

Editorial

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Editor-in-Chief

The 2020 fall edition of *Slovo*, UCL's School of Slavonic and East European Studies' interdisciplinary, postgraduate peer-reviewed academic journal, entirely managed and edited by postgraduate students, comes out during a tumultuous period for the citizens of Belarus, who for almