

TRANSFORMATION GROUP NEWSLETTER

JULY 2010

THE COLD WAR STILL CONTINUES...

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along the DMZ – always known, for some reason, as the DeeEmZee. It's certainly the scariest place I've ever visited (writes Stephen), and I crossed into East Berlin through Checkpoint Charlie soon after the Wall was built. It's not easy to get there either, although it's not far (about an hour's drive) from the Korean capital, and there are tourist trips, for those who can book in advance. In this case, the Korean authorities made it possible for a small number of those who were attending the East Asian Conference for Slavic Eurasian Studies to take part in a specially arranged visit. One of the others was Graeme Gill, of Sydney University, who was kind enough to make his photographs available. It's very difficult for South Koreans themselves to visit the DMZ, although on this occasion we were accompanied by Seong-jin Kim of Duksung Women's University, one of the little 'family' of Glasgow PhDs who are now a prominent part of an active community of about five hundred Korean Slavists

in all disciplines.

What was most notable, as we drove north, was the mounting level of security and the falling incidence of human habitation (although there are two functioning villages within the zone itself, one on each side, and it is a rich reserve of plant and animal life). The 'zone' is in fact a strip of land about two and a half miles wide, heavily forti-

fied on both sides. The 155 mile-long military demarcation line runs through the middle of the zone, and a few concrete huts, in which all negotiations take place, sit on the line itself, within what is called the Joint Security Area. Walk to the far end of the hut, as we all did, and you're technically in North Korea. We're supervised by an officer from the South Korean army, and two armed soldiers in dark glasses, ready to shoot at a moment's notice, are in the hut itself. (Although, oddly, it's quite OK to take photographs

of them.) There are dire warnings not to make unexpected gestures, or carry a bag, and when we drive round the zone afterwards there are firm instructions not to get out of our minicoach. Not even when we pass the Bridge of No Return, where tens



Above: The Bridge of No Return

of thousands of prisoners of war had to make a choice when hostilities came to an end: to go either north, or south. Forever.

In fact the whole of the zone is dangerous territory. There have been several incidents, some of them involving shooting (in one case, back in 1984, a Soviet tourist made a run for it and managed to reach the other side in spite of a hail of bullets; he's now in California).

There's even danger *underneath* the territory, as the North Koreans built a series of tunnels through which

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they could have organised a rapid invasion, coming out some distance south of the border zone. One of them is big enough to have allowed an entire infantry division of two thousand soldiers to pass through in an hour, although it's a bit too small for tanks. This time it's fairly quiet, and there's an opportunity to visit the souvenir shop: for some authentic North Korean currency, and a bit of the wire that at one point separated the two sides, now available in short sections in expensive packaging. And indeed to 'get the T-shirt'.

For Westerners, it's an exciting experience. For South Koreans, it's a much sadder business, as there are very few who think there is any prospect of their country reuniting within their own

lifetime. Which means there are few who can hope to see members of their own families who were separated by the conflict, or the graves of their ancestors.



Above: On the South Korean side



Above: Inside one of the negotiation huts in the DMZ, with North Korea on the far side



Above: In front of the negotiation huts in the DMZ

Needless to say, the conference itself was also an opportunity to meet up with other members of the 'family': as well as Seongjin, Yeongmi Yun (now at Pyeongtaek University but also working in television), Younhee Kang (at Kookmin University), and Taikang Choi (at Hallym University; Kenneth Wilson, another Glasgow postgraduate now at Dongguk University, was another conference presenter). They all seem to be doing well and driving much bigger cars than I do.

CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

The conference on 'The International Crisis and the Post-Soviet States' took place on 13 and 14 May with the support of Lorton House, the Glasgow-led Centre for Russian, Central and East European Studies (CRCEES) and BASEES. There were papers on the first day from David Lane (Cambridge), on 'Global Economic Crisis: Russia, Belarus and Ukraine in Comparative Perspective'; Robert Bideleux (Swansea), on 'Contrasting Responses to the Global Crisis in the CIS and the new EU Member States'; Richard Rose (Aberdeen), on 'Vulnerability to Economic Shocks: A Pan-European Perspective'; Phil Hanson (RIIA London), on 'Russia: Crisis, Exit and...Reform?'; Neil Robinson (Limerick), on 'The Limits of Authoritarian Developmentalism in Russia: Patrimonial Capitalism and the Global Credit Crunch'; Elizabeth Teague (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), on 'The Politics of Crisis and Russian Workers'; and Richard Sakwa (Kent), on 'The Politics of Krisis'. On the second day there were papers from Valentina and Stephen on 'Reading the Krizis in Russia', Ian McAllister (Canberra) and Stephen on 'The Crisis, the

