

'West Coast Seminars'

on

**Economic and Social Change in Russia and Eastern Europe
(Glasgow, West of Scotland [Paisley campus] and Strathclyde Universities)**

Eighteenth Series 2011-2012

The organisers of the West Coast Seminar Series are grateful for the financial support provided by the University of Glasgow MacFie Bequest

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Wednesday 29 February 2012

17.30

Central and East European Studies Seminar Room, 8 Lilybank Gardens

Professor Birgit Menzel

University of Mainz

'The New Age of Russia (Occult and Esoteric Dimensions)'

Tea and coffee from 17.00

ALL WELCOME

Birgit Menzel is a co-editor of the recently published book on *"The New Age of Russia (Occult and Esoteric Dimensions)"* (SLCCEE, Volume 17) München - Berlin, Verlag Otto Sagner 2011, Hardcover, 451 pp., ISBN 978-3-86688-197-6)

Occult and esoteric ideas became deeply embedded in Russian culture long before the Bolshevik Revolution. After the Revolution, occult ideas were manifested in literature, the humanities and the sciences as well. Although the Soviet government discouraged and eventually prohibited metaphysical speculation, that same government used the Occult for its own purposes and even funded research on it. In Stalin's time, occultism disappeared from public view, but it revived clandestinely in the post-Stalin Thaw and became a truly popular phenomenon in post-Soviet Russia. From cosmism to shamanism, from space exploration to Kabbalah, from neo-paganism to science fiction, the field is wide. Everyone interested in the occult and esoteric will appreciate this book, because it documents their continued importance in Russia and raises new issues for research and discussion.