

Editorial

The 2020-2021 Editorial Team

Serian Carlyle, Editor-in-Chief

Claudia Griffiths, Managing Editor

Pippa Crawford, Social Media Editor

Jordan Meggs, Film Editor

Mira Nichani, Book Editor

Anna Sneidermane, General Editor

I am very pleased to share the Autumn 2021 edition of Slovo with you all. This issue brings my term as Editor-in-Chief to an end, and I am delighted to be able to share everything that the team has been working on. My last Editorial touched on Slovo's responsibility as regards accessibility and equity in our field. We believe that good research is diverse, inclusive, and accessible. We stand in solidarity with those experiencing oppression and discrimination. I am therefore delighted that since then, we have been able to publish our [statement on diversity and inclusivity](#). I have been very heartened to see the conversations about anti-oppression become more widespread across our field and I am incredibly proud that we have been able to ensure that Slovo is able to participate in these changes. We would really appreciate feedback on our statement and suggestions for other ways we should improve our practices.

Academia can be a very alienating space, and many universities in the UK have historic and ongoing links to colonial inequities and injustices. It remains a very homogenous environment, with traditions and conventions that exclude many people, particularly those from marginalised groups. It is vital that we are active in correcting these legacies. We must ensure that our research is accessible, and that our systems offer places of growth and learning. As I leave my position, I am very keen to continue this work in other spaces. I would welcome the chance to collaborate in this realm, so please feel free to get in touch with me with advice, ideas, or projects we could work on together.

Slovo is designed to be a space for academics early in their studies to share their work, learn, and grow. It can be difficult to understand how academia works, particularly if you are a first generation academic or coming from a different system. We have therefore been working to demystify the process of peer review to help support postgraduate students who are unsure about how to publish their work. In this vein, we have therefore published a set of guides to publishing your work: [why publish with Slovo](#); [editing your writing for publication](#); and [a guide to the peer review process](#). Please share them widely!

We are thrilled to be able to share the excellent works we are publishing in this issue. In typical Slovo fashion, our two research articles prove the variety of work in our field, covering different

time periods, locations, and topics. Yet, as is often the case, the two articles also demonstrate the intersections that arise between different domains, with both exploring themes of the power of narrative in the creation of community. Madeleine Tiratsoo's article *Visions of Europe in Crisis: Strategic narratives and their alternatives in Russian state and independent media coverage of the 2015-16 'Refugee Crisis'* analyses media coverage of migration in Europe by state media channels and independent broadcaster TV Rain. Analysing nearly 800 news pieces, Tiratsoo explores the narratives that states tell about themselves and their neighbours, and the extent to which independent media can act as a watchdog. By contrast, in *Constellations of Memory: the Historicity of Hungarian Yizker-Bikher*, Lujza Vallo demonstrates the potential of these memorial volumes as testimonial documents. Vallo analyses six specific sources from the perspective of linguistics and historical "veracity", situating them within the wider academic discussion on Hungarian Holocaust research. Both articles demonstrate the power that stories have in our understandings of ourselves and others.

We are also delighted with the range of topics covered by our book and film reviewers. Kimberly St Julian Varnon provides a detailed summary of Olivette Otele's *African Europeans: An Untold History*, "an ambitious study of African experience and lives across Western Europe" which includes specific biographies of key figures from across the region against a wider history and overview of theoretical writing on Blackness in Europe. Fengfeng Zhang reviews Scott C Levi's *The Bukharan Crisis: A Connected History of 18th-Century Central Asia*. Zhang highlights the monograph's position within the context of studies of the region, arguing that it is "an alternative to previous works which attribute the fall of the Bukhara Khanate to the isolation and decline" of the Central Asian region.

We have three film reviews, which should provide the reader with some ideas for ways to spend the lengthening autumn nights. Hanna Hodgetts reviews Kantemir Balagov's 2019 film *Beanpole (Dylida)*, a "rare peak into the sombre lives of traumatised women in post-war Leningrad", based on Svetlana Alexievich's oral history of Soviet women in the Second World War. We are also pleased to feature another review by Kieran McCluskey Wakeley, who was also published in our previous issue. This time, McCluskey Wakeley reviews Sergei Loznitsa's *State Funeral*, which undertakes the mammoth task of collecting and reinterpreting contemporary archival footage to explore the response to Stalin's death. Finally, Sandra Radenovic discusses Aleksandr Khant's debut film *How Viktor "The Garlic" Took Alexey "the Stud" to the Nursing Home*, a poignant exploration of familial relationships.

Slovo's work would not be possible without the support of dozens of other people, who generously give us their time and support. First and foremost, we extend our thanks to all our anonymous peer reviewers, whose advice is indispensable for all our authors. Despite numerous other commitments, they dedicate their time and energy to supporting our work, without compensation or recognition. We are very grateful for their work. We also owe thanks to everyone at SSEES, from SSEES Director Professor Diane Koenker to the journal's faculty advisor Dr Sergei Bogatyrev. I would also like specifically thank Patricia Gabalova, Elinor Pegler, and Barbora Posluch for all their help with our communications and the launch event. We are also grateful to Ian Caswell and the wider UCL Press team for their support with our website.

Finally, I extend particular thanks to our excellent editorial team. They have all done incredible work this year. I wish them all the best with their next steps and look forward to seeing everything they accomplish. I will not manage to cover everything they have done this year, but I hope to give a small taster of their achievements.

Our Managing Editor, Claudia Griffiths has been indispensable to our work this year and has been involved in every aspect of the journal's work. I could not have asked for more support. Among other things, she has organised socials, found peer reviewers, provided feedback to authors, created our new typesetting templates, supported the inclusivity statement, and oversaw the final weeks of our latest issue. Somehow, she has managed to fit this in around her job in academic publishing and her MA in Russian and East European Literature and Culture! Pippa Crawford joined us mid-year as our Social Media Editor and immediately managed to get up to speed and cram multiple projects into barely four months. She and Claudia oversaw the publication of our new writing guides and ensured their professional layout. She is also responsible for our new [Instagram account](#) – please do follow us! She is now starting her MA in Political Analysis at SSEES this year.

Jordan Meggs, our Film Editor, has done fantastic work for all our film reviewers, providing detailed feedback and support. He has shown commendable dedication and has always been ready to support the team. This year he has been studying for an MA in Political Analysis (Russia and Eastern Europe), among a number of other external responsibilities.

Our Book Editor Mira Nichani has a fantastic eye for clarity, structure, and readability. Ever professional and supportive, with her oversight our writers have been in very capable hands. She is about to enter her second year of the IMESS double degree and in her free time studies Arts and Politics at the Arts School of Gothenburg University. Our General Editor, Anna Sneidermane, has been a great support to the authors of our research articles, helping them manage the intimidating peer review process. She is now starting a new role with Argus Media as a Trainee Reporter and we look forward to seeing her writings in print!

If you are a UCL student and would be interested in supporting Slovo's work, we are currently hiring for the 2021/2022 Editorial Board. Please see our guide to applications [here](#) – applications are due through Google Forms by midnight UK time on the 10th October.

Serian Carlyle, Editor-in-Chief, University College London