Public and the Parties', and Olga Kryshstanovskaya (Moscow), on 'The Crisis and the Tandem'. Ukraine was the focus of contributions by Nat Copsey (Aston), on 'The Effect of the Global Economic Crisis on Ukraine's Path towards European Integration'; Vlad Mykhnenko and Adam Swain (Nottingham), on 'Depression, Devaluation and Divergence: The Bursting of the Orange Bubble and Ukraine's Space-Economy'; Marco Bojcin (London Metropolitan), on 'International Economic Crisis and the 2010 Presidential Elections in Ukraine'; and Elena Kropacheva (Hamburg), on 'The Presidential Election in Ukraine and Foreign Policy Choices'. Elena Korosteleva (Aberystwyth), spoke on 'Financial Crisis and Belarus Foreign Policy'; and Yulia

Korosteleva (SSEES/UCL), on 'The Implications of the Global Recession for the Belarusian Economy: Revealing Cracks in the Economic Model'. The conference concluded with three challenging summations by Marie Mendras (LSE/Paris), Peter Duncan (SSEES/UCL) and Margot Light (LSE), followed in turn by a conference dinner in the Melville Room and some wonderful singing by Christine Primrose. For those who could stay there was a further pleasure on the Saturday afternoon, a coach trip to Culzean Castle and a walk around its sunlit gardens. In due course the papers will appear, suitably edited, in the *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*.

On 11 May, the Scottish Centre for Chinese Social

Science Research and its Postgraduate Network held a workshop on 'Publishing in Chinese Studies' at Glasgow University. The day-long workshop was aimed at graduate students and other early career researchers doing social science research on China across Scotland and the wider UK. It was attended by students from the LSE and University College London, as well as Universities of Cambridge, Leeds, Sheffield, Edinburgh, West of Scotland, and Glasgow (among others). We were very privileged to have a core session on journal publishing delivered by Dr Julia Strauss (SOAS, London), editor of the leading Chinese social science journal, *The China Quarterly*. Other sessions included an overview of publishing strategies for early career researchers who straddle the social science/Chinese studies divide (led by Jane), and on publishing books (led by Professor Catherine Schenk at Glasgow). Another core session involved participants reviewing and giving feedback on each others' draft papers. The workshop's impeccable organisation was led by Daniel and Ariel, with support from Jane and the Centre. We are grateful to the Roberts Fund that made the workshop possible.



Above: outside Culzean Castle

PRESENTATIONS

Valentina gave a paper on 'Russia's attempts at public diplomacy' at the annual convention of the International Studies Association (ISA) in New Orleans in February. She has also become a co-convenor (together with Dr Natasha Kuhrt, King's College London) of the recently established working group on Russian and Eurasian Security of the British International Studies Association (BISA).

Stephen spoke on 'Explaining the "coloured revolutions"' at the School of Politics and International Relations of the Australian National University in February. In March he was in Korea, where he spoke on 'Political elites in Russia' at Kookmin University and on 'Is Russia a democracy?' at Hanyang University, and then on 'Explaining the "coloured revolutions"' at the East Asian Conference for Slavic Eurasian Studies in Seoul. Later in March he spoke on 'People and politics in postcommunist Russia' at the BASEES conference in Cambridge, and on 'Russia's authoritarian elections: a focus-group study' (with Valentina) at the PSA conference in Edinburgh. In May he made two joint presentations at the Crisis Conference, 'Reading

the *Krizis* in Russia' (with Valentina) and 'The crisis, the public and the parties' (with Ian McAllister).

In June he spoke on 'What kind of system?' at a conference on 'Russia in 2010: Sources of Stability and Change' at Bath University, and on 'Rethinking party identification' at a conference on Russian political parties at Birmingham University.

Jane presented a paper on 'China's health policies and their impact on marginalised and vulnerable groups' to a panel on 'Bringing Health Care Services to Marginalized and Vulnerable Groups in China' at the American Association of Asian Scholars in Philadelphia in March. She also gave a talk in January to the Scotland-China Association on the health system in China, and another on 'Benign dictatorship or democracy?' to a Model United Nations organised at George Watson's College, Edinburgh, in March. In June, she was in Hong Kong for a week where she did some archival research at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. She also has been completing the manuscript of a book (co-edited with Beatriz Carrillo in Sydney) that takes a local perspective on China's welfare provision.

Bill Miller gave a series of presentations during the first half of the year related to his Norwegian Research Council grant: he spoke at BASEES in March on 'A convergent popular European legal culture?', and at the PSA in Edinburgh on 'The impact of the "war on terror" on minority legal cultures' and also on 'Legal cultures in transition: the impact of the "war on terrorism"'. He will be presenting a paper on 'Empirical dimensions of popular legal culture in contemporary Europe' at the ICCEES Congress in Stockholm at the end of July.

Vikki presented a paper at BASEES in March that explored women's rights claims in Russia as part of their broader care work responsibilities. Vikki has also been busy working on a paper to be presented at ICCEES in July, which further analyses how, when and why women in Russia choose to undertake legal claims to resolve 'everyday rights violations'. This paper will be published as a chapter in an edited volume entitled 'Rethinking Class in Russia' edited by Suvi Salmeniemä (Helsinki) and under contract with Ashgate, expected publication late 2011.

Chris Thornhill has recently addressed conferences in Oslo and Frankfurt, and has been visiting researcher at the Max Planck Institute for Legal History in Frankfurt. He is also co-organising a conference on constitutionalism at the University of Copenhagen in December, which will include a session on transitional constitutionalism in Eastern Europe. He is currently completing a book on the sociology of constitutions.

Anke was an invited keynote speaker at EUROSIM, a transatlantic European Union simulation of the Trans-Atlantic Consortium for European Union Simulations and Studies (TACEUSS) at Antwerp in January. Her presentation was entitled 'Dealing with the Russian Federation: a challenge for the EU and its member states'. The topic of the four-day simulation was the new EU-Russia Agreement. She will also be presenting a paper to the ICCEES VIII World Congress at Stockholm at the end of July on 'With or without the EU? EU member states' relations with the Russian Federation', and in October will be speaking on 'EU member states' energy relations with Russia: conflicting approaches to securing natural gas supplies' at the University Association for Contemporary European Studies (UACES) Annual Conference in Bruges.

PUBLICATIONS over the first six months of the year included

Jane Duckett, 'Economic Crisis and China's 2009 Health Reform Plan: Rebuilding Social Protections for Stability and Growth?', *China Analysis: Studies in China's Political Economy* No. 80, April 2010, 14 pp., at www.chinapolitik.de.

Christopher Thornhill and Samantha Ashenden, eds., *Legality and Legitimacy: Normative and Sociological Approaches* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2010), 342 pp.

David Lane and Stephen White, eds., *Rethinking the 'Coloured Revolutions'*, London and New York:

Routledge, 2010, xviii + 308pp.

Stephen White, 'Soviet nostalgia and Russian politics', *Journal of Eurasian Studies* 1:1 (January 2010), pp. 1-9.

Stephen White, 'Russia/USSR', in Dieter Nohlen and

Philip Stöver, eds., *Elections in Europe. A Data Handbook* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2010), pp. 1623-1668.

Stephen was among those who were invited to contribute to the Mattei Dogan Foundation's online 'Dictionary of Eminent Social Scientists: Autobiographies' (see <http://www.fondationmatteidogan.org/indexen.html>).

ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

Stephen spent a month (in February-March 2010) as a Program Visitor at the School of Politics and International Relations of the Australian National University at Canberra. The visit arose from his ESRC-ARC collaborative project with Ian McAllister.

