our work to meet the challenges. The Board, committee members, and staff both at the main office and the *Slavic Review* editorial office did tremendous work to ensure ASEEES's mission and work stayed on course.

Membership

As expected under the circumstances and because we decided not to enforce the membership rule for the 2020 convention participation, we saw a decrease of 9.4% in individual membership in 2020 from 2019. We had **3,192 members**: 648 student members (20%); 278 affiliate members (8.7%); 996 international members (31.2%) from 56 countries. The top five countries outside the US with the most members were: UK, Russia, Canada, Germany, and Poland. We had 413 members (12.9%) from the 18 countries in Eastern Europe and Eurasia (including Poland and Russia). For comparison, in 2019, we had 3,490 members: 685 student members (19.6%); 337 affiliate members (9.7%); 1,246 international members (35.7%) from 49 countries. For trends in membership over the last decade, please see the graph appended to this report. For 2020 Institutional Membership, we had 50 members - 19 premium and 31 regular members.

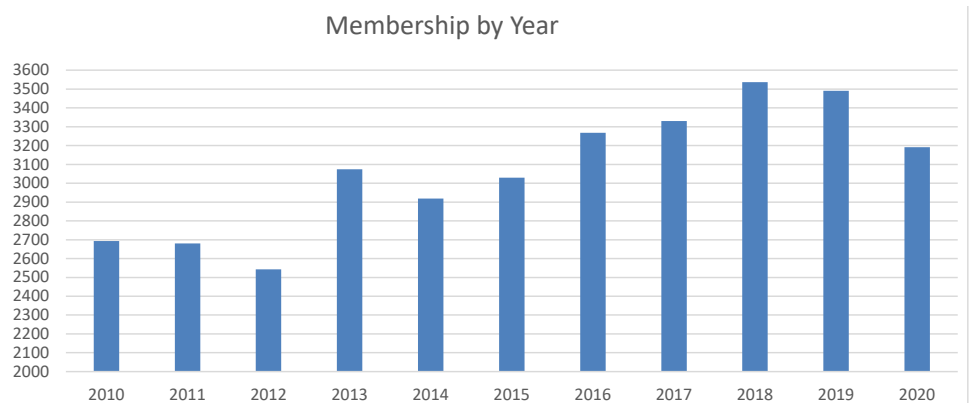
Convention

The 52nd Annual Convention, initially scheduled to be held at the Washington DC Marriott Wardman Park on November 5-8, 2020, was held as a virtual event on November 5-8 and 14-15. With the most fitting theme of "Anxiety and Rebellion," convention planning took many turns over the year. With the situation becoming increasingly clear in early summer that we would not be able to hold an in-person convention, the Board established a Convention Contingency Planning Committee in June, made up of Angela Brintlinger, Keith Brown, Harriet Murav, Elena Prokhorova (2020 Convention Program Committee Chair), Margaret Manges (convention manager), myself, and chaired by ASEEES president Jan Kubik, to examine our options. The

Committee was most concerned about the safety of our attendees and staff, while being mindful of the contractual obligations to the hotel, which in principle were over \$600,000 in cancellation penalties. The Committee conducted a survey of participants for their input. By mid-July, it was clear that we could not hold a successful in-person event and notified the hotel, invoking force majeure. Thankfully, the hotel let us out of the contract without penalties, and we moved forward with plans to hold a virtual convention.

From August until the Convention, ASEEES staff did extraordinary work putting together a virtual convention for the first time, reimagining every aspect of convention planning and structure. In the end, I dare say that we held a remarkably successful convention. In May, we had scheduled 670 sessions for the in-person convention. Notification of the plan for a virtual convention led to cancellation of 165 sessions in early August and others throughout the fall. The actual scheduled sessions consisted of 28 individual paper panels, 4 lightening round, 331 panels, and 135 roundtables, for a total of 498 sessions, plus the presidential plenary, 4 film screenings, 33 meetings, 4 literary events, and other ancillary events. Most of the sessions were recorded, and the convention registrants can still visit the convention site to watch the recordings until October 2021. We scheduled entertainment and wellness breaks, networking receptions, and a dance party all held on Zoom! We offered a virtual exhibit hall with 27 exhibitors. We thank the eight sponsors.

Even faced with limitations of the Zoom platform and shortened session time, the convention offered high caliber research and topical presentations. The Presidential Plenary, "Anxiety and Rebellion in the Post-communist World,"



chaired by Jan Kubik, featured speakers Graeme Robertson (UNC Chapel Hill), Gwendolyn Sasse (Oxford U), and Timothy Snyder (Yale U), who provided thought-provoking research and reflections. President Kubik gave a timely presidential address, “Rightward Populist Rebellion in East Central Europe: Anxieties, Proselytization, and the Rebirth of Mythical Thinking.” The convention also featured a number of roundtables that addressed the issue of race and more inclusive pedagogy in Slavic studies and excellent lightning rounds that featured presentations by undergraduate students participating in a program administered by Howard University to encourage underrepresented students of color in Slavic studies. I thank B. Amarilis Lugo de Fabritz (Howard U), Colleen Lucey (U of Arizona), and others involved in organizing these sessions.

The final registration numbers were higher than we had anticipated in July and higher than our projections for an in-person convention in Washington, DC. We had a total of 2879 registrants from 54 countries: 426 were graduate students (15%) (286 members, 101 international); at least 376 were first-time attendees (13%) (176 international, 168 grad students); and 270 undergraduate students (9%). Of the 848 international attendees (29% of total registrants) from 53 countries, the largest contingents were from Russia (140), the UK (139), Canada (108), Poland (65), and Germany (64). Of the total registrants, only 66% (1891 registrants) were ASEEEES members, which is much lower than in previous years with averages around 85-90%. This is a result, in part, of us not enforcing the membership rule, but also due to new attendees taking the opportunity of the online platform to participate in an event that they otherwise would not. We granted registration waivers to 484 attendees (17% of total registrants). We thank 94 members who registered at the “Register+Donate” rate.

We thank the 2020 Convention Program Committee for their work. We are especially grateful to the Committee Chair Elena Prokhorova (William and Mary) for her tremendous work in scheduling the sessions while facing so much uncertainty.

For 2021, we are planning to hold our convention at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside on Nov 18-21 with possible inclusion of a virtual component held on separate dates around the time of the in-person convention. While we would all like to meet in person in New Orleans, we nonetheless are planning for various contingencies. The program chair is Thomas Garza (U of Texas at Austin), and the Convention theme is “Diversity, Intersectionality and Inclusion.”

The summer convention in region planned for 2021 is now postponed at least until at least 2022, possibly 2023.

Travel Grants

As the 2020 Convention was held virtually, ASEEEES waived the convention registration fees for all 2020 travel grant recipients and alternates, totaling 98. The remaining funds will be used for the 2021 travel grant programs. The 25 Russian Scholar Travel Grant winners and alternates also received a complimentary 1-year membership in the Association, funded by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation.

Fundraising

Thanks to the generosity of individual donors and institutions, we raised over \$1.31 million in contributions and grants for the Future of the Field fundraising campaign, which concluded its active phase at the end of 2019. In 2020, due to the extraordinary circumstances, we stepped back from any major fundraising. We received \$36,690 in donations in addition to the Future of the Field pledge payments. In 2021, we plan to make a greater effort so that we can sustain the increase in grant programs and possibly launch new funding programs.

Fellowships and Grants

In 2020 we awarded 49 fellowships and grants for a total amount of \$372,000. We awarded six Stephen F. Cohen-Robert C. Tucker Dissertation Fellowships – four for research, and two for dissertation completion - with a stipend of \$25,000. For the research grant programs, we were able to more than double the funding thanks to the Future of the Field campaign and awarded 14 grants for dissertation research for a total of \$84,000, including the grants in LGBTQ and women’s and gender studies and the Joseph Bradley and Christine Ruane Grant, and established a new Summer Dissertation Writing Grant program, which awarded eight grants for a total of \$44,000. In addition, we awarded four \$6,000 grants for the Understanding Modern Russia research grant program. We also established a new Internship Grant program, which provides stipends to grantees wishing to take unpaid internships relevant to the field, and were able to award 12 internship grants for a total of \$60,000. Finally, we disbursed \$10,000 to five First Book Subvention grantees to support book publishing. Some of the funds have not been disbursed. Due to the pandemic travel restrictions, many grantees with research funding and some with internships have postponed their grants. They have been given extra time, as needed, to start the grant and options to make alternative plans.

2020 Board Decisions

The ASEEEES Board of Directors met online for its annual meeting on November 1, 2020. The following are some major decisions and discussions.

The Board discussed and approved establishment of a new **Future of ASEEEES/Field Strategic Planning Committee** to discuss the future of the Association and the field. ASEEEES last conducted strategic planning in 2013-2014 and issued a Strategic Priorities Statement in 2014. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the likelihood of fundamental change in higher education, especially in the humanities and social sciences, and exacerbated the precarity of the profession, as seen in a growing number of contingent faculty and the loss of programs and faculty positions. Rather than reacting to the crisis in piece meal, the Board agreed that this was the time to reexamine our strategic priorities and existing activities of the Association and re-imagine the future of the Association and the field, including new opportunities and possibilities. The Committee should be a diverse working group representing varied perspectives, including contingent faculty, students, international scholars, BIPOC members, and others.

The board also held a lengthy discussion of the Association's **Advocacy Policy**. Requests for statements and letters on various concerns, especially on issues beyond the traditional scope of academic freedom and program reduction/elimination, have skyrocketed in the last three years. The main question raised was whether we need to revise our policy and procedures or continue ad hoc in response to these new areas of concern, especially as members ask the Association to speak out on public issues in the US and in the region we study. The discussion raised many concerns, and the Board agreed that comments from members on the scope and process of advocacy work would be beneficial. The Board also agreed that the above-mentioned Strategic Planning Committee should include this issue as part of the committee's charge.

Slavic Review

Harriet Murav offered to extend her service as Editor of *Slavic Review* until August 14, 2023, which the Executive Committee approved at its May 2020 meeting. The University of Illinois has agreed to the two-year extension of her term. The extended date allows Prof. Murav to serve two full terms as Editor. We will begin a national search sometime this year for the Editor for 2023-2028. The Slavic Review Committee, consisting of Michael Bernhard (U of Florida), Angela Cannon (Library of Congress), Sibelan Forrester (Swarthmore College), and chaired by Mark Steinberg (U of Illinois), has been convened to start the process as well as review the trends in academic journal publishing, particularly the trend towards Open Access models.

