



REPORT FORM FOR NETWORK ACTIVITIES

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Confidential

1. Lead Applicant

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Title (Dr, Professor, etc)	Dr		
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Present appointment and employing institution

Senior Lecturer in Russian History, Centre for Russian and East European Studies, University of Birmingham
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Role in activity

Organiser

2. Activity details

Type and title of activity

Midlands Russian Seminars: Russian Political Thought
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Location

University of Birmingham and University of Warwick
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Date

From: 1/10/2008	To: 31/5/2009
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Brief Description of activities carried out (please include or attach a confirmed list of participants)

The series consisted of four seminars connected to the theme of Russian Political Thought:

26th November 2008: Erik van Ree (Amsterdam): *'Socialism in one Country' and the Myth of 'World Revolution' in Socialist Thought*. Discussant: Christopher Read (Warwick)

28th January 2009: Derek Offord (Bristol): *Conceptions of the People in Nineteenth Century Russian Thought*
Discussant: Maureen Perrie (CREES)

4th March: Arfon Rees (CREES): *Boris Savinkov and the Ethics of Terror*

20th May: Alexander Titov (SSEES/UCL) *Lev Gumilev and the Rebirth of Eurasianism* and Edwin Bacon (Birkbeck) *Putinism in Perspective*

The first and third seminars were held at Warwick University, the second and fourth at Birmingham University. Two hours were allowed for presentation and discussion of each paper. The format varied between seminars, with formal discussants at two of the seminars and with two speakers at the final seminar (which was split into two sessions). Seminars were followed by a meal for participants at which discussion of the day's talk was continued, except at the final seminar where a buffet meal was provided for participants in between the two sessions.

Seminars were attended by:

Melanie Ilic (Gloucester)

Jeremy Smith (CREES)

Alexander Titov (SSEES)

Mark Harrison (Warwick)

John Westwood (Independent scholar linked to CREES)

Judith Pallot (Oxford)

Maureen Perrie (CREES)

Victoria Hudson (PhD CREES)

Julian Cooper (CREES)

Alexandra Prodromidou (PhD CREES)

Julia Lajus (Birmingham)

Edwin Bacon (Birkbeck)

Arfon REES (CREES)

Derek Offord (Bristol)

Erik van REE (Amsterdam)

Chris Read (Warwick)

Rainer Horn (Warwick)

Christoph Mick (Warwick)

David White (CREES)

Other graduate students attended whose identity is not known.

3. Achievement of stated aims and objectives

Please summarise how the stated aims and objectives of the activities proposed have been achieved and how these have helped to further the aims and objectives of CEELBAS.

There was a high level of discussion at each seminar, which easily filled the two hours available. Four of the five papers can be considered 'work in progress' and the speakers acknowledged that comments raised in discussion were of great benefit to their research. A number of postgraduates attended and took part in discussion, in many cases the first opportunity they would have had to participate in discussion at this level.

Attendance at seminars varied, but a core of scholars attended all or three out of four seminars. The series therefore went some way to creating a regular dialogue between Russia scholars at Birmingham and Warwick. Disappointingly, attendance was dominated by historians and overall attendance was not as high as hoped for. There may be a number of reasons for this, but perhaps the most important was the difficulty of escaping the label of 'History seminar series', to which other academics continued to refer to it in spite of the series being advertised as interdisciplinary. In future, greater effort will be made to emphasise the interdisciplinary nature of the series, by a more considered balance of speakers, greater effort to publicise the nature of the series, and involvement of a broader range of academics in planning the series. In this regard, the final seminar in the series, where the two speakers were a historian and a political scientist, provided the biggest success in terms of interdisciplinarity as participants from both disciplines mostly stayed for both sessions. Attendance from outside Birmingham and Warwick was also low, which is maybe to be expected, but greater effort will be made in future to publicise such events at institutions in Oxford, Wolverhampton and Coventry.

4. Outcomes

Please indicate the outcomes and 'value for money' of activities carried out.

The series succeeded in continuing the tradition of high level seminar discussion on Russia in the Midlands, previously maintained by the Birmingham 'Soviet Industrialisation Project' and other seminar series. Costs were restricted by using local discussants to comment on talks by (in four out of five cases) external speakers. Social events after the seminars were particularly important in maintaining and developing links between academics at Birmingham and Warwick. This achievement was limited given the preponderance of historians, but as noted above, steps have already been taken to ensure a broader disciplinary participation in future events. As well as promoting links between institutions, future events will therefore also strengthen Russia studies within the institutions by providing a regular forum for academics from different departments at each of the Universities.

At a total cost of the series came in well under budget. Considering the proximity and existing links between the two main participant universities, getting together on a regular basis and conducting high level academic discussion should not be a great burden, but this financial support was essential in setting up the occasions at a relatively low cost. CREES no longer has any independent seminar funding, while the dispersion of Russian studies across Warwick means that colleagues there are only able to attract small contributions from different departments.

5. Breakdown of total costs for workshops (please attach evidence of expenditure)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Key speakers (Travel, accommodation and subsistence)	£389.20
Postgraduate participation	
Room/equipment hire	
Administration costs CREES administration	£400.00
Printing and publicity (including conference packs) Copies of seminar papers	£120.00
Other (please specify) Buffet, refreshments and meals 223.35 70.20 39.00 19.50 10.58	362.63
Total expenditure	£1,271.83
Total contribution invoiced to CEELBAS	£1,271.83

6. Breakdown of total costs for projects (please attach evidence of expenditure)

<i>Item</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Staff costs	
Equipment/technical costs	
Administration costs	
Other (please specify	
Total expenditure	
Total contribution invoiced to CEELBAS	

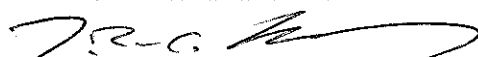
7. Dissemination and further research

Please give details of dissemination of the outcomes of the workshop/project and any further research planned.

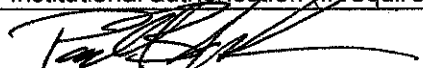
Papers, which were mostly work in progress, were circulated to seminar participants. For the coming academic year, Mark Harrison of Warwick University is organising a follow on series of seminars, with a number of changes made as indicated above (greater interdisciplinarity, wider participation etc.) Professor Harrison has created a website for the seminar series, where new papers will be available for download when permission is given by the authors.

8. Signature and date

Applicant's signature


Date: 8/10/2009

Institutional authorisation (if required)


Position: Head of School
Date: 4.11.09

Institutional CEELBAS Network Primary Contact

Date:

This form must be accompanied by an invoice from the applicant's institution, supported by receipts or other evidence of the expenditure incurred.

Please send the completed form to: CEELBAS Administrator, SSEES, UCL, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT and by email to: ceelbas-network@ssees.ucl.ac.uk.

CEELBAS is a consortium of UCL,
University of Oxford and University of Birmingham



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