



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

THE PRINCESS DASHKOVA RUSSIAN CENTRE

APRIL – JUNE 2017 NEWSLETTER

19 Buccleuch Place,
EH8 9LN, Edinburgh,
Tel: 0131 650 84 10

4 April, 2017, Issue 2

May Events

Loaded Words: A Discussion of Contemporary Russian Propaganda
Time: Tuesday 9th May, 18.00-20.00
Venue: The Scottish Parliament

Katya Rogatchevskaia: 'Liberty and Revolution: Russia 1917 Revisited' – an exhibition at the British Library
Time: Wednesday 24th May, 17.00-18.00
Venue: Princess Dashkova Russian Centre

Ilya Kalinin: Open research seminar
Time: Tuesday 30th May, 17.00-18.00
Venue: Princess Dashkova Russian Centre

June Events

Londongrad and Londongradians: Identities, imaginaries, and cultural practices of Russians in the UK
International workshop
Time: Friday/Saturday 16th/17th June
Venue: TBA



News

This semester, the Princess Dashkova Russian Centre has continued with its versatile programme of academic and cultural events. Having settled into our temporary premises at 19 Buccleuch Place while our home at 14 Buccleuch Place is undergoing significant renovations, we were able to welcome a visiting delegation from South Urals State Humanitarian and Pedagogical University there on 13 February.

In January and February, we welcomed Ilya Yablokov from Leeds University who was speaking on conspiracy theories and the media.

Derek Averre, a specialist in Russian foreign and security policy from Birmingham University, came to talk both at the University and at the meeting of the Cross-Party Group on Russia at the Scottish Parliament on 9 February. Dr Averre spoke on Russia's policy concerning Syria and Ukraine. To add to our Politics strand, on 17 February Edwin Bacon from Birkbeck College, University of London, gave a talk on the Russian election of 2016 and the upcoming presidential elections, while Kataryna Wolczuk (Birmingham) offered her insight into the current situation in Ukraine. March was the month to continue with a poetic and literary theme which has been prominent throughout this year, as we hosted three more events. On 5 March, we reached out to the Scottish Russian-speaking community when around over 150 young poetry enthusiasts and their families and supporters gathered to take part in a lively poetry competition, the First Scottish Russian Schools Poetry Competition. On 14 March we collaborated with British Council and the Scottish Poetry Library to organize a wonderful poetic feast, the 'Sonnets Exchange'. Two weeks later on 28 March, we hosted a fascinating evening with the renowned writer Tatyana Tolstaya. In the same week, our centre manager Gesine Argent and postgraduate student and public outreach coordinator Mikhail Vodopyanov presented their research at the annual BASEES conference in Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge.

Upcoming Events

May 2017

Loaded Words: A Discussion of Contemporary Russian Propaganda

Time: Wednesday, 9th May, 18:00-20:00

Venue: The Scottish Parliament, Committee Room 4, Horse Wynd, Edinburgh EH99 1SP



Russia's increasingly assertive way of promoting globally its vision of the world order has emerged as one of the most urgent issues of today's politics. While some commentators agree that we live in an age of weaponization of information and influence operations conducted on an unprecedented scale, others point out that there is nothing new in the tactics of creating a 'fog of falsehood' dating from as far back as at least the First World War. How does the

Kremlin-controlled media originate, transmit and promote its favoured narratives directed at international audiences? What tools and strategies are in use for the purposes of persuading and influencing, including those provided by the communication technologies of the 21st century? And what are the consequences of these developments for Scotland, chosen as a base for 'Sputnik' – a major Russian propaganda agency?

The discussion panel includes Professor Luke March (University of Edinburgh), Dr Lara Ryazanova-Clarke (University of Edinburgh), Ben Nimmo (Atlantic Council Digital Forensic Research Lab), Dr Andras Rasz (Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Budapest), Floriana Fossato (Centre for Media and Society, Russia and Oxford) and Jakub Kalensky (East StratCom Task Force (EU)).