Board Election/Incoming Members

The 2020 annual election for the Board of Directors was held

from June-Sept, and the results were the following: Joan Neuberger (U of Texas Austin) was elected vice-president/president-elect for 2021; Theodora Dragostinova (Ohio State University) and Sunnie Rucker-Chang (University of Cincinnati) were elected members-at-large for 2021-2023. A total of 2,975 ballots were sent and 1,139 responded for a total response rate of 38%.

The other incoming Board members in 2021 are: Christine Worobec (Northern Illinois U) as Treasurer; Michael Bernhard (U of Florida) as APSA representative; and Neringa Klumbyte (Miami U of Ohio) as AAA representative. Robert Niebuhr (Arizona State U) will stay on through 2022 as representative of the Council of Regional Affiliates. Michael Kunichika agreed to serve on the Executive Committee as Member at Large, 2021-2022.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the University of Pittsburgh for hosting the main office and to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign for hosting the *Slavic Review* editorial office. We would not be able to do our work without the support these universities provide.

INTRODUCING NEW ASEEEES DEPUTY DIRECTOR/MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR



Kelly McGee served as the ASEEEES Convention Program Coordinator for five years before joining ASEEEES as Deputy Director and Director of Membership. She previously served as Resident Director in Narva, Estonia for Project Global Officers, an initiative of the Defense Language and National Security Education

Office, which funds ROTC students for the study of critical languages. She worked as Administrative Officer for Department of Defense Education Activity in Spangdahlem, Germany and most recently as Deputy Director of the Graduate Initiative in Russian Studies at The Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey. Kelly received a BA in Russian/Slavic and East European Studies from West Virginia University, an MA in Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies from University of Michigan, and her PhD in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at University of Pittsburgh.



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**DIVERSITY, INTERSECTIONALITY,
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The 2021 ASEEES convention invites approaches to diverse topics in the field and celebrates our various backgrounds, disciplines, and ways we create and propagate knowledge. Our studies of Eastern Europe and Eurasia have tended to be highly informed about class and economic questions, thanks largely to socialist scholars before and after the revolution, but these societies, their inhabitants and their discourses also bring other kinds of diversity: ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, and sexuality. These are often perceived differently in Eastern Europe and Eurasia than in the Americas or Western Europe, which itself suggests possible approaches for study.

Proposals from all disciplines and historical periods are welcome, and encouraged.

**The deadline for paper, panel, lightning rounds, and roundtable submissions is March 1, 2021.
The deadline for meeting room requests and film proposals is April 1, 2021.**

aseees.org/convention/cfp



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Anne Eakin Moss, Johns Hopkins U, 2021-2023
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Eva Rogaar, U of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2020-2021 (graduate student rep)

Communications Advisory Committee

Andrew Behrendt, Missouri U of Science & Technology, 2019-2021, Chair
Molly Thomasy Blasing, U of Kentucky, 2019-2021
Joe Lenkart, U of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2021-2023
Robert Niebuhr, Arizona State U, 2021-2023
Kimberly St. Julian-Varnon, U of Pennsylvania, 2020-2022

Committee for the Advocacy of Diversity and Inclusion

Ani Kokobobo, U of Kansas, 2019-2021, Chair
Thomas Garza, U of Texas, Austin, Chair, 2018-2021
Anita Kurimay, Bryn Mawr College, 2021-2023
Amarilis Lugo de Fabritz, Howard U, 2020-2022
Zsuzsanna Magdo, U of Pittsburgh, 2018-2023

Investment Sub-Committee of the Executive Committee

Daniel Peris, Federated Investors, Chair, 2015-2021
Juliet Johnson, McGill U (Canada), 2018-2023
Craig Kennedy, Bank of America Merrill Lynch (ret.), 2020-22
Christine Worobec, Northern Illinois U, 2021-2023

Committee on Environmental Sustainability

José Vergara, Swarthmore College, 2020-2022, Chair
Jane Costlow, Bates College, 2020-2022
Elizabeth Plantan, Stetson U, 2020-2022

Slavic Review Committee

Mark Steinberg, U of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2020-2022, Chair
Michael Bernhard, U of Florida, 2020-2022
Angela Cannon, Library of Congress, 2020-2022
Sibelan Forrester, Swarthmore College, 2020-2022

CLIR Executive Council

Joseph Lenkart, U of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, 2020-22, Chair
Natasha Lyandres, U of Notre Dame, Member-at-large, 2020-22
Heghine Hakobyan, U of Oregon, Chair, Subcommittee on Collection Development, 2020-2022
Janice Pilch, Rutgers U, Chair of Subcommittee on Copyright Issues, 2020-2022

Anna Arays, Yale U, Chair, Subcommittee on Education and Access, 2020-2022
Alla Royslance, New York U, Chair, Subcommittee on Slavic & East European Materials Project (SEEMP), 2020-2022
Roman Ivashkiv, U of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Faculty Liaison, 2020-2022

PRIZE COMMITTEES

Distinguished Contributions Award Committee

Olga Shevchenko, Williams College, 2019-2021, Chair
Eliot Borenstein, New York U, 2020-2022
Choi Chatterjee, California State U, Los Angeles, 2021-2023
Gerald Creed, Hunter College, 2020-2022
Dan Healey, Oxford U (UK), 2019-2021

Wayne S. Vucinich Book Prize Committee

Thomas Seifrid, U of Southern California, 2020-2021, Chair
Nancy Condee, U of Pittsburgh, 2021-2022
Neringa Klumbyte, Miami U of Ohio, 2020-2021
Donald Raleigh, UNC at Chapel Hill, 2021-2022

Davis Center Book Prize Committee

Emily Channell-Justice, Harvard U, 2020-2022, Chair
Jeffrey Kopstein, UC Irvine, 2020-2022
Ola Onuch, U of Manchester (UK), 2020-2022

USC Book Prize Committee

Diane Nemeč Ignashev, Carleton College, 2019-2021, Chair
Louise McReynolds, UNC at Chapel Hill, 2021-2023
Jon Stone, Franklin and Marshall College, 2020-2022

Reginald Zelnik Book Prize Committee

Wendy Goldman, Carnegie Mellon U, 2020-2021, Chair
Barbara Engel, U of Colorado, 2021-2023
Ronald Suny, U of Michigan, 2021-2023

W. Bruce Lincoln Book Prize Committee

Erika Monahan, U of New Mexico/Dartmouth 2019-21, Chair
David Brandenberger, U of Richmond, 2021-2023
Christine Evans, U Wisconsin at Milwaukee, 2020-2022

Marshall Shulman Book Prize Committee

Jeff Hass, U of Richmond, 2018-2021, Chair
Nikita Lomagin, European U at St. Petersburg, 2021-2022
Jelena Subotic, Georgia State U, 2021-2023

Ed A Hewett Book Prize Committee

Doug Rogers, Yale U, 2019-2021, Chair
Gerald Easter, Boston College, 2019-2021
Sarah Wilson Sokhey, U of Colorado, 2020-2022

Barbara Jelavich Book Prize Committee

Kimberly Elman Zarecor, Iowa State U, 2019-2021, Chair
Theodora Dragostinova, Ohio State U, 2021, 2023-24
Sean McMeekin, Bard College, 2020-2022

Kulczycki Book Prize Committee

Piotr Kosicki, U of Maryland, 2020-2022, Chair
Malgorzata Mazurek, Columbia U, 2020-2022
Benjamin Paloff, U of Michigan, 2021-2023

Pritsak Book Prize Committee

Catherine Wanner, Penn State U, 2019-2021, Chair
Michael Naydan, Penn State U, 2019-2021
Steve Seegel, U of Northern Colorado, 2021-2023

Graduate Student Essay Prize Committee

Jovana Babovic, SUNY Geneseo, 2019-2021, Chair
Andrea Lanoux, Connecticut College, 2021-2023
Lauri Mälksoo, U of Tartu (Estonia), 2020-2022

Tucker/Cohen Dissertation Prize

Bruce Grant, New York U, 2020-2022, Chair
Matthew Lenoe, U of Rochester, 2019-2021
Valerie Sperling, Clark U, 2019-2021

GRANT/FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEES

ASEEES Dissertation Grant Committee

Katya Hokanson, U of Oregon, 2020-2022, Chair
Natalia Aleksion, Touro College, 2021-2023
Ben Noble, U College London (UK), 2020-2022

Cohen-Tucker Dissertation Fellowship Selection Committee

William Mills Todd III, Harvard U, 2019-2021, Chair
Diane Koenker, U College London (UK), 2019-2021
Susan Morrissey, UC Irvine, 2020-2022

Internship Grant Committee

Nina Murray, US Department of State, 2020-2022, Chair
Melissa Bokovoy, U of New Mexico, 2020-2022
Amb. Ian Kelly, Northwestern U, 2020-2022

Convention Opportunity Travel Grant and Diversity and Inclusion Travel Grant Committee

Roman Utkin, Wesleyan U, 2018-2021, Chair
Choi Chatterjee, CSU Los Angeles, 2020-2022
Lenny Urena Valerio, U of Florida, 2021-2023

Graduate Student Travel Grant Committee

Katherine Bowers, U of British Columbia (Canada), 2020-2022, Chair
Brian LaPierre, U of Southern Mississippi, 2020-2022
Lynn Lubamersky, Boise State U, 2019-2021

First Book Subvention Committee

Jane Costlow, Bates College, 2019-2021, Chair
Paul Hanebrink, Rutgers U, 2021-2023
David Ost, Hobart and Williams Smith Colleges, 2020-2022
Gwen Walker, U of Wisconsin, 2021-23 (non-voting member)

Regional Scholar Travel Grant Committee

Marina Mogilner, U of Illinois at Chicago, 2019-2021, Chair
Jan Musekamp, U of Pittsburgh, 2021-2023
Julia Vaingurt, U of Illinois at Chicago, 2020-2022

Russian Scholar Travel Grant Committee

Rossen Djagalov, NYU, 2020-2021, Chair
Julie Hessler, U of Oregon, 2021-2023
David Siroky, Arizona State U, 2019-2021



ASEEES Congratulates Affiliate Organizations' 2020 Prize Winners

ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN IN SLAVIC STUDIES

Outstanding Achievement Award

- **Esther Kingston Mann**, Professor Emerita, University of Massachusetts-Boston

Heldt Prize for Best Book by a woman in any area of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies

- **Jennifer Carroll**, *Narkomania: Drugs, HIV, and Citizenship in Ukraine* (Cornell University Press, 2019)
- **Honorable Mention: Jelena Subotić**, *Yellow Star, Red Star: Holocaust Remembrance after Communism* (Cornell University Press, 2019)
- **Honorable Mention: Lenny A. Ureña Valerio**, *Colonial Fantasies, Imperial Realities: Race Science and the Making of Polishness on the Fringes of the German Empire, 1840–1920* (Ohio University Press, 2019)

Heldt Prize for Best book in Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Women's and Gender Studies

- **Olga Peters Hasty**, *How Women Must Write: Inventing the Russian Woman Poet* (Northwestern University Press, 2019)

Heldt Prize for Best Article in Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Women's and Gender Studies

- **Allison Leigh**, "Il'ia Repin in Paris: Mediating French Modernism," *Slavic Review*, 78, 2 (2019): 434-55
- **Honorable Mention: Christine Varga-Harris**, "Between National Tradition and Western Modernisation: Soviet Woman and Representations of Socialist Gender Equality as a 'Third Way' for Developing Countries, 1956-1964," *Slavic Review*, 78, 3 (2019): 758-781

Mary Zirin Prize

- **Magdalena Moskalewicz**

Graduate Research Prize

- **Ivana Polić**, PhD Candidate in History at the University of California San Diego

Graduate Essay Prize

- **Marta Aleksandra Zboralska**, PhD, History of Art, University College London, "The Matter of Chatter"
- **Honorable Mention: Kamila Kociałkowska**, PhD, History of Art, University of Cambridge, "Early Avant-Garde Book Design and Imperial Censorship"

Undergraduate Essay Prize

- **Frankie Tulley**, University of Bristol, "The Performative Power of Discourse: What Role Does State-released Visual Culture Play in the Construction of Putin's Masculinity?"

EARLY SLAVIC STUDIES ASSOCIATION (ESSA)

Maria Grazia Bartolini, received the 2020 ESSA Publication Prize for her scholarly article, "Visible Rituals: Theology and Church Authority in the Iconography of the Seven Sacraments in Peter Mohyla's Trebnyk (1646)." *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 98, No. 1 (January 2020). Honorary mention went to **Tomasz**

Grusiecki for "Michał Boym, the Sum Xu, and the Reappearing Image." *Journal of Early Modern History* 23 (2019) 2.

SOCIETY FOR ROMANIAN STUDIES

The Twelfth Annual Graduate Student Essay Prize of 2020 was earned by **Cosmin Koszor Codrea**, doctoral candidate in the School of History, Philosophy and Culture at Oxford Brookes University, for his submission entitled "Mismeasuring diversity: Popularizing scientific racism in the Romanian Principalities around the mid-nineteenth century." Honorable mention was extended to **Cosmin Tudor Minea**, a postdoctoral research fellow at the New Europe College in Bucharest for his entry "Old buildings for modern times: The rise of architectural monuments as symbols of the state in late nineteenth-century Romania."

POLISH STUDIES ASSOCIATION

The recipient of the annual graduate student research prize is **Emily Roche**, who is a doctoral student in History at Brown University. Roche's dissertation, "No Second Troy: Trauma and Ideology in the Recreation of Warsaw, 1918-1968," focuses on the ways World War II and the Holocaust shaped the lives of Polish (Jewish and non-Jewish) architects and the subsequent changes in the tradition of Polish modernist architecture. She intends to use the award to conduct archival research this summer.

Forthcoming in *Slavic Review* Volume 79 Number 4 Winter 2020

ARTICLES

"Chekhov's Environmental Psychology: Medicine and the Early Stories" by Matthew Mangold

"The Wandering Orthodox Nuns: Religion and Gender in the Nineteenth-Century Central Balkans" by Evguenia Davidova

"Performing Glinka's Opera A Life for the Tsar on the Village Stage" by Julia Mannherz

"Airing Our Dirty Linen in Public": Lidia Chukovskaia, Nadezhda Mandel'shtam, and Competing Visions for a Liberal Soviet Counterpublic" by Lusya Zaitseva

"Resurrection by Surrogation: Spectral Performance in Putin's Russia" by Maksim Hanukai



Personages

Rachel Applebaum's book *Empire of Friends: Soviet Power and Socialist Internationalism in Cold War Czechoslovakia* (Cornell UP 2019) had been awarded the [2020 Radomír Luža prize](#) for an outstanding work in twentieth century Austrian or Czechoslovak history. The prize was awarded by Center Austria.

The MLA of America presented its thirteenth Lois Roth Award for a translation of a literary work to **Robert Chandler** and **Elizabeth Chandler** for their translation of Vasily Grossman's *Stalingrad*, published by New York Review Books. The Chandlers also received a 2020 Read Russia Prize Special Commendation.

Chris Chulos joined Towson University as the [Dean of the College of Liberal Arts](#) where he also a professor of history.

Robert Paul Geraci is now a Research Associate Professor in the International and Area Studies Library, with affiliations in the Department of History, the Graduate College, and the Russian, East European, and Eurasian Center at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. [This is a correction to the note in the October 2020 NewsNet. Apologies to Professor Geraci for the error.]

Paul Goode has been appointed the McMillan Chair in Russian Studies at the Institute of European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies (EURUS), Carleton University.

David L. Hoffmann was awarded Ohio State University's Ronald and Deborah Ratner Distinguished Teaching Award, which recognizes faculty who have exemplary records of engaging, motivating, and inspiring students as well as of making a difference in students' educations, lives, and careers.

Eileen Kane has been awarded a \$60,000 fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities to research and write a book on Jewish and Muslim emigration from Russia to the Middle East from the 1840s to the 1940s.

James Krapfl is now Editor-in-Chief of *Canadian Slavonic Papers*.

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) announced \$32.8 million in grants to support 213 humanities projects. Among the recipients of this year's funding was ASEEES member **Laurie Manchester** for her project: *From China to the USSR: The Return of the "True" Russians Project*, which supports research and writing leading to a book on the 1954 return of 100,000 Harbin Russians to the Soviet Union from China.

Thomas Ort also received NEH funding for his project: *The Afterlife of a Death: Meaning, Memory, and the Assassination of Reinhard Heydrich*, to support research and writing leading

to a book on the Nazi governor to Bohemia and Moravia and an architect of the Final Solution.

Each year the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America recognizes exceptional professional achievements through its awards program. The Institute congratulates its 2020 award recipients, among them, several ASEEES members.

- Susanne Lotarski Distinguished Achievement Award was presented to **Antony Polonsky**, Emeritus Professor of Holocaust Studies, Brandeis University, for exceptional achievement in Polish studies broadly defined.
- Oskar Halecki Polish History Award for the best book on Polish and East-Central European history was awarded to **Anna Müller**, University of Michigan-Dearborn, for *If the Walls Could Speak: Inside a Women's Prison in Communist Poland* (Oxford UP, 2018).
- Bronisław Malinowski Social Sciences Award, which recognizes a scholar in the social sciences who has written a book or seminal publication of particular value and significance dealing with an aspect of the Polish experience, was awarded to **Jeffrey S. Kopstein**, UC, Irvine and **Jason Wittenberg**, UC, Berkeley, for their book, *Intimate Violence. Anti-Jewish Pogroms on the Eve of the Holocaust* (Cornell UP, 2018).

Brandon Schechter was awarded the 2020 Paul Birdsall Prize for the American Historical Association for his work, *The Stuff of Soldiers: A History of the Red Army in World War II through Objects* (Cornell University Press, 2019).

Erik R. Scott was appointed as Editor of [The Russian Review](#) by the journal's trustees. He succeeds **Eve Levin**, who had been at the helm of the journal since 1996.

INDEX OF ADVERTISERS	
American Councils/ACTR Academic Fellowships	39
American Councils/ACTR Summer Language Fellowships	31
ASU Critical Language Institute	17
AWSS Herlihy Grad Research Prize Fund	14
Kritika/Slavica/ Three Strings Books	36
Monterey Summer Symposium in Russian	18

In addition to articles and news columns, NewsNet also features a limited number of advertisements from various organizations presenting scholarly publications, products, services, or opportunities of interest to those in the Russian, Eurasian, and Central European fields. Please contact newsnet@pitt.edu for rates, specs, and production schedule.



Publications

American Slavery and Russian Serfdom in the Post-Emancipation Imagination, by Amanda Brickell Bellows, was published by the University of North Carolina Press in June 2020.

The abolition of Russian serfdom in 1861 and American slavery in 1865 transformed both nations as Russian peasants and African Americans gained new rights as subjects and citizens. During the second half of the long nineteenth century, Americans and Russians responded to these societal transformations through a fascinating array of new cultural productions. Analyzing portrayals of African Americans and Russian serfs in oil paintings, advertisements, fiction, poetry, and ephemera housed in American and Russian archives, Bellows argues that these widely circulated depictions shaped collective memory of slavery and serfdom, affected the development of national consciousness, and influenced public opinion as peasants and freed people strove to exercise their newfound rights.

Magdalena Baran-Szołtys, Jagoda Wierzejska edited *Continuities and Discontinuities of the Habsburg Legacy in East-Central European Discourses since 1918* (Vienna University Press, January 2020).

In 1918 the Danube Monarchy ceased to exist and its provinces became parts of the Monarchy's successor states, which increasingly assumed the character of nation-states. The regimes of these countries were usually oblivious and/or hostile to remnants of the erstwhile Austrian rule due to ideological reasons: they treated them as traces of a superimposed imperial power and an alien – democratic, pluralistic, liberal – tradition. Notwithstanding that fact, erasing the Habsburg Empire from maps of Europe did not entail the entire cancelation of its legacy on the former Habsburg territories. Although officially neglected or suppressed, this legacy made itself felt, overtly or tacitly, in discourses present in the public sphere of the countries that superseded the Monarchy.

Bristol University Press published Laura Dean's book, *Diffusing Human Trafficking Policy in Eurasia*, in May 2020.

This book analyzes the development and effectiveness of public policies across Eurasia and explores the factors behind anti-trafficking strategies and the role of governments and activists in combating labor and sexual exploitation. Dean examines the intersection of global strategies and state-by-state approaches, and casts new light on the impetus and implementation of different policy typologies. Identifying the strengths, weaknesses, and best practices in human trafficking policies around Eurasia, Dean's book will appeal to a wide range of students, scholars, practitioners, and policy makers.

Green Horses on the Walls, by Cristina A. Bejan, was published by Finishing Line Press in May 2020.

This collection of poems capture Bejan's tortured love affair with the country her father escaped in 1969: Romania.

Like so many exiles and migrants around the world, there is a compulsion to return and to leave the homeland. Romania suffered a communist dictatorship for forty years, and these poems reveal the horrors and the inherited trauma that are products of such historical injustice. She also tackles the sensitive topics of mental health and sexual assault in an effort to fight the pervasive stigma surrounding both issues. And finally this is a book about love: family love, love of ancestors, mindless youthful mistakes, the realities of American dating, forbidden love, and finally true equal miraculous love. The collection includes 28 original poems by Bejan and two translations by Bejan of poems by Romanian poets Ana Blandiana and Nina Cassian. Bejan's poems are mostly in English, with Romanian and French making important appearances.

Institutionalised Dreams: The Art of Managing Foreign Aid, by Elżbieta Drażkiewicz, was published by Berghahn Books in January 2020.

Using examples from Poland, Drażkiewicz explores the question of why states become donors and individuals decide to share their wealth with others through foreign aid. She comes to the conclusion that the concept of foreign aid requires the establishment of a specific moral economy which links national ideologies and local cultures of charitable giving with broader ideas about the global political economy. It is through these processes that faith in foreign aid interventions as a solution to global issues is generated. The book also explores the relationship linking a state institution with its NGO partners, as well as international players such as the EU or OECD.

Duke University Press published *Journeys through the Russian Empire: The Photographic Legacy of Sergey Prokudin-Gorsky*, by William Craft Brumfield, in July 2020.

Brumfield began working with Prokudin-Gorsky's photographs in 1985. He curated the first public exhibition of them in the United States and has annotated the entire collection. In *Journeys through the Russian Empire*, Brumfield—who has spent decades traversing Russia and photographing buildings and landscapes in their various stages of disintegration or restoration—juxtaposes Prokudin-Gorsky's images against those he took of the same buildings and areas. In examining the intersections between his own photography and that of Prokudin-Gorsky, Brumfield assesses the state of preservation of Russia's architectural heritage and calls into question the nostalgic assumptions of those who see Prokudin-Gorsky's images as the recovery of the lost past of an idyllic, pre-Soviet Russia.

Psychomotor Aesthetics: Movement and Affect in Modern Literature and Film, by Ana Hedberg Olenina, was published by Oxford University Press in May 2020.

Olenina explores the effects of physiological psychology on art at the turn of the 20th century. The book explores its influence on not only art scholars and theorists,

wishing to understand the relationship between artistic experience and the internal processes of the mind, but also cultural producers more widely. *Psychomotor Aesthetics* calls attention to the cultural resonance of theories behind emotional and cognitive experience - theories with implications for today's neuroaesthetics and neuromarketing.

Wiktor Marzec's *Rising Subjects: The 1905 Revolution and the Origins of Modern Polish Politics* (University of Pittsburgh Press, May 2020) explores the change of the public sphere in Russian Poland during the 1905 Revolution. The 1905 Revolution was one of the few bottom-up political transformations and general democratizations in Polish history. It was a popular rebellion fostering political participation of the working class. The infringement of previously carefully guarded limits of the public sphere triggered a powerful conservative reaction among the commercial and landed elites, and frightened the intelligentsia. Polish nationalists promised to eliminate the revolutionary "anarchy" and gave meaning to the sense of disappointment after the revolution. This study considers the 1905 Revolution as a tipping point for the ongoing developments of the public sphere. It addresses the question of Polish socialism, nationalism, and antisemitism.

Edinburgh University Press published *Russia's New Authoritarianism: Putin and the Politics of Order*, by David G. Lewis, in March 2020.

Why did Russia's post-Soviet political system develop into a new form of authoritarianism? And how did its foreign policy come to pose such a profound challenge to the West? Lewis investigates these questions and the Russian understanding of concepts such as sovereignty, democracy and political community. He analyzes the Russian political system as a novel form of authoritarian political order, unpacking the ideological paradigm that underpins it. He reveals that Russia's new order is characterized by the consolidation of political and economic power around a sovereign leader, together with a willingness to take political decisions outside the law both at home and in international affairs.

Security Empire: The Secret Police in Communist Eastern Europe, by Molly Pucci (Yale University Press, July 2020) examines the history of early secret police forces in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany in the aftermath of the Second World War. Pucci delves into the ways their origins diverged from the original Soviet model based on differing interpretations of communism and local histories. She also illuminates the difference between veteran agents who fought in foreign wars and younger, more radical agents who combatted "enemies of communism" in the Stalinist terror in Eastern Europe.

Stalin's Niños: Educating Spanish Civil War Refugee Children in the Soviet Union, 1937-1951, by Karl D. Qualls, was published by the University of Toronto Press in February 2020.

Stalin's Niños examines how the Soviet Union raised and educated nearly 3,000 child refugees of the Spanish Civil War. An analysis of the archival record, letters, oral histories, and memoirs reveals that this little-known story exemplifies

the Soviet transformation of children into future builders of communism and illuminates the educational techniques shared with other modern states. Even during their horrific evacuation to the Soviet interior during World War II, the 22 Soviet boarding schools designed specifically for the Spanish refugee children served these displaced niños for 14 years and transformed them into Red Army heroes, award-winning Soviet athletes and artists, successful educators and workers, and aides to Fidel Castro in building Cuba after his revolution. *Stalin's Niños* also sheds new light on the education of non-Russian Soviet and international students and the process of constructing a supranational Soviet identity.

Vladimir Jabotinsky's Russian Years, 1900-1925, by Brian J. Horowitz, was published by Indiana University Press in May 2020.

In the early twentieth century, with Russia full of social strife and political struggle, Jabotinsky (1880-1940) was a Revisionist Zionist leader and Jewish Public intellectual. Horowitz focuses on Jabotinsky's commitments to Zionism and Palestine as he embraced radicalism and fought against antisemitism and the suffering brought upon Jews through pogroms, poverty, and victimization. Horowitz also defends Jabotinsky against accusations that he was too ambitious, a fascist, and a militarist. Horowitz delves into the years that shaped Jabotinsky's social, political, and cultural orientation.

Vladimir Sorokin's Discourses: A Companion, by Dirk Uffelmann, was published by Academic Studies Press in April 2020.

Uffelmann's book is the first English-language monograph about Vladimir Sorokin. It introduces the reader to Sorokin's works and will help both fans of Sorokin and his new readers to better understand the work of this mercurial author, who managed to build a bridge from the Russian literary canon of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries into the twenty-first century.

Congratulations to the Fall 2020 ASEEES First Book Subvention Recipients

Cornell University Press, *Snapshots of the Soul: Photo-Poetic Encounters in Modern Russian Culture* by Molly Thomas Blasing

McGill-Queen's University, *Restless History: Political Imaginaries and Their Discontents in Post-Stalinist Bulgaria* by Zhivka Valiavicharska

Northwestern University Press, *Word Play: Experimental Poetry and Soviet Children's Literature* by Ainsley Morse

There are two deadline each year, February 1 and September 1. For more information on the program, visit:

aseees.org/programs/firstbook-subvention



Institutional Member News

BARD-SMOLNY STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM SPRING INITIATIVES

Bard-Smolny Study Abroad Program announces several virtual initiatives for the Spring 2021 semester that allow students and faculty to continue to connect with their peers in St. Petersburg. All events are free and open to all those interested. <https://www.bard.edu/bardabroad/>

- [Bard-Smolny Peer Language Cafe](#) (Fridays at 20:30 MSK/ 12:30 PM EST) Join Smolny students to practice your Russian and discuss relevant topics. Weekly meetings resume February 12.
- [Bard-Smolny Trivia](#): February 11 at 12PM EST. Gather around your screens, and play solo or in a team of up to five people together with Smolny students. All questions are Russia-related, and you do not need to speak the language to participate.
- [Constitutional Changes and Regional Politics in Russia: 1993-2020](#): February 25 at 12PM EST with Pavel Kononenko
- [Russian Digital Art](#): March 10 at 12PM EST with Natalia Fedorova
- [Bard-Smolny Info Session](#): March 17 at 12PM EDT. Join Bard-Smolny Program staff to learn about opportunities available to students by spending a semester or year in St. Petersburg. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Bard-Smolny Study Abroad Program is closely monitoring information in order to determine when in person programming may resume safely. For more information, please visit <https://www.bard.edu/bardabroad/>
- [Cinema of the Thaw: Style, Narrative, and Modernity](#): March 31 at 12PM EDT. Olga Davydova (Assistant Professor, Faculty of Liberal Arts and Sciences (Smolny) of St. Petersburg University)

The Bard-Smolny Study Abroad Program is ready to help arrange talks by Smolny faculty to U.S. classes. If you are interested, please contact Michael Freese (mfreese@bard.edu).

THE KENNAN INSTITUTE AT THE WILSON CENTER Title VIII Fellowships

Please note that during the coronavirus outbreak, the Wilson Center and Kennan Institute will be postponing onsite meetings and events. They are working with awarded scholars to provide the option to either work remotely or to postpone start dates. Please visit <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/kennan-institute-fellowships-and-internships> for the latest updates.

Title VIII Research Scholarships

The Kennan Institute offers 3 to 9 month research fellowships for post-doctoral, early-stage scholars. Research proposals examining the countries of Eurasia are eligible. Those proposals related to regional Russia, Ukraine, Central Asia, Belarus, the Caucasus, and contemporary issues are particularly

welcome. You must be a U.S. citizen to apply. The deadline for the next research fellowship competition is January 31, 2021.

Title VIII Summer Research Scholarships

The Kennan Institute also offers two-month summer research fellowships for those holding an MA degree or higher. Scholars who conduct research in the social sciences or humanities focusing on Russia and the other countries of Eurasia, and who demonstrate a particular need to utilize the library, archival, and other specialized resources of the

2021 ASEES DISTINGUISHED CONTRIBUTIONS AWARD Call for Nominations

ASEES' Distinguished Contributions to Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies Award honors members who have made major contributions to the field. Distinguished Contributions may be conceived of in diverse ways, and ASEES seeks to recognize outstanding service, leadership, scholarship, mentoring, and public outreach. In particular, we hope to receive nominations that highlight noteworthy contributions to public understanding, contributions that innovate and transform the way we understand our regions and our disciplines, and leadership that opens our disciplines to new perspectives and encourages fresh voices in Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies.

NOMINATING INSTRUCTIONS

The Committee accepts nominations in writing or via e-mail from any ASEES member. The lead nominator should submit all documents and letters in one PDF file to the Committee Chair. The package should consist of:

- one nominating letter not exceeding 3 pages discussing the nominee's service, scholarship, mentoring and leadership; there is no limit to the number of signatories it may append;
- max. of 10 supporting letters of 2 pages each; letters must discuss evidence of the criteria categories;
- the candidate's full CV including publications, editorships, curatorships, awards and prizes; and service to ASEES and/or the profession.
- Self-nomination is not accepted.
- The Committee positively encourages nominations from ALL disciplines in SEES. It welcomes inclusive nominations that reflect the diversity of the profession, and the diversity of contributions colleagues can make.
- The Committee will seek to ensure a balanced pool of nominees and may survey the field for prospective award winners.

The deadline for nominations is April 1.

The winner of this award will be chosen by: Olga Shevchenko, Williams College, Chair, Eliot Borenstein, New York U, Choi Chatterjee, California State U, Los Angeles, Gerald Creed, Hunter College, Dan Healey, Oxford U (UK)

Washington, D.C. area should consider applying. You must be a U.S. citizen to apply. The deadline for the next research fellowship competition is January 31, 2021.

Title VIII Short-Term Scholarships

Title VIII-Supported Short-Term Grants allow scholars to spend up to one month using the library, archival, and other specialized resources of the Washington, D.C. area while in residence at the Kennan Institute. Applicants are required to hold an MA degree or higher, or demonstrate commensurate professional achievement. You must be a U.S. citizen to apply. The next deadline for these grants is March 1, 2021.

Please see our website for more details on the Title VIII-supported fellowship program: <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/fellowship-opportunities-and-internships>.

George F. Kennan Fellowships

George F. Kennan Fellows are based at the Wilson Center in Washington, D.C. for three-month residencies. Fellows will receive access to the Library of Congress, National Archives, and policy research centers in Washington, D.C., as well as the opportunity to meet with key experts and officials. While conducting research, the George F. Kennan Fellows are expected to actively participate in discussions with the policy and academic communities, including speaking engagements at the Wilson Center as well as potentially outside of Washington D.C., and attending meetings, conferences, and other activities organized by the Kennan Institute and Wilson Center. Upon

completion of the fellowships, the grantees become alumni, for whom Kennan will continue to offer opportunities for collaboration and engagement. There are no citizenship requirements for this grant.

Please note applicants have an option to apply for the fellowship as individuals or as part of a team. If applying as a team of two (or three) applicants, the applicants must be citizens of at least two different countries. The goal of such joint fellowships is to promote collaborative research projects among U.S., Russian, and Ukrainian experts.

George F. Kennan Fellowship Teams will: Produce joint paper(s) for policy-relevant publications; Present work at D.C., Russia, and/or Ukraine events; Conduct meetings and engage with policymakers in D.C.

Competitions for the fellowships will be held twice yearly with the following application deadlines: March 1 and September 1. Applicants must submit a completed application – please see our website for more details: <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/opportunity/george-f-kennan-fellowship>.

The Kennan Institute welcomes the following scholars:

Title VIII Research Scholars

- Jonathan Brunstedt, Assistant Professor History, Utah State University, “Entangled Defeats: The Soviet-Afghan War and the Shadow of Vietnam,” May 2021 – August 2021.
- Brandon Schechter, Elihu Rose Scholar in Modern Military History, NYU, “The Search for Salvation in the Second World War,” June 2021 – August 2021.

Summer 2021 Language Fellowships

Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad:

For intensive study of Russian in Moscow or Almaty, or Persian in Dushanbe.

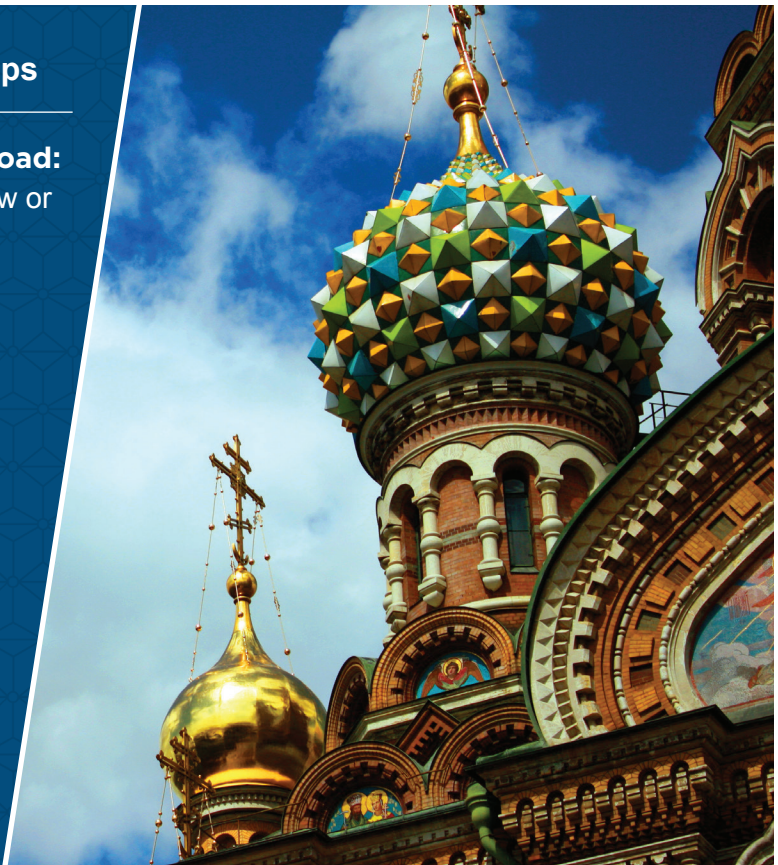
Awards range from \$2,900 to \$5,300

Title VIII Language Fellowships:

For graduate students of Russian, Balkan, and Eurasian languages.

Awards up to 75% of program cost

acStudyAbroad.org/ inancialaidoutbound@americancouncils.org



- Andrey Shlyakhter, Director of Education, Hermiona Education; Center Associate, Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University, “Smuggling Across the Soviet Borders: Contraband Trades, Soviet Solutions, and the Shadow Economic Origins of the Iron Curtain, 1917-1933,” January 2021 – September 2021.

- Lauren Woodard, Analyst, Government Accountability Office, “Russian State Mobilizations of Compatriots and Diasporas,” September 2021 – May 2022.

Title VIII Short-Term Research Scholars

- Kathryn Hendley, Professor of Law and Politics Science, University of Wisconsin-Madison, “The Potential for Young Lawyers to Reimagine the Role of the Legal Profession Under Authoritarianism: The Russian Case,” July 2021.

George F. Kennan Fellows

- Mehmet Kasikci, PhD Candidate and Teaching Associate, Department of History, Arizona State University, “Making Sense of Catastrophe: Experiencing and Remembering the Kazakh Famine,” March – May 2021.
- Andrew Monaghan, Director of Research on Russia, Oxford Changing Character of War Centre, Pembroke College, “The Importance of History to Contemporary Russian Ways of War,” January – April 2021.
- Marianna Muravyeva, Professor of Russian Law and Administration, University of Helsinki, “Defining Family Violence in the Courtroom: Performing Justice and Gender,” April – June 2021.

James Billington Fellow

- Yasha Klots, Assistant Professor of Russian, Hunter College (CUNY), “Tamizdat, the Cold War, and Contraband Russian Literature (1956-1991),” December 2020 – August 2021.

POLISH INSTITUTE TO MEET IN BIAŁYSTOK

Planning is underway for PIASA’s annual conference to convene at the University of Białystok on June 10-13, 2021. Proposals are solicited for complete sessions or individual papers in any of the disciplines in the liberal arts, sciences, or business/economics. The general theme of the conference is “Borderlands (Pogranicza),” for which Białystok, a city adjacent to Poland’s historic borderlands (kresy), is a most appropriate setting. Although topics on any relevant subject are welcome, we particularly seek proposals which address the multiethnic and contested nature of borderlands, realms where the mixing and unmixing of populations and cultures have occurred. Since PIASA values comparative sessions that place the Polish and East Central European experience in context, papers need not focus specifically on Poland or Polish themes. Similarly, sessions including presenters from more than one country are encouraged.

Each session is scheduled for 90 minutes to accommodate three 20-minute papers, with time left for discussion. The conference language is English. All conference rooms will be equipped with AV. Presenters are invited to submit their conference papers to be considered for possible

publication in *The Polish Review* after the conference.

To Submit a Proposal: Send the name, e-mail address, institutional affiliation, tentative paper title and brief one-paragraph abstract for each presenter to Prof. Patrice Dabrowski at pmd639@g.harvard.edu. The deadline is March 15, 2021. All participants are expected to pay the conference registration fee of \$80, discounted to \$40 for students.

PUSHKIN HOUSE BOOK PRIZE 2020 WINNER

Sergei Medvedev, a historian, writer and journalist, has won this year’s £10,000 Pushkin House Russian book prize for his work *The Return of the Russian Leviathan* on contemporary Russia.

The jury overseeing the Prize - awarded each year for the best non-fiction writing in English on the Russian-speaking world - singled out his work among six strong shortlisted finalists whose varied books covered culture, history, politics, science and the environment.

Medvedev is the first Russian-based author to win the prize. *The Return of the Russian Leviathan* was translated into English by Stephen Dalziel and it is published by Polity.

The backers of the prize, created in 2012, this year generously increased their support to allow the prize money to be doubled, reflecting the increasing importance of showcasing, rewarding and encouraging original, insightful and well written books on Russia and encouraging public understanding and intelligent debate around the country and its culture.

The panel of judges for the 2020 Pushkin House Russian Book Prize is chaired by Serhii Plokhyy, professor of Ukrainian history at Harvard University and twice winner of the Pushkin House Book Prize. Its other members are Celestine Bohlen, who teaches journalism at Science Po in Paris, is a contributor to *The New York Times* and former Moscow correspondent; Julia Safronova, associate professor and chair, Department of History of European University at Saint Petersburg University; and Richard Wright, former EU Ambassador to the Russian Federation and Director of the UN Agency for Palestine refugees.

TCUP VIRTUAL CONFERENCE: WHY IS UKRAINE A DEMOCRACY?

The first annual Temerty Contemporary Ukraine Program Conference will be held on Zoom from February 1-5, 2021. Addressing the theme of Ukraine’s democracy in the past, present, and future, the conference is distinct from typical academic conferences. Rather than presenting papers, panelists will respond to a set of questions provided in advance by the moderator. Each panelist will discuss the same questions based on his or her expertise, followed by an open discussion with participants. All panels feature a combination of scholars and policy practitioners, creating a space for dialogue that extends beyond academia. Dr. Francis Fukuyama will give the keynote address on Wednesday, February 3 at 12pm (EST). A series of four panels covering the implications of Ukraine’s history on contemporary events, civil society and mass mobilizations, institutions and reform, and displacement

and reconciliation will be spread throughout the week, one per day, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday (all events at 12pm EST; see the full schedule at <https://huri.harvard.edu/tcup-conference>. Registration is required to attend the online conference: Register here: https://harvard.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_IhiKuyVYRLCZ9K44TdXqYw.

UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM
TO HOST RESEARCH WORKSHOPS

Decentering Holocaust Studies: Comparative Perspectives from the Global South Research Workshop, July 26–August 6, 2021

The Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum invites applications for this research workshop co-convened with Nancy Nicholls Lopeandia, Pontifical Catholic University of Chile, and Yael Siman Druker, Iberoamericana University. The workshop will take place at the USHMM's Shapell Family Collections, Conservation and Research Center. If it is impossible to convene during those dates due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the workshop will be held in a hybrid format during the Summer and Fall of 2021, and an in-person program convened at the Museum for May 23–27, 2022.

Between 1933 and 1950, 100,000 refugees and Holocaust survivors immigrated to Latin America. Thousands more fled to mostly colonized spaces in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. These exiles re-created cultural and emotional communities, transferring European identities and experiences of Nazi persecution across oceans. Jewish communities in African countries were changed by events in Europe, while host communities in Asia were affected by the refuge they offered to Jewish escapees. Though these experiences of dispersion, displacement, and dislocation were a central lived experience for so many Jews and Roma at this time, their histories and those of their sites of refuge and escape have long figured as “marginal,” consigned to the periphery of the field of Holocaust studies. This workshop seeks to bring these histories into a wider scholarly frame in order to identify their commonalities and as well as the centrality of the margin.

Applications are welcome from scholars affiliated with universities, research institutions, or memorial sites and in any relevant academic discipline. Applications will be accepted from scholars at all levels of their careers. Scholars working at universities and research institutions in the Global South are particularly encouraged to apply.

Direct questions to Krista Hegburg, PhD, Senior Program Officer, International Academic Programs Division, Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies, at khegburg@ushmm.org. This Call for Applications is available at www.ushmm.org/decentering-holocaust-studies.

The Mandel Center will also co-convene a workshop entitled “The Holocaust and Asia: Refugees, Memory, and Material Culture” with Kimberly Cheng, Skirball, NYU, and Ran Zwigenberg, Asian Studies, Penn State University. The workshop

will take place at the USHMM's Shapell Family Collections, Conservation and Research Center. The workshop is scheduled for March 28–April 6, 2022 but may be held in a hybrid format.

In recent decades, the Holocaust has occupied an increasingly prominent place in Asian cultures of memory. Chinese intellectuals have called the Cultural Revolution their “Holocaust,” and both China and Japan have found and commemorated their own “Schindlers” (Ho Feng-Shan and Sugihara Chiune). Partition refugees in India/Pakistan have compared themselves to Jewish refugees, and memory activists across Asia have invoked Holocaust analogies in the region's never-ending history wars. Yet the Holocaust's impact on Asia was not just cultural. Many Asians witnessed the Holocaust firsthand, and tens of thousands of Jewish refugees fled through Asia. These Jewish refugees challenged Asians' conceptions both of the figure of the Jew and of the white man; both for Jews and Asians, their encounters with one another as racial others brought stark questions of identity, race, racism, gender, class, and colonial entanglements to the fore.

This workshop explores Jewish and Asian involvement in the Holocaust and its memory. The workshop examines the limits of the term “Holocaust” and its applicability across histories and cultures to account for the multifaceted ways the tragedy has reverberated beyond Europe. In doing so, we intend to delimit the existence of an Asian sub-field or an “Asian turn” within Holocaust studies. To identify the main lines of inquiry of this burgeoning field, the workshop will consist of presentations and roundtable discussions led by participants along three thematic tracks: 1) the experiences of refugees, 2) Asian cultures of memory, and 3) material culture.

Applications are welcome from scholars in any relevant academic discipline. Applications will be accepted from scholars at all levels of their careers. Scholars working in Asian academies, as well as scholars from underrepresented backgrounds in the field, are particularly encouraged to apply.

Direct questions to Krista Hegburg, PhD, Senior Program Officer, International Academic Programs Division, Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies, at khegburg@ushmm.org. This Call for Applications is available at www.ushmm.org/holocaust-asia.

The Mandel Center will reimburse travel costs/incidental expenses and will provide hotel accommodation. Participants will have access to the Museum's downtown campus and a number of other collections. Applications must be received by Monday, February 1, 2021. Applications must include an abstract of no more than 300 words outlining the specific project that the applicant plans to research and present in the workshop, and a short bio in English. The application forms are available at www.ushmm.org/research-workshops.

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH UNDERGRADUATE
RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

The Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies at the University of Pittsburgh invites applications from

undergraduate students for the 2021 Undergraduate Research Symposium in European and Eurasian Studies to be held online from May 11-13, 2021.

The Undergraduate Research Symposium is an annual event since 2002 designed to provide undergraduate students, from the University of Pittsburgh and other colleges and universities, with advanced research experiences and opportunities to develop presentation skills. The event is open to undergraduates from all majors and institutions who have written a research paper from a social science, humanities, or business perspective focusing on the study of Eastern, Western, or Central Europe, the European Union, Russia, or Central Eurasia.

Selected participants will be grouped into panels according to their research topics. The participants then give 10- to 15-minute presentations based on their research to a panel of faculty and graduate students. The presentations are open to the public. For more information, please contact REEES Engagement Coordinator Dr. Susan Dawkins at sad96@pitt.edu

THE TWENTIETH ANNUAL CZECH AND SLOVAK STUDIES WORKSHOP

This workshop will be held virtually at the University of Pittsburgh on March 18-21, 2021. The program committee welcomes proposals for papers on Czech and Slovak topics, broadly defined, in all disciplines. The Czech and Slovak Studies Workshop aims to bring together researchers, scientists, faculty members and advanced graduate students to exchange their experiences, research results, and ideas. New work in progress is appropriate for our workshop format. Each speaker is typically allotted a 50-minute slot divided between a presentation and active discussion.

This year's keynote speaker will be Pavol Demeš, an internationally recognized NGO leader who opened German Marshall Fund (GMF) of the United States office in Bratislava, Slovak Republic, in 2000 in order to oversee GMF's activities in Central and Eastern Europe.

The workshop is a collaboration of the University of Pittsburgh, the Czechoslovak Studies Association, and the Slovak Studies Association.

EVENTS AT THE ZIMMERLI

The Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers invites art lovers to come together this winter during a variety of free virtual programs on [Zimmerli at Home](#). Plus, visit the site to experience the museum's resources, including eMuseum, Make Art at Home, Art + Music, virtual backgrounds, online exhibitions, artist interviews, virtual events, staff favorites, and videos.

On Thursdays in January, view the film series *The History of Russian Design*. Beginning at 4:00pm (ET) each Thursday, each 20-minute episode of the documentary is followed by a live Q&A with *Everyday Soviet* co-curators Julia Tulovsky, Curator of Russian and Soviet Nonconformist Art at the Zimmerli, and Alexandra Sankova, Director of the Moscow Design Museum. Details and registration information will be

posted on go.rutgers.edu/zimmerlievents.

Art Together offers free family art activities either live on Zoom or recorded, on Zimmerli at Home. Register (up to the program start time) at go.rutgers.edu/arttogether. Artists of all ages are welcome, but sessions are best suited for ages 5 to 13, joined by their grown-ups. Recorded [sessions are posted](#) on Zimmerli at Home, including projects inspired by still life and collage works in the museum's collection, as well as the exhibition *Mood Books: The Children's Stories of Alvin Tresselt and Roger Duvoisin*.

Please note that first Tuesday programming for Art Before/After Hours returns on February 2, 2021. Recordings of previous events are available on Zimmerli at Home [Videos](#).

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Association for Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES), 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.

If you are interested in becoming an individual or institutional member, visit: <http://aseees.org/membership>

Announcements submitted to all regular columns are published free of charge. NewsNet frequently publishes unsolicited material. All submissions should be e-mailed to: newsnet@pitt.edu. **Deadlines for submissions (ads, articles, announcements)**

January issue—1 Dec; March issue—1 Feb; June issue—1 May; Aug issue—5 July; October issue—1 Sept

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Subscription to *NewsNet* is \$35 for US subscribers and \$60 for non-US subscribers. Prices include shipping. Single copies are \$7.00 each. To subscribe or order back issues, contact aseees@pitt.edu. Back issues are available up to two years only. Nonprofit postage paid at Pittsburgh, PA, and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: ASEEES, 203C Bellefield Hall, 315 S. Bellefield Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15260-6424.



In Memoriam

It is with great sadness that the University of Wisconsin-Madison announces the death of Professor Emeritus **James Orville Bailey, Jr.** on July 20, 2020. He was born in 1929 in La Junta, Colorado; after graduating from the University of Southern California, he served for several years in the US Army, studying Russian at the Army Language School in Monterey, California. Jim received his MA in Slavic Studies at Indiana University in 1958 and his PhD in Slavic Languages and Literatures from Harvard University in 1965. He taught in the Slavic Department at UW-Madison from 1967 until his retirement in 1995. He served at various times as Department Chair, Head of the Russian Area Studies Program, and Head of the Folklore Program, which he also helped to found in the early 1980s. Bailey published numerous articles and several books on folklore, and he collaborated on an anthology of translations of Russian epics. He helped to organize and also served as President of the Slavic and East European Folklore Association.