'Right now' (writes Sarah), 'it is all effort to the study of the internet, as I foolishly promised to write another monograph called *Revolution Stalled: The Political Limits of the Internet in the Post-Soviet Sphere*. Clearly, the grants listed elsewhere will be a big part of that, but I have started presenting the material and getting feedback. Of particular use was an excellent conference organised by Natalia Rulyova at the University of Birmingham on New Media for a New Europe-Asia. I presented at the first workshop in

March 2010, which was entitled "New media and society: politics, economics, geography", boldly giving a paper that compared the web strategies of the British Liberal Democrats with those of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (*Political Party Websites as Mirror or Prism: Comparing Russian Communists and British Liberal Democrats in the Online Sphere*, available for download at <http://www.media-politics.com/publications.htm>). I would describe the audience response as a bit stunned. The aim of the paper was to compare two parties that had little chance of serving in government, as this was written before the 2010 campaign kicked off. Perhaps the fate of the Liberal

Democrats could signal some hope for the Communists in that regard? Unlikely ... The conference was sponsored by CREES and supported by the useful Digital Icons project (www.digitalicons.org) that is an excellent source of research into the post-Soviet online sphere (publishing in English, Russian and German).'

Aside from researching the internet and submitting various grant proposals, Sarah also kept busy during her research leave (January-April 2010) by participating in knowledge transfer events relating to the internet's role in society (at the Cabinet Office and the Ministry of Defence). She organised and led a forum of 25 internet scholars at Google Ltd., forming the network of

scholars to exchange data and information with Google to study the political, social and economic impact of search on society, and set up a university-wide research network as well (Information Democracy Technology Network, see <http://www.dcs.gla.ac.uk/idtn/index.cfm>). At the moment she is busy preparing a paper for the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting in DC in September, also on (unsurprisingly) the Russian internet.

Sam has now completed his fieldwork in Moscow and has started the writing-up process. In the summer he will be attending the ICCEES congress in Stockholm (with a sizeable TG contingent) and making a research trip to the British Library. He is

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also hoping to go to France on what he describes as a no-research trip. After the fun, he will be writing a book review and reprising his previous role in the catering industry, ready for next academic year.

Chris Lamont writes 'I hope everyone back at Glasgow is doing well! It has been a busy first year at the Univer-

sity of Ulster. In addition to settling into life in Derry (or Londonderry), I published my first book, *International Criminal Justice and the Politics of Compliance* (Ashgate 2010), and have been awarded an IREX, US State Department Title VIII funded grant, to spend August and September conducting field re-

search in on the politics of transitional justice in Croatia.'

Caroline Hoy (currently based in Edinburgh) writes: 'I am currently working on Health Impact Assessments in China with a colleague from the US and we presented a poster at the 'Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Conference: Urban

development and extractive industries: What can HIA offer?' in Geneva in April. I will be going to China later in the year to continue this work.'

GRANTS

'You wait forever for a grant, then three come along at once' (writes Sarah). She is Principal Investigator on a £99,407 ESRC project on *'The Internet and Everyday Rights in Russia'*, October 2010-September 2012. The project examines whether the internet can champion the causes of citizens in non-democratic states. It will study the role of the internet in political life in Russia in particular through an analysis of how people seek to fulfil their 'everyday' human rights in gaining access to social services such as pensions and health care. The study uses five central elements to study the role of the internet in these efforts: content, community, catalyst, control and co-optation. 'The co-investigator is Vikki Turbine

– we're looking forward to our first project together', she adds. 'I will focus on the national movements and travel to Moscow; Vikki will be continuing her research in Ul'yanovsk to study the links between local movements and the internet.'

Vikki is 'also delighted to be co-investigator with Sarah' on the project.

Sarah also secured an award from the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland on *Decoding the Online Sphere in the Post-Soviet Region*, March 2010-February 2011, £1060, which provides funds to lecture and liaise with researchers at the Faculty of Journalism at the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy in Kyiv on

researching the internet in post-Soviet states. I travelled to Kyiv in May for a week (she writes) to teach a research seminar with their first cohort of PhD students – the Faculty of Journalism is the first in the country to offer a research-based PhD degree in the Western style. The programme has seven amazing students and it was great to work with them. We hope that exchanges will continue at Kyiv-Mohyla, particularly if a TEMPUS bid for collaboration funds is successful. I have travelled there twice to teach and it's a very inspiring place – it makes one realise the critical role that higher education plays in the democratic health of a society (something that seems very

taken for granted right now in the United Kingdom!) While in Kyiv, I met several promising post-graduate in the Master of Journalism programme and have recruited them to work on my ESRC project under the direction of a lecturer at Kyiv-Mohyla, so I am hoping for a very fruitful relationship to continue. If anyone else is interested in guest teaching at Kyiv, please let me know and I will put you in touch with the university.

Finally there was an award from the British Academy on *International Potential, National Limits: Investigating the Role of the Russian Internet in Constraining the Social Agenda*, April 2010-September 2011, £6,780. This project seeks to better

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understand the dynamics of the online sphere through an analysis of internet content relating to access to state health care in Russia. The research takes a novel approach to the study of online media and the political sphere by emphasising the examination of a particular issue area rather than

the analysis of specific online sites. Jane was successful in a joint bid with colleague Ana Langer for Adam Smith Research Foundation seedcorn funding for a pilot project investigating 'Media reporting of China's health reforms, 2005-9'. Previous studies of the media in

China have concentrated on evaluating the balance between state control and media freedom. This project takes a new perspective by analysing the range of health policy debate in selected Chinese newspapers between 2005 and 2009. While we hope to publish at least one paper based on data from the pilot project,

we also hope to use it to develop a larger funding application for a study of whether particular government ministries used the media to influence health policy debates.

Daniel secured an award of £1265 from the Universities China Committee London to conduct research at the University Service Centre in Hong Kong, September – October 2010.

VISITORS

In February, the Scottish Centre for Chinese Social Science Research jointly with the Adam Smith Research Foundation, and funded by the University of Glasgow Partnership Development Fund, hosted a visit to Glasgow by Professor Zhu Guanglei of Nankai University, Tianjin. Professor Zhu, who is Provost of a key Glasgow partner university in China, is developing a research project on local governance in China together with Jane.

Ol'ga Kryshchanovskaya of the Institute of Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences was again our visitor in May 2010, in the course of which she addressed the crisis conference.

THE END OF BUSY YEAR

'The temptation to use some cliché or other was strong but I managed to resist' (writes Daniel Hammond). 'The end of 2009 was a strange one with the rush to finish and submit my thesis culminating in a late November submission. This was followed by not so much a sense of loss but a combination of elation, exhaustion and a lot of pondering what I should do next. I would like to say I

spent a lot of time working on articles, papers and being academically prolific but to be honest I think too much time was spent online in Azeroth and the like. Regardless the year finished happily, the first guilt-free Christmas and New Year in a long time.

Throughout doing my PhD I'd always been aware of the dreaded viva. This was due to both being part of the academic community at

Glasgow but also because of my father's steady stream of PhD students. It wasn't due to confidence or arrogance but my preparation for the viva probably did not follow convention. Perhaps I was still slightly queasy at the idea of reading the piece again but I managed to read it once or twice. I did manage to forget my conclusion. I realised this whilst stuck in a football-related traffic jam in Dunfermline the day

before the exam. Thankfully such thoughtlessness did not have any unpleasant repercussions.

I don't know what I was expecting but whatever it was my defence wasn't! The tension building up to the appointed hour was horrendous and so was the wait in Alasdair's office afterwards. The actual exam itself was really quite enjoyable and I got a nice range of questions covering everything

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from case selection, theory and my experience of doing research in the People's Republic. It goes without saying that passing was a wonderful feeling and it did make the previous years of work worthwhile.

There was not much time to revel as numerous activities have kept me occupied from February all the way up to the graduation ceremony which was held on 24 June. I've had a great time teaching first years on the comparative politics course and postgraduates taking the department's Contemporary Chinese Politics course.

