

## Editorial

On behalf of the editorial team at *Slovo*, I am delighted to share this special issue of the journal entirely dedicated to research and reviews dealing with marginalised subjects in the East European and Central Asian regions. The open-ended phrasing of our timely theme is deliberate: the phenomenon of marginalisation in all its manifestations is invariably characterised by a deleterious effort to erase or minimise the existential legitimacy or intrinsic value of a subject. As a result, our efforts to embrace an approach rooted in the validation of the generous multiplicity of life has informed our wish to avoid the imposition of any undue limitations upon our authors' interpretation of marginalisation in the regions of interest.

Indeed, it is with heavy hearts that we continue to witness marginalisation consume swathes of life in these regions, straining our bond of a shared humanity: the Russo-Ukrainian war continues; anti-LGBTQIA+ legislation endures in Eastern Europe; the Romani population remains systematically discriminated against in these regions; and Central Asian governments continue to uphold oppressive restrictions on religious freedoms — only four examples of how marginalisation is manifest from the Black Sea to the plains of Siberia. Far from languishing in pessimism, as passionately devoted scholars of these regions, we seek to address such problems by contributing however much we can to an increased awareness and knowledge of these iniquities in the hope of their eventual resolution. We encourage you to consider this special issue to be one such step in our efforts.

We are enormously proud of the searingly illuminating contributions of the issue's generous authors. Our two research articles offer valuable examinations of Eastern European Jewish life, both in the past and present. Arleen Ionescu's (Shanghai Jiao Tong University) article deals with an often overlooked aspect of Jewish exile during WW2 — the safe haven of Shanghai, which offered solace to thousands of Polish Jews hosted by Russian Jews who themselves found refuge from war in the city. *Slovo* is especially proud to publish Ionescu's piece whose impressive second annex is the most comprehensive list of memoirs of WW2 Jewish refugees that has ever appeared in a study. Maria Obrębska (University College London) offers an insightful piece examining Jewish life today in the context of Poland, using her own experience volunteering for the Jewish Culture Festival in Kraków as a case study in her analysis of the symbolic significance of Jewishness for Polish national identity.

We are equally delighted to share our book reviews which treat vital subject matter, two of which deal with the Polish LGBTQIA+ community. Magdalena Krzyżanowska (University of Silesia) reviews the first published anthology of Polish queer poetry, *Dezorientacje. Antologia polskiej literatury queer* [Disorientations: An Anthology of Polish Queer Literature], released last year, insightfully elucidating the various realms of meaning encompassed by the term 'queer' in Polish literary history. Olga Doletskaya (University College London) reviews another publication that treats the Polish LGBTQIA+ community: Joanna Mizielińska's *Queer Kinship*

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*on the Edge? Families of Choice in Poland* (2022). Doletskaya offers a lucid and concise evaluation of the newly published work which expands the field of queer kinship research largely set in Anglo-American contexts. Last but not least, Jelena Gajic (Charles University) perspicuously treats Fabio Giomi's *Making Muslim Women European: Voluntary Associations, Islam, and Gender in Post-Ottoman Bosnia and Yugoslavia (1878-1941)*, published last year, which is an important contribution to the little-trodden scholarly field of Muslim female life in Bosnia during the post-Ottoman and interwar eras.

We are equally glad to publish our trio of film reviews, one of which also deals with the Polish context. Nathan Alan-Lee (University College London) offers a nuanced treatment of Polish director Adrian Panek's *Wilkołak* [Werewolf] (2018), a portrait of a group of children following their release from a Nazi concentration camp in early 1945, which our reviewer evaluates as a form of trauma voyeurism in Holocaust cinema. Francisco Vargas (University of Cambridge) examines Bosnian filmmaker Danis Tanović's documentary fiction, *Episode in the Life of An Iron Picker* (2014), which paints a heart-rending, intimate portrait of a real-life Bosnian Romani family struggling to survive, placing a much-needed spotlight on the racial discrimination and social oppression endured by the Romani population in Europe. Finally, Lakkaya Palmer (University College London) presents an engaging analysis of American director Eli Roth's cult classic horror film, *Hostel* (2005), which follows the riotous travels of two American university students across Europe, elucidating the film's problematic 'othering' of the Slovakian people.

I would like to express my warmest gratitude to the aforementioned authors who kindly worked with *Slovo* on this issue. We are also deeply indebted to our anonymous peer-reviewers who have magnanimously afforded us their valuable time and formidable expertise. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the editorial team which has worked with admirable dedication and diligence on this issue. Our Managing Editor, Pippa, has been a beacon of light at *Slovo*, conscientiously resolving the obstacles that inevitably arise during the publication process and reliably procuring the feedback of our peer-reviewers. I would like to congratulate Pippa for completing her master's programme in political analysis earlier this year and securing her position as intelligence analyst with the KCS group.

Our General Editors, Margo and Hu, have continued to kindly and charitably devote themselves to ensuring that you see the deserving articles and reviews before you. I congratulate Margo for completing her master's programme in history, penning her dissertation while industriously acting as vice-lead organiser of the department's Biennial Postgraduate Conference. I am certain that her next steps will be mighty ones. Hu continues to make great strides as he enters his second year of doctoral research, admirably balancing his studies with his teaching commitments, role as a research assistant, and commitment to *Slovo*.

I extend many thanks to our Film Editor, Louis, who has frequently gone above the call of duty to ensure the journal's success. I wish Louis great success as he embarks upon his new

professional commitments. Our Book Editor, Monika, deserves special recognition for benevolently assuming and assiduously executing multiple roles for this issue, acting as Copywriter and Typesetter in addition to her editorial commitment. I also congratulate Monika for completing her master's programme in political analysis and wish her great luck as she continues in her capacity as research analyst at Chambers and Partners. Finally, I express my gratitude to our Online Editor, Sarah, who has ensured *Slovo*'s success by maintaining our online presence with impressive efficacy and fulfilling the administrative aspects of the journal's operations. Sarah is in the fourth year of her PhD programme and continues to leap from strength to strength.

I express the entire team's sentiments when I write that it has been an honour to work at *Slovo* for the 2021/22 academic year. The experience has been a thoroughly rewarding and enjoyable one, affording a valuable and enriching dimension to our time at SSEES. It has broadened our minds, deepened our knowledge and strengthened our connections. I wish the incoming editorial team the best of luck as they embark upon this exciting journey and I look forward to reading the first issue of 2023. In the meantime, myself, Pippa, Margo, Hu, Monika, Louis and Sarah hope that you enjoy reading this issue as much as we enjoyed compiling it.