Admission to this event is strictly by invitation only, due to security reasons and limited space. To apply for your invitation, please follow the link:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/loaded-words-a-discussion-of-contemporary-russian-propaganda-tickets-33390350437>



Katya Rogatchevskaia

Katya Rogatchevskaia (Lead Curator, East European Collections, British Library): 'Liberty and Revolution: Russia 1917 Revisited' – an Exhibition at the British Library

Time: Wednesday, 24th May, 17:10-18:00

Venue: The Dashkova Centre, 19 Buccleuch Place

To commemorate the centenary of the 1917 Russian Revolution, the British Library is drawing on its rich collection and some unique loans to recount one of the 20th century's most compelling historical events in an exhibition which focuses on the traumatic and extraordinary lives of ordinary Russian people. Dr Rogatchevskaia will introduce this varied collection and demonstrate how this varied collection takes visitors on a fascinating journey from the final days of Russia's last Tsar to the rise of the world's first communist state. For more information on the exhibition at the British Library, see <http://support.bl.uk/Page/Liberty-and-revolution-Russia-1917-Revisited>

Ilya Kalinin: Open Research Seminar

Time: Tuesday 30 May, 17:10-18:00

Venue: The Dashkova Centre, 19 Buccleuch Place

We are very pleased to announce that Ilya Kalinin (Smolny College, St Petersburg State University) will return to the Princess Dashkova Centre to give a talk at our Open Research Seminar. Dr Kalinin is Associate Professor in the Department of Liberal Arts and Sciences (Smolny College) at St Petersburg State University and Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Neprikosnovennyi Zapas: Debaty o politike i kul'ture*. He was a Calvert-Smolny Fellow in the Dashkova Centre in 2014-15.



June 2016

International Workshop 'Londograd and Londogradians: Identities, imaginaries, and cultural practices of Russians in the UK'

Time: Friday 16 June-Saturday 17 June

Venue: TBA



This workshop is organised within the AHRC-funded, Edinburgh University based project 'Global Russians: Transnational Russophone Networks in the UK'. The project is part of the 'Cross-language Dynamics: Reshaping Communities' OWRI Consortium programme.

The 'Global Russian' is a new emerging type of transnational identity and Britain presents one of the most significant world stages where this identity is imagined, constructed and performed. With the number of Russian speaking migrants reaching almost half a million, Russian diasporic and transcultural spaces and networks are making an increasingly prominent mark on the British multilingual and multicultural map – from dedicated art auction houses, costume balls and festivals to hundreds of schools, societies, restaurants, clubs, and internet sites. Moreover, the visibility of Russians in the UK has been augmented in many art and media forms: television

documentaries, series, fiction and non-fiction writing, films, and newspaper columns which intently observe and comment on their collective life. The workshop aims to explore the imaginaries of 'Londograd' – the British spaces populated and inflected by Russians. It will deal with the representation of the Russian presence in the UK, focusing on such cultural and media productions. What does it mean to be a 'global Russian' living in Britain? How do the various art and media forms capture the life of Russians in the UK? How do these forms mediate the language, experiences, behaviour and cultural practices, loyalties, and other attributes of 'global Russians'? And do these representations have a community building potential, contributing to the

continuing disporisation of Russians, to the development of Russophone networks and of the transnational interactions between Russians and the host culture?

The workshop will address these and other relevant questions by bringing together academics, writers, script writers, journalists and actors who have worked on the creation of the imaginaries of the Russian community of 'Londongrad'.

Reporting on our events



Open Dashkova Research Seminar Ilya Yablokov: Russian Media and Conspiracy Theories

Ilya Yablokov (University of Leeds) investigated the phenomenon of conspiracy theories as a populist tool of power relations in his talk on the Russian media on 25 January. He spoke on the significance of RT and Sputnik in the present time but also delved deep into the early post-Soviet history of the Russian media and media legislation, and showed how media outlets can become a sophisticated public diplomacy tool.

Derek Averre, University of Birmingham: Cross-Party Group on Russia, Scottish Parliament

Derek Averre, Reader in Russian Foreign and Security Policy at the Centre for Russian, European and Eurasian Studies at the University of Birmingham, gave a lunchtime talk on 9 February on Russian foreign policy concerning Ukraine and Syria, and later spoke at a meeting of the Cross-Party Group on Russia at the Scottish Parliament, explaining Russia's foreign and security policy and economic interests.





