

AWSS ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN IN SLAVIC STUDIES

Women East-West

Volume 4, Issue 2

November 2015

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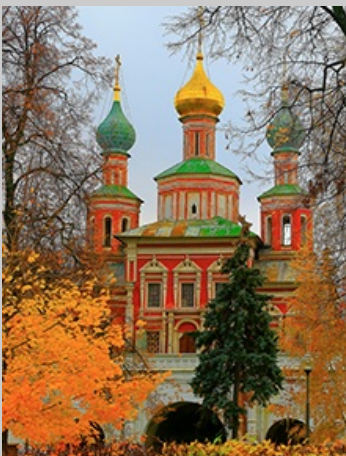
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Join Us for These AWSS Events in Philadelphia!

By Heather Coleman, AWSS Secretary

As usual this year, the Association for Women in Slavic Studies will be hosting a number of events at the annual convention of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies in Philadelphia in November. Please join us and bring your friends!

Our **reception and annual general meeting** will be held on Friday, November 20 from 6:45 to 8:45 pm in the Franklin Hall A, Room 3. The main order of business is to announce the winners of the various AWSS prizes and to celebrate their accomplishments. This is a chance to catch up with old friends, meet new colleagues, renew your membership, and enjoy some tasty eats and perhaps a drink from the cash bar.

[Read more...](#)

Ask Aleksandra!

With more than two decades of experience in Slavic Studies and lots of chutzpah, she'll share with you her hard-won wisdom. Under a cloak of anonymity, you can safely ask Aleksandra anything you like, and in doing so you'll help not just yourself but probably others as well who no doubt have the same questions. Please send your questions to awssnewsletter@gmail.com and put "Ask Aleksandra" in the subject line.



[Bibliography](#)

Join Our Mailing List!



Dear Aleksandra,

Your response [in the Spring 2015 newsletter] to the grad student about the breast-feeding professor missed an important point. The teaching assistant's role is not to help cater to a professor's personal needs. Even in an "uncivilized society" (like the United States), a professor can organize her time so that feeding her child does not interfere with her teaching obligations. You might be surprised to know that there are female faculty (not adjuncts) who apparently think it is ok to sometimes - or even just once - have their (often female) TAs cover for them when they leave class early to breast feed. I think this constitutes inappropriate pulling of rank. Yes, I am female. And, yes, I have a child.

Claire Z.

[Read more...](#)

Unanswered and Lingerin Questions: Or A Research Note on the 1995 Beijing Conference

Jennifer Suchland, Ohio State University

We often start the research process with a question or set of questions that send us to the library or into the field. During the process of research, those questions alter, sharpen and even fade away. There are also those questions that unexpectedly arise and become important but do not fully get answered. This kind of question emerged for me while crafting a genealogy of transnational feminism and United Nations doctrine on violence against women. I was not able to delve as far as I wanted into the quite varied and complex experiences that women from postsocialist countries experienced at the 1995 Beijing Conference on Women. This particular question was not as central to the larger project when I started it years ago. However, as the research evolved, I grew more and more interested in it. In the end, I learned that even when a project is "done" - that is, published - you can still have unanswered and lingering questions. I still want to learn more about this important time in transnational feminist history from the perspective of those in the former "second world." For now, I will share this research note.

Using primary and secondary sources, I gathered some

understanding of the excitement but also frustration that representatives from the former "second world" experienced at the 1995 Beijing Conference on Women. In particular, I focused on the public statement known as the "Statement from a Non-Region," in which representatives from the former second world declared their place at the conference. The document states: "Our group of countries is a Non-Region, because there is no recognizable political or geographic definition for the region composed of countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union" (Nowika 1995). This document was very important for my research and the genealogy I crafted because I wanted to explain/articulate how postsocialism was situated within global discourses on violence against women. Most significantly, I sensed the lack of a voice representing "transition" at the particular moment of the 1995 Beijing Conference. [Read more...](#)

Research Notes: Call for Contributions

Members of the Association for Women in Slavic Studies are invited to participate in a published roundtable on feminism and post-socialism for the Research Notes column of *Women East-West*. Jenny Suchland will curate the dialogue with a set of questions. Please submit your interest and ideas to awssnewsletter@gmail.com or to the new editor of Research Notes, Mollie Cavender, at cavender.13@osu.edu.