Although it was frustrating to find that the lecture on social security reform still doesn't flow like I want it to! Helping organise the Scottish Centre for Chinese Social Science Research's workshop on publishing also took some of my time and provided a good opportunity to have my work critically reviewed. It was also nice to see some familiar faces and make some new friends in the field. In between times I've been applying for jobs. Probably the least fun exercise but a necessary one which I hope will end soon. So, what now? Considering I

am technically only in part-time employment the summer actually looks very busy and very exciting. I will be visiting the Bahamas, Indonesia, Hungary, Hong Kong and the People's Republic for a mixture of professional and personal reasons. A recent travel grant means I can work on collecting materials in Hong Kong and possibly the PRC for my book manuscript. I've also got a couple of papers to present on new areas of research which is both daunting and exciting. There are a couple of articles which need writing as well.

Outside of the academic world I'll enjoy visiting some new places, meeting some new people, and enjoying the fact that I've finally achieved becoming my own doctor doctor joke.'

Daniel adds that his 'Social assistance in China 1993-2002: institutions, feedback and policy actors in the Chinese policy process' has recently been accepted for publication in *Asian Politics and Policy*.

POLICY MAKING IN THE PRC

Daniel's thesis was entitled 'Explaining Policy Making in the PRC: The Case of the Urban Resident Minimum Livelihood Guarantee'. The abstract reads as follows:

From 1992 to 2003 the emergence of the urban resident Minimum Livelihood Guarantee (MLG) system saw a major reconfiguration and expansion of social assistance in the People's Republic of China (PRC). There are currently two gaps in current studies of the MLG which this dissertation will address. First,

detailed historical information on the MLG is lacking in the English language. Second, the focus of current studies on the effectiveness of the MLG has led to an implicitly rational explanation for the emergence and development of the policy. Such an explanation does not provide a satisfactory explanation for the MLG.

Using Chinese language sources and interview data collected during two field trips to the PRC this dissertation uses four different periods in the MLG's policy

development to argue that that explaining the programme requires a more complex approach. Drawing on insights provided by the China studies and wider political science literature I argue that the development of the MLG system has been a complex process which can be explained by using a synthesis of concepts. These are the role played by policy sponsors, a new concept developed in the dissertation, and policy entrepreneurs. Second, the continued importance of the structure of the Chinese state. And finally, the influence of feedback from previous

policy decisions and outcomes.

These three concepts are used to examine four significant stages of the MLG programme's development. First, the often overlooked emergence of the first MLG programme in Shanghai between 1992 and 1993 is examined. Second, the MLG's shift from a local innovation to a national policy from 1994 to 1997 is investigated. Third, the factors behind the significant expansion of the MLG between 1999 and 2003 are

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contrasted with more low-key developments in the scope and delivery of social assistance. Finally, the con-

cepts developed and applied to the MLG are taken and used to explain the emergence and spread of

the Community Public Service Agencies in Dalian. I conclude that the synthesis of the policy sponsor and

neo-institutionalist concepts provide a richer explanation of the MLG than that implicit in the existing literature.

CONGRATULATIONS

- to Alison, Daniel and Valya, who all received their PhD degrees at the ceremony in June 2010
- to Ariel, who successfully defended her doctoral thesis in June
- to Stephen, who has joined the editorial board of the US-based journal *Post-Soviet Affairs* and become joint editor of the *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, based at Hanyang University in Seoul and published by Elsevier, the first issue of which appeared in January
- to Elena, on her promotion at Aberystwyth University to Senior Lecturer



Above: Valentina and her supervisor

Below: Valentina and Daniel with their degrees



WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

The Transformation Group was established in 2004 as a framework for cooperation among staff and research students in the Department who work in whole or in part on political change in Eastern Europe, the Former Soviet Union and China. Since 2010 it has also addressed broader issues in comparative politics, especially but not exclusively in relation to Latin America. It is codirected by Jane Duckett and Stephen White, and includes (among other staff) Mo Hume, Ana Langer, Sarah Oates, Chris Thornhill, Bill Miller and Vikki Turbine; (among research assistants) Tania Biletskaya and Valentina Feklyunina; and (among research students) Daniel Hammond, Ariel Ko, Sam Robertshaw and Anke Schmidt-Felzmann. It also includes a wider group who have a continuing association with the Department: Tom Johnson, Katsuto Furusawa, Caroline Hoy, Derek Hutcheson, Elena Korosteleva, Yulia Korosteleva, Chris Lamont, Alison Swain, Wang Guohui and Kenneth Wilson.