Party	%	Seats	Single Seats	Total Seats	Total Seats %
United Russia	54	140	205	345	76
CPRF	13	35	32	67	15
LDPR	13	34	29	63	14
A Just Russia	6	16	19	35	8

Edwin Bacon, Birkbeck, University of London: The 2016 Russian Elections & the Aftermath (in collaboration with Transatlantic Seminar series)

In his talk on the Russian elections on 17 February, Edwin Bacon explained key features of the Russian electoral system and examined why there has not been a single change of regime in Russia since the adoption of a democratic system. The audience learned what function the elections have for the regime and for the opposition, what the results of the 2016 parliamentary election tell us, and what might be expected from the 2018 presidential election, in a complex polity that cannot be reduced to the figure of the president alone.

Russian Schools Poetry competition

On 5 March, The Dashkova Centre hosted the first Scottish Russian Schools Poetry Competition. The event, co-organized by the East European Centre, was a great success and is set to become an annual event. The Screening Room was full to capacity as the Russian-speaking community gathered to hear dozens of children reciting poems in Russian, including some of the most famous lines of Russian verse by Pushkin, Lermontov and Tiutchev. Congratulations to everyone taking part, particularly the prizewinners!



Kataryna Wolczuk



Professor Kataryna Wolczuk of the University of Birmingham analysed EU-Ukraine relations in a talk on 9 March by looking at different types of boundaries of order – various disjunction that the EU (de-)constructs with non-EU countries in Europe. She focused on geopolitical, legal and cultural boundaries, and the role of the domestic regime in Ukraine and the role of Russia in re-shaping the EU's relations with Ukraine.

Scotland-Russia Sonnets Exchange

The Princess Dashkova Centre collaborated with British Council and Scottish Poetry Library to host a stimulating poetry evening on 14 March, as Russian poets Marina Boroditskaya, Grigory Kruzikov and Lev Oborin visited their Scottish colleagues Christine De Luca, Jen Hadfield, and Stewart Sanderson for the second leg of the Scotland-Russia Sonnets Exchange project under the auspices of the British Council. The poets had come together in Russia in the autumn for a workshop: using Shakespeare's sonnets as a stepping-off point, they translated the work of their counterparts into Russian, English and Shetlandic. The event hosted by the Dashkova Centre re-united the Scottish and Russian poets to share their new poems and translations with an extremely appreciative audience for the first time, along with their reflections on the challenges, rewards and revelations of the translation process, and how Shakespeare's Sonnets continue to enrich the poetry of today.

The Russian Word in Scotland: An evening in conversation with Tatyana Tolstaya



Tatyana Tolstaya visited the Dashkova Centre for a highly entertaining evening on 28 March. Arguably the most well-known contemporary writer and public intellectual in Russia, Tatyana Tolstaya talked of her Tolstoy family history, her early life, how she became a writer, the writing process and seeing her work in translation. Tatyana Tolstaya, according to *The Washington Post*, is "considered by many critics and writers to be the foremost writer of her generation, a miniaturist whose

stories combine the linguistic stardust of Vladimir Nabokov and the emotional wisdom of Anton Chekhov". Her contribution in Edinburgh certainly confirmed this yet again.

News

PhD Scholarship in Russian

The School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures at the University of Edinburgh is delighted to invite applications for a fees-only PhD scholarship in the area of Russian studies.

The successful candidate will join an AHRC funded Open World Research Initiative (OWRI) research project led by Dr Lara Ryazanova-Clarke and titled **'Diasporic and Transnational Russophone Networks in the UK: in Search for Global Russians'**. The project feeds into a large multidisciplinary and multi-institutional research consortium "Cross-Language Dynamics: Reshaping Community" (CLDRC) headed by Professor Steven Hutchings of the University of Manchester and funded by a £4m grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. For more information visit:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/literatures-languages-cultures/graduate-school/fees-and-funding/funding/phd-students/russian-phd-scholarship>

We're on the Web!

Follow us on Facebook for regular updates of news and events.

<https://www.facebook.com/DashkovaCentre>



The Dashkova Centre is on Twitter! You can follow us on [@DashkovaCentre](https://twitter.com/DashkovaCentre)

To become a friend of the Dashkova Centre please contact Dashkova.Centre@ed.ac.uk

The Princess Dashkova Russian Centre

The University of Edinburgh

19 Buccleuch Place, EH8 9LN, Edinburgh, Tel: 0131 650 84 10

Dashkova.Centre@ed.ac.uk