2015 Outstanding Achievement Award

Recipient: Sarah Phillips

The Association for Women in Slavic Studies is pleased to announce that Dr. Sarah Phillips is winner of the 2015 Outstanding Achievement Award. Dr. Phillips is Professor of Anthropology, and Director of the Russian and East European Institute at Indiana University, Bloomington. A distinguished scholar, caring mentor, a model activist, efficient administrator, and an esteemed colleague, Dr. Phillips embodies the complete scale of values espoused by the AWSS.

Dr. Phillips is both a productive and a thoughtful scholar, with an uncanny knack of selecting unusual and little researched topics in women and gender studies. Her first book, *Women's Social Activism in the New Ukraine: Development and the Politics of Differentiation* (2008), was named the co-winner of the best book prize awarded by the American Association for Ukrainian Studies in 2008-2009. In her second monograph, *Disability and Mobile Citizenship in Postsocialist Ukraine* (2011), Dr. Phillips sensitively explored the world of disabled

persons in post-Soviet states, creating a new locus and agenda for gender research. [Read more...](#)

2015 Heldt Prizes

We are proud to announce the Held Prize winners for 2015.

Best Book by a Woman in Slavic/East European/Eurasian Studies

Luba Golburt, *The First Epoch: The Eighteenth Century and the Russian Cultural Imagination* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2014).

Luba Golburt's book *The First Epoch, the Eighteenth Century and the Russian Cultural Imagination* is a true original. Golburt skillfully unearths the eighteenth-century literature that gave rise to the Pushkin era Golden Age. She argues that the culture of the nineteenth-century's Russian Golden Age emerged while the intellectuals of that era attempted to define their place in history. She shows that the Pushkin-era literary history writing mostly came about because of intellectual inquiry of the past, and despite its relegation to obscurity. This beautifully written book offers a fresh reading of the works of Derzhavin, Pushkin, Lomonosov, Viazemsky and other giants of literature. Golburt proves that the eighteenth century was a testing ground of periodization, belonging, and representation that, unlike Europe, did not abandon the "ancient" while becoming "modern." Finally, Golburt's book succeeds in turning our attention to how Derzhavin, Pushkin and others imagined their literary origins, and desired to be remembered.

[Read more...](#)

2015 Mary Zirin Prizes

The Association for Women in Slavic Studies is pleased to announce **Dr. Rosamund Bartlett** and **Dr. Ellen Elias-Bursac** as the two recipients of the Mary Zirin Prize.

Dr. Bartlett received her DPhil from the Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages, University of Oxford in 1991 and has a sterling record of scholarly publications, academic teaching and activism. Dr. Bartlett is a well-known public intellectual and she has disseminated her research in Russian cultural history at various public forums throughout the world. Her scholarship reveals a broad and deep understanding of Russian cultural history in its intersection with Western Europe. The field would find it hard to fit her into a single category. She is widely known

as a translator, thanks to her unsurpassed translations of nineteenth-century Russian prose. [Read more...](#)

Dr. Elias-Bursac received her doctorate in Croatian Languages and Literature from Zagreb University in 1999. Her thesis provided a comparative/contrastive linguo-stylistic analysis on translations of Anglo-American literature into Croatian. A prolific literary translator from South Slavic languages, Dr. Elias-Bursac is also the author of *Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, a Textbook*, winner of AATSEEL Best Contribution to Language Pedagogy in 2009 and, currently, the most used textbook in U.S. and foreign Slavic departments. [Read more...](#)

2015 Graduate Research Prize

Recipient: Margarita Safronova

The AWSS Graduate Research Prize provides funding for graduate students at any level to pursue research on topics related to Slavic/East European/Central Asian studies in general (by a woman) and Women's and Gender studies specifically (by a man or a woman).

The prize committee would like to thank all the applicants for the Graduate Research Prize for their interesting proposals. The committee is pleased to announce that the recipient of the 2015 Graduate Research Prize is **Margarita Safronova**, Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of Political Science at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Safronova's project studies the effect of culture on political integration and political identity among ethnic Russian youth in Kazakhstan and Latvia. She uses surveys, focus groups, and analysis of educational materials to assess the role of culture in the integration of the ethnic Russian minority in two post-Soviet states with very different governmental structures. Safronova employs a unique perspective that highlights the importance of culture in the political assimilation of ethnic minorities. Her study hopes to determine how political identity and assimilation translate into political support and economic stability. Safronova plans to use her grant to fund a follow-up trip to Kazakhstan to conduct research in two Kazakh cities with large ethnic Russian populations.

2015 Graduate Essay Prize

The Association for Women in Slavic Studies announces with great pleasure that **Katarzyna Kaczmarek**, a recent Ph.D. in International Politics at Aberystwyth University, has been awarded the Graduate Essay Prize for "Russia, a Different

Version of the International," a chapter of her dissertation "The Politics of Representing the International: International Society and the Russian World."

In contrast to most contemporary International Relations (IR) scholarship, Dr. Kaczmarska takes seriously the representations of the international that have emerged in contemporary Russian discourse and explores the conditions of their production. She emphasizes Russia's articulation of the idea of a "multipolar" world that puts Russia in competition with the West. Russia seeks to be an equal partner with the West, driven simultaneously by feelings of inferiority that emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union and confidence in Russia's "historic mission" as a unique and superior civilization. Paradoxically, "the Russian World" cannot exist without reliance on "the West" as the primary frame of reference with which to construct the Russian view of the international. By examining Russia "in its own terms," Dr. Kaczmarska provides powerful new insights into the motivations that drive Russian actions on the international stage.

Dr. Kaczmarska's work brings a fresh and original perspective to the field of IR which often proves to be American or Eurocentric while claiming to be objective. This thesis reframes the subfield by placing the concept of "the Russian World" at the center of analysis and calling IR's claims of objectivity into question. Dr. Kaczmarska effectively presents a balanced picture of Russian thinking without reproducing Russia's own biases.

Women's Forum, BASEES

Report by Judith Pallot (Christ Church, Oxford)

The launch of a new Women's Forum took place at the annual conference of the British Association of Slavic and East European Studies (BASEES) in Cambridge UK in March of this year. The Forum's aim is to further the interest of women in Slavonic and East European studies and to promote research about women and gender among UK and European members of the Association. We are indebted to AWSS for showing us the way forward and our planned activities are very much modeled on your practice. One difference is that we are part of the main professional organization which is providing start-up funding - a sign, perhaps, of the distance travelled by women since AWSS's founding in 1986.

The Forum launch was attended by over one hundred people so that the Reddaway Hall at Fitzwilliam College was filled to

overflowing. The three current, self-appointed, committee members consisting of Melanie Ilic, Claire Shaw and myself, briefly spoke about how we saw the forum developing - its constitutional structure, the plans for the mentoring young scholars and for a prize programme to recognize excellent research by, and about, women. And we invited people to send in suggestions and comments and to volunteer to join the committee. All this was a prelude to the main event of the evening, which was a panel discussion involving women who in the 1960s and 1970s contributed to the advancement of scholarship in our area and who were at the forefront of introducing a consideration of gender into Slavic literary, historical and social studies. [Read more...](#)

Book Reviews

Beth Holmgren. *Starring Madame Modjeska: On Tour in Poland and America.*

Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2012. 408 pp., including chronology, illustrations, endnotes, bibliography, and index. \$39.95, hardcover.

Reviewed by: Lee A. Farrow, Auburn University at Montgomery

Beth Holmgren's *Starring Madame Modjeska: On Tour in Poland and America* is a fascinating and extensively researched biography of a Polish actress who both challenged and comfortably navigated the social expectations and limits of women in middle-class American and European society. Holmgren traces the career of Helena Modrzejewska (later simplified to Modjeska for American audiences) from its dawn in Krakow in the Austrian-held section of Poland, through her reign as a leading actress on the American stage. Born in Krakow in 1840 as the illegitimate child of a burgher's widow, Modjeska debuted on the provincial stage of Bochnia, only months after giving birth to her own illegitimate child. Over the next decade and a half, Modjeska performed in various smaller theaters, eventually working in the larger and more prestigious venues of Krakow and Warsaw. [Read more...](#)

Ellen Rutten. *Unattainable Bride Russia: Gendering Nation, State, and Intelligentsia in Russian Intellectual Culture.*
Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2010. 328 pp. Notes. Index. Paper.

Reviewed by: Virginia Parobek, Independent Scholar

"Although the metaphor of Russia as wife

or beloved has indeed become a cliché in contemporary Russia, it has received little attention in literary research to date" (3)

Thus begins the intended thesis for *Unattainable Bride Russia* by Ellen Rutten, a professor of literature at the University of Amsterdam. The author informs readers that her study will purposely dismiss the traditional "Mother Russia myth" in favor of the more recent "male intelligentsia's unattainable bride Russia." This concept posits that Russia functions as a kind of female beloved for whom two Russian males vie for affection. This feminine bridal image, with its obvious amorous overtones, is contrasted by the two males: the Russian state-the captor or husband-versus the intelligentsia (the educated elite)-her true bridegroom. [Read more...](#)

Member News

If you would like to be included in "Member News," send your accomplishments to awssnewsletter@gmail.com. Please include your affiliation. For articles and books, send full publication information. We are also happy to publish photos from members' travels and research in the region; please include a caption.

Choi Chatterjee (California State University, Los Angeles) announces the publication of her article "Imperial Incarcerations: Ekaterina Breshko-Breshkovskaia, Vinayak Savarkar, and the Original Sins of Modernity" in the Winter 2015 issue of *Slavic Review*.

Lisa A. Kirschenbaum (West Chester University) has published *International Communism and the Spanish Civil War: Solidarity and Suspicion* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015). Exploring the transnational exchanges that occurred in Soviet-structured spaces - from clandestine schools for training international revolutionaries in Moscow to the International Brigades in Spain - the book uncovers complex webs of interaction, at once personal and political, that linked international communists to one another and the Soviet Union. For more information, click [here](#).

Stepanka Korytova (Indiana University, Bloomington) writes, "I volunteered for an organization called Miret that organizes summer school for Roma young people. The summer school was in August near Bardejov, Slovakia. **(I am in the pink glasses in the photo below**, with members of the Czech Philharmonic and Chavorenge, the group that spends two weeks at the summer music school.) I was also a member of a jury deciding on the best documentary film made by Czech or

Slovak directors. The theme is predominantly human rights issues. The award is in the name of film director Pavel Koutecky (film "Citizen Havel" for example). The event took place in Prague, Czech Republic in June."



AWSS Treasurer **Sarah D. Phillips** is now Director of the Russian and East European Institute (REEI) at Indiana University, Bloomington. She recently co-authored the article "A 'Common Factors' Approach to Developing Culturally Tailored HIV Prevention Interventions" in the journal *Health Education & Behavior*.

Amy E. Randall (Santa Clara University) announces the publication of her edited collection *Genocide and Gender in the Twentieth Century: A Comparative Survey* by Bloomsbury in October 2015. The ISBN is 9781472509802. The book is available in paperback and hardcover. For more information click [here](#).

Marian J. Rubchak (Valparaiso University) has edited and translated *New Imaginaries: Youthful Reinvention of Ukraine's Cultural Paradigm* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2015), a collection of articles on gender politics, the power of the media, changing demographics and paradigm shifts, written by young feminist scholars of post-Soviet Ukraine.

Elena Sokol (The College of Wooster) shares the news of her collaboration with Véronique Firkusny on the English translation of Czech writer Daniela Hodrová's novel *A Kingdom of Souls* (Jantar Publishing, 2015), the first volume in a loose trilogy, *City of Torment*, set in Prague. Work on the second volume is in progress.

In *Economies of Violence: Transnational Feminism, Postsocialism and the Politics of Sex Trafficking* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2015), **Jennifer Suchland** (Ohio State University) directly critiques the tendency of recent human rights campaigns to focus on individual victims and to

treat sex trafficking as a criminal aberration in an otherwise just economic order; rather, she argues, trafficking is symptomatic of complex economic and social dynamics and the economies of violence that sustain them. For more information, click [here](#).

Anika Walke (Washington University in St. Louis) has published *Pioneers and Partisans: An Oral History of Nazi Genocide in Belorussia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015). As one reviewer noted, "In this gripping and intimate history, Anika Walke provides one of the first studies of Nazi genocide of Jews in the former Soviet Union." For more information, click [here](#).