

**'West Coast Seminars'**  
on  
**Economic and Social Change in Russia and Eastern Europe**  
**(Glasgow, West of Scotland [Paisley campus] and Strathclyde Universities)**  
**Sixteenth Annual Series 2009-2010**

***'Debates on Climate Change in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Russia'***

**Professor David Moon**  
Department of History, University of Durham

**Wednesday 27 January 2010**  
**at 5.30 pm**

**University of Glasgow, CEES Seminar Room, 8-9 Lilybank Gardens**

**Tea and coffee will be available from 5.00**

**All Welcome**

Abstract of paper

The issue of climate change in the steppe region of Russia was the subject of much discussion and debate over the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries among natural scientists, landowners and government officials in the region. There were broadly two lines of argument. On the one hand, it was argued that deforestation was making the climate harsher, drier, and causing droughts to recur more frequently. The other side of the debate asserted that climate change was cyclical and, in any case, the climate was a result of wider factors in the atmosphere and beyond that were outwith human influence and control. Like present-day debates over climate change, the discussions in Russia were of immediate practical importance. The steppe region, with its fertile soil, was developing into a major agricultural region and grain grown in the region was exported in increasing quantities. A change to a more severe and drier climate had major implications for the economy of the region and Russia as a whole.

David Moon is Professor of Russian history at the University of Durham.  
In 2008-9 he was a fellow of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton.

\* for further details please contact  
Prof Terry Cox, University of Glasgow  
Dr Irene McMaster, University of Strathclyde  
Prof Martin Myant, University of West of Scotland

0141 330 2343 [t.m.cox@lbss.gla.ac.uk](mailto:t.m.cox@lbss.gla.ac.uk)  
0141 554 4905 [irene.mcmaster@strath.ac.uk](mailto:irene.mcmaster@strath.ac.uk)  
0141 848 3367 [martin.myant@uws.ac.uk](mailto:martin.myant@uws.ac.uk)