Donald Barton Johnson (UC Santa Barbara) passed away on August 25, 2020. Johnson was a Professor of Russian in the Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies for 25 years, before retiring in 1991.

Born on June 15, 1933, he received his PhD from UCLA in 1966 and joined UC Santa Barbara that same year. Johnson's work ranged from linguistics to literary studies, and he was devoted to the study of Vladimir Nabokov and Sasha Sokolov. He authored several books, including *Transformations and their Use in the Resolution of Syntactic Homomorphy* (Mouton, 1970), *Worlds in Regression: Some Novels of Vladimir Nabokov* (Ardis, 1985), and, with Gerald de Vries, *Vladimir Nabokov and the Art of Painting* (Amsterdam UP, 2006), as well as numerous chapters and articles.

Johnson served twice as the president of the International Vladimir Nabokov Society. In 1993, he created and launched NABOKV-L, an electronic discussion forum, and founded the annual print journal *Nabokov Studies*, which now awards the Donald Barton Johnson Prize. Thanks to his scholarly generosity, UC Santa Barbara has extensive archival and research materials related to Nabokov and Sokolov at Davidson Library and Special Research Collections. In 2016, UC Santa Barbara arranged a Nabokov symposium, exhibit, and performance in Johnson's honor. The Department will continue to honor his memory with the D. Barton Johnson Award for best critical scholarly essay by a student on Russian, East European, or Eurasian literature, art, and culture. *Excerpted from text provided by Sara Pankenier Weld, UC Santa Barbara*

With great sadness the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures at UAlbany reports that **Charles Rougle** (1946–2020), passed away peacefully on May 17, 2020. The field of Russian translation, especially academic translation, has lost a prolific and scrupulous practitioner of translation from multiple languages, who for many years gave an authoritative English voice to the latest achievements in Scandinavian Slavic studies. He was also a

scholar of Isaak Babel, modernism, utopianism, science fiction, and translation itself; the translator of novels by Valentin Kataev and Aleksandr Bogdanov; and intricate culturological works by Boris Groys and Magnus Ljunggren.

Excerpted from text provided by Timothy Sergay

Samuel Sandler, historian of Polish literature, died on August 2, 2020. Born on January 25, 1926 in Łódź, Sandler was a Holocaust survivor, imprisoned in Litzmannstadt. After studying sociology at the University of Łódź, he received his Ph.D. in Polish philology in 1951 from the University of Wrocław. From 1951 through 1969 he held positions at the Academy of Sciences in Warsaw; however his promotion to full professor was stopped by Władysław Gomułka, the 1st Secretary of the Central Committee of PZPR, whom Sandler criticized. In 1969, he left the Polish People's Republic in the aftermath of the anti-Semitic purges initiated by the Communist government. Sandler held positions at a number of universities before joining the University of Chicago Department of Slavic Languages & Literatures in 1972, where he remained until his retirement in 1995.

By 1959, Sandler had published five books and many articles, focusing on Bronisław Białobłocki, Adam Mickiewicz, Aleksander Świętochowski, and Andrzej Strug, among others. Between 1952-1969, Sandler co-edited three hundred volumes of the treasures of Polish and foreign literature, as well as literary criticism in the Polish book series *Biblioteka Narodowa*. As a specialist of 19th century Polish literature, he authored numerous books, especially about Bolesław Prus and Henryk Sienkiewicz. Sandler published on Joseph Conrad, Cyprian Kamil Norwid, and Świętochowski, and anchored the program in Polish literature. Active to the end of his life, he published his last major book project, a representative selection of Prus' journalistic writings, in 2006. In 2019, he donated his book collection to the University of Chicago Regenstein Library.

Excerpted from text provided by Bozena Shallcross

Edward "Ed" Wynot, Jr., Professor of History at Florida State University, passed away on August 12, 2020.

A native of New Hampshire, Wynot called Florida home for over 50 years. After finishing high school in Candia, NH, he went to Dartmouth College, graduating in 1965. He went to Indiana University-Bloomington where he received his MA and PhD in 1967 and 1970 in history. He was hired at Florida State that same year, where he stayed until his retirement in 2015. He was an expert on Eastern European history, especially Poland. He wrote five books and over thirty articles on the subject. One of Wynot's greatest accomplishments was helping to found the United Faculty of Florida, the faculty union. He was also the faculty advisor to Chi Omega.

Excerpted from his obituary.

NEW FROM SLAVICA PUBLISHERS

David M. Griffiths, *No Collusion! Catherine the Great and American Independence*, ed. George E. Munro, xvi + 717 p., 2020 (ISBN 978-0-89357-499-4), \$44.95.

The fledgling United States desperately needed more than its single ally, France, to pursue its war for independence. Unwilling to engage in traditional European diplomatic behavior, the Americans developed a concept of "militia diplomacy," under which merchants would be sent to foreign ports to initiate friendly trading relations. Not fully realizing Empress Catherine II's intention to maintain absolute neutrality in order to mediate peace between Great Britain and its breakaway colonies, the Americans sent to St. Petersburg, uninvited and unannounced, a would-be ambassador. The empress refused to collude in any way.

Charles J. Halperin. *Ivan IV and Muscovy*, viii + 409 p., 2020 (ISBN 978-0-89357-501-4), \$44.95.

In many ways Ivan the Terrible's personality and reign remain mysteries. This anthology will attempt to shed new light on a variety of issues related to Ivan's person and 16th-century Muscovy, including accounts of the *oprichnina* written by Germans in his service, intrafamilial strife and foreign slaves in Muscovite society, the role of clergy in the documentary life of the Muscovite laity, the Muscovite perception of the political culture of the Crimean Khanate, diplomatic relations between Ivan IV's Muscovy and Lithuania, coinage, Ivan and the *rusaskaia zemlia*, Ivan as a charismatic ruler, and a historiographical analysis of Ruslan Skrynnikov's *Tsarstvo terrora* and *Reign of Terror*.



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Vol. 22, no. 1 (Winter 2021)

Articles

SAMUEL J. HIRST
Comrades on Elephants

ROBERT DALE
Remobilizing the Dead

ERIN HUTCHINSON
Ivan Denisovich on Trial

Documents and Source Analysis

ARTEMY M. KALINOVSKY AND ISAAC SCARBOROUGH
The Oil Lamp and the Electric Light

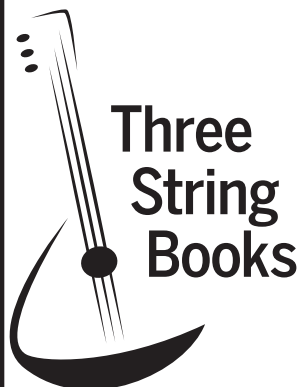
Review Article

PATRYK REID
The Lands beyond the Rivers

Review Essays

JULIA LEIKIN
From Comparative to Entangled Histories

SARAH MATUSCHAK
In Apollo's Sphere



Pavol Rankov, *It Happened on the First of September (or Some Other Time)*, trans. Magdalena Mullek, viii + 267 p., 2020 (ISBN 978-089357-502-1), \$29.95.

Winner of the European Union Prize for Literature.

"It's where we've ended up. Not because of our own mistakes, because of politics. We weren't able to live our own lives; we had to live the way we were told." —Maria (excerpt from book)

"*It Happened on the First of September* is a novel with epic sweep yet without the epic length as both the years it covers and its action fly by. Though much of the book deals with history's bleaker chapters, the novel is a page turner filled with humor, vibrant writing, and hope." —Michael Stein, *Literalab, BODY*



Affiliate Group News

AATSEEL CONVENTION UPDATES

AATSEEL's program for the 2021 virtual conference is now available! They have also composed a list of [Special Events](#) and encourage you to check out this year's thematically-linked [streams of panels](#) as well.

[Registration is open](#) and AATSEEL encourages [members to renew and welcomes new members to join](#) in order to pay the reduced registration rate for members. Membership has many benefits and includes a subscription to the *Slavic and East European Journal*.

AATSEEL hopes you'll register and join virtually for the main conference weekend, Thursday, February 25th, 2021 through February 28th, 2021. A few select panels will be offered on Saturday, February 20th, 2021 to provide participants an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the virtual conference platform and Zoom prior to the main conference weekend. Questions? Please write to Dr. Rachel Stauffer, AATSEEL's Conference Manager (aatseelconference@usc.edu).

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR UKRAINIAN STUDIES PRIZE

American Association for Ukrainian Studies (AAUS) invites nominations (including self-nominations) for the next round of the AAUS Book, Article, and Translation Prizes. For this round, works published in 2019 and 2020 are eligible (as long as they were not nominated last year, as each work can be considered for a prize only once). Nominations must be received by the prize committee members by February 15, 2021.

The AAUS Book Prize is awarded for the best scholarly monograph-length work in the field of Ukrainian history, politics, language, literature and culture published in English, preferably by a single author, but by no more than two. Textbooks, collections, bibliographies, reference works, and self-published books are ineligible. English translations of scholarly monographs published initially in another language will be considered on a case-by-case basis, but will generally not receive highest priority unless their content represents a major contribution to Ukrainian studies.

The AAUS Article Prize is awarded for the best article-length work in the field of Ukrainian history, politics, language, literature and culture published in English. Journal articles in peer-reviewed academic journals and chapters in scholarly collections are eligible.

The AAUS Translation Prize is awarded for the best translation into English of a book-length literary work originally published in Ukrainian.

Please submit nominations via the AAUS website by clicking on the relevant link to nominate a book, article or translation for the AAUS Prize. Copies or e-copies of nominated books (monographs and translations) must be sent to all relevant prize committee members. Works nominated for the Article Prize need to be submitted and uploaded via the website. Please direct any questions to the respective committees at book_prize@ukrainianstudies.org, article_prize@ukrainianstudies.org, [\[ukrainianstudies.org\]\(http://ukrainianstudies.org\). Prize winners will be announced during the ASN Convention at Columbia University, New York \(6-8 May, 2021\).](mailto:translation_prize@</p></div><div data-bbox=)

CENTRAL EURASIAN STUDIES SUMMER INSTITUTE

The Central Eurasian Studies Summer Institute (CESSI) typically offers courses in Kazakh, Tajik, Uyghur, and Uzbek. Additional Central Eurasian languages (such as Azeri or Kyrgyz) may be added with sufficient student interest.

Several funding opportunities exist for students, researchers, and working professionals. Graduate students (including incoming students), post-baccalaureate researchers, and professionals who are U.S. citizens are especially encouraged to apply for the Title VIII fellowship, which covers full tuition plus a stipend of \$2,500 for the summer. Note: this is a great opportunity for incoming MA and PhD students to develop language skills before embarking on fieldwork.

CESSI is an intensive, eight-week language program held each summer in Madison, Wisconsin. Students receive the equivalent of one year of language study during this time and earn eight credits upon completion of the program. In addition to language classes, CESSI students have the opportunity to attend lectures on Central Eurasia; participate in cultural events; engage with local Central Eurasian communities; and network with other scholars of Central Eurasia. Students of all disciplines and academic programs are welcome!

The priority application deadline is February 1, 2021. CESSI will be regularly posting information/application deadlines to the CESSI Facebook page ([@CessiMadison](https://www.facebook.com/CessiMadison)) and CESSI Instagram ([@uwcessi](https://www.instagram.com/uwcessi)). For more information, please visit cessi.wisc.edu or contact cessi@creeca.wisc.edu.

CENTRAL SLAVIC CONFERENCE VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

March 11– 13, 2021

In a departure from past practice, this conference will be entirely virtual and will not take place at the Missouri Athletic Club and Hotel in St. Louis, as happened in recent years. Conference organizers will leverage the virtual platform with the aim of generating dynamic exchanges in new and exciting ways. Conference fees are \$25 for faculty and \$10 for students.

Graduate students who present at the CSC Annual Meeting are invited to participate in the Charles Timberlake Graduate Paper Prize competition: Dedicated to the memory of Charles Timberlake as a teacher and mentor, the prize carries a cash award.

Please join CSC for what promises to be an engaging event. The CSC exists to encourage new talent in a supportive, collegial atmosphere. Be a part of the CSC's amazing journey.

CSA PECH PRIZE COMPETITION EXTENDED

The Czechoslovak Studies Association (CSA) is pleased to announce that it is extending the competition for the Stanley Z. Pech Prize for 2020. The Pech prize honors a peer-reviewed article or book chapter dealing with the history of Czechoslovakia, its predecessor and successor states or

provinces, or any of its peoples within and without its historic boundaries. To be eligible for consideration in this cycle, the publication must have appeared in English in print or online in calendar years 2018 or 2019.

The Pech Prize Committee accepts submissions from all academic disciplines, if they contain a substantial historical component. Authors should be CSA members when they submit their publications. To submit an article for consideration for the Pech Prize, please email an electronic copy of your own work or that of a colleague no later than May 1, 2021 to the any member of the Pech Prize Committee: Hugh L. Agnew, [agnew\(at\)gwu.edu](mailto:agnew(at)gwu.edu); Todd Huebner, [thuebner\(at\)verizon.net](mailto:thuebner(at)verizon.net); Thomas W. Ort, [Thomas.Ort\(at\)qc.cuny.edu](mailto:Thomas.Ort(at)qc.cuny.edu)

The prize, as well as an honorable mention citation if awarded, will be formally announced at the 2021 ASEES Convention, during CSA's annual meeting.

2021 MIDWEST SLAVIC CONFERENCE

April 15-18, 2021 / ONLINE CONFERENCE

This year, the conference will be an online conference that will give participants the opportunity to present panels in live, virtual sessions or individual papers at virtual afternoon blogging/discussion sessions.

Proposals are welcome from students, faculty, and independent scholars from across the Midwest, the U.S., or overseas. Panels and papers may be on any topic related to the Eastern European and Eurasian regions and from any discipline. Please note that Midwest Slavic will not be forming panels this year, participants must either create their own panel, or submit an individual paper! All proposals are due by February 1, 2021.

Conference registration is required to participate as a presenter or attendee but is free. More information is available at the conference website: <https://u.osu.edu/mwsc2021/>

Panel/Roundtable: Participants can propose a panel or roundtable that consists of 3-4 participants. Panels and roundtables will be held on Saturday, April 17 or Sunday, April 18 live via ZOOM. To submit a proposal: Send a 1-page abstract that includes the name, honorific, and affiliation of each presenter, as well brief a CV, in a single PDF file to csees@osu.edu.

Individual Papers: Participants who are not presenting as part of a panel can opt to participate in the Friday afternoon blogging/discussion session either by pre-recording themselves giving a 15-minute (maximum) video presentation, or submitting an 8-10 page conference paper. On Friday, April 16, from 1:00-5:00PM EDT, all conference attendees and participants will be invited to log-in to the conference webpage where pre-recorded presentations and papers will have been posted 1-week in advance. Presentations and papers will be grouped by subject area and given a specific 1-hour timeslot that afternoon. All conference attendees and presenters will be able to review papers, presentations, and then interact with each other via a live blog and Zoom meeting room specific to each subject area. Moderators or discussants will not be present. To submit a proposal: Send a 1-paragraph abstract with the name, honorific, and affiliation of the presenter, presentation format (pre-recorded presentation or paper), and a brief CV in a single PDF file to csees@osu.edu.

PSA VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

Modalities of Resistance: Polish Social Protest Across the Generations, March 4-5, 2021

Over the past several years, Poles from across the country have taken to the streets in unprecedented numbers, contesting and supporting a widening array of political and social issues. They have marched for (and against) refugee asylum, gender equality, LGBTQ rights, school reform, access to reproductive services, agricultural vs. animal rights, censorship, Sunday closings, and the packing of the Constitutional Tribunal, to name a few. National and religious holidays, historical anniversaries such as the 2010 Smolensk plane crash, and election results have become moments of spontaneous or orchestrated demonstrations, often pitting opposing sides against one another in urban spaces. Echoes of these public spectacles have brought Polonia into the streets in simultaneous events across the globe.

Social protests and politically tinged parades or celebrations are time honored strategies that have been employed strategically throughout Polish history and that were instrumental in bringing down the communist regime in 1989. This jointly sponsored UIC and Polish Studies Association conference will focus on the rhetorical tools and language that

A New ASEES Interest Group: Working Group on Drama and Performance

The Working Group on Drama and Performance became a new interest group of ASEES in November, 2020. It is a forum for scholars who study the past and present of Eastern European and Eurasian national and transnational drama as well as movements and practices in the performing arts more broadly. It also unites researchers interested in applying the theories and methods of Performance Studies to the analysis of political, social, and cultural processes in the region. Additionally, the Group hopes to develop into a hub where scholars share best practices of integrating diverse aspects of drama and performance into teaching.

The Group's co-convenors are Susanna Weygandt (Sewanee: The University of the South) and Tatiana Klepikova (University of Toronto). Feel free to reach out if you have any questions about the group and its activities.

If you are interested in joining the group, look to Facebook (Working Group on Drama and Performance, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/dramaperformance>) or sign up for updates on Google groups (<https://groups.google.com/g/wg-drama-performance>).

Stay tuned for the launch of the group's virtual platform that will feature conference announcements and news about recent publications, syllabi for teaching drama and performance in Russian, Eastern European, and Eurasian Studies, as well as multiple resources on research and practice of drama and performing arts in the region!

marchers have used in their demonstrations and on the ways social memory, symbolic forms, and spaces have influenced the ways Poles gather.

The PSA conference will be held via Zoom through the University of Illinois at Chicago. Participation is limited to current members of the Polish Studies Association.

CfS: SEEFA STUDENT PRIZES

The Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Folklore Studies Association (SEEFA) is hosting a prize competition for the Best Undergraduate Research Paper (\$50 honorarium) and Best Graduate Research Paper (\$100 honorarium).

Winning papers will be considered for publication in SEEFA's peer-reviewed journal, *Folklorica*. Eligible submissions must be grounded in the disciplines of folkloristics, ethnology or related fields and based on original research connected to any region of Eastern Europe, Eurasia or its diaspora. Submissions must have been written for a university course within the 12-month period preceding the submission deadline of May 31.

Submissions must include: A copy of the paper formatted according to the *Folklorica* style sheet <https://journals.ku.edu/folklorica/about/submissions#stylesheet>, with the author's name removed from the paper to ensure blind adjudication; A cover sheet including the title as well as the name of the author, instructor, course and institution for which the paper was written (indicate if the paper has been published or submitted for publications); a short CV or biographical statement; a note from an Instructor/Supervisor endorsing the submission (this should be emailed directly by the Instructor/Supervisor separately from the rest of the package). Application packages should be emailed

as PDF documents to President of SEEFA, Dr. Mariya Lesiv, mlesiv@mun.ca, and include "SEEFA Graduate Student Paper Prize" or "SEEFA Undergraduate Student Paper Prize" in the subject line. Winners will be announced at the SEEFA's annual meeting during the ASEES convention.

CfP: THE 2021 WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SLAVIC STUDIES CONFERENCE

Held under the auspices of the Western Social Science Association's 63rd Annual Conference held virtually, due to COVID-19 restrictions April 12 – 25, 2021. The conference will accept proposals for: Live ZOOM sessions (paper presentations, roundtables, workshops); Recorded sessions; Hybrid sessions (Recorded sessions, with a scheduled online Q&A session during 2nd week); Document-only papers (not attached to any other format).

Proposals must be submitted at the link below, by January 29, 2021. For more information and the portal to submit your contribution, see the WSSA website at: <http://www.WSSAweb.com/sections>. The group encourages student participation. The best graduate paper wins a prize and will be eligible for the graduate student paper prize sponsored by ASEES. Please follow the instructions for submissions under the "Slavic and Eurasian Studies" section. Deadline for submission is 29 January 2021. Papers from any academic discipline covering the range of Slavic and Eurasian Studies will be accepted.

For questions, email Robert Niebuhr at robert.niebuhr@asu.edu. CfP online: <https://westernslavic.asees.hcommons.org/calls-for-papers/>

ACADEMIC FELLOWSHIPS IN RUSSIA

Provided by a grant from Carnegie Corporation of New York, Academic Fellowships in Russia supports U.S. graduate students, faculty, and independent scholars as they conduct field research for three to nine consecutive months on topics within the social science disciplines in Russia. Applications due **February 15th**.

Learn more:

acResearchAbroad.org/afr
outbound@americancouncils.org





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