**STUDY GROUP ON THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION, Annual Conference, 3rd – 5th January 2024, Southampton University, Southampton, UK**

The 49th Annual Study Group on The Russian Revolution (SGRR) was held at the University of Southampton on 3-5 January this year, the second time the annual conference had been hosted by the University, which, prior to 2023, had never seen the event before. The SGRR is now in its 50th year and an exciting programme united established and newer approaches to the study of the revolution’s history. Our conference theme was ‘Decolonization in the history of the Russian Revolution’, and a diverse list came to discuss many different themes. 36 colleagues and friends joined us from Russia, Ukraine, the Caucasus, North America, and mainland Europe. The conference saw many people from different ages and stages of their careers, from people undertaking PhD research to emeritus professors, deliver interesting and well-received papers, and reflected a good gender balance in terms of speakers. It was especially pleasing that a number came to us from the former Soviet states: especially in the present day and age it is vital to keep open all the scholarly channels that we can – communication with colleagues in all the former Soviet states has always been important, but now, in my view, it is more than ever crucial to the long-term viability of our discipline.

The Study Group was established in 1973 and its aim is to promote new approaches to the study of the Russian Revolution, focusing on the period between 1880 and 1932. Affiliated to the British Association for Slavonic and East European Studies (BASEES), the Study Group possesses a truly international membership. Our themes were diverse and wide-ranging, showing the many different aspects of studying the revolution that people can take nowadays. We saw a good number of papers focused on non-Russian regions, which explored new approaches to the study of revolution in Ukraine and the Caucasus, and the impact of the First World War on the revolutions of 1917 in different regions. We also saw some well-known subjects such as Soviet power politics covered, but in new and diverse ways which marked the differing approaches scholars can take to the subject nowadays. Two well-attended roundtables saw lively debate: these were on Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and how that is likely to impact on our profession now and in the future, and a strong discussion about Lenin’s legacy today, held due to the recent centenary of his death.

As organizer, I would like to say a big thank you to all participants – everyone who presented a paper, chaired, or attended. I felt overall the intellectual elements of the conference worked well, and there was a huge range of materials presented – lots of different topics, approaches, and ideas were reflective of a diverse group of people who were attending this year. Like last year the conference had a hybrid format allowing people to join us from around the world – there was, as ever, some recalcitrant IT, but generally the transitions between in person and online attendees worked quite well in terms of facilitating discussion. As organizer for 2023 and 2024, I should like to say a big thanks to Lara Douds, Jenny Grieve-Laing, and Katy Turton, who were all instrumental in helping the SGRR work well this year. I would also like to thank BASEES especially for their long-term support for the SGRR, and our more recent sponsors, including the University of Southampton history department, and the Southampton Centre for Eastern European and Eurasian Studies (CEEES).

The numerous interesting reports from this conference should make for some good papers for our in-house journal *Revolutionary Russia*, which is actively looking for submissions. It was also pleasing that new members of the SGRR joined us, including some early-career researchers located in continental Europe. The SGRR now has a web presence, which the organizers should like to see go from strength to strength: our website is located here <https://www.sgrr.co.uk> and shows our leadership committee, the programmes of past conferences, and information on our journal and for academics.

The conference had a collegial and friendly atmosphere throughout, and this greatly assisted in running it. We are happy that the conference worked well this year and are excited about the direction it may take in the future.

**George Gilbert, 26 January 2024**

Please see images from the event belowA child standing in front of a large white board

Description automatically generatedA table with books on it

Description automatically generatedA sculpture in a pond

Description automatically generatedA sign on a table

Description automatically generatedA person standing at a podium

Description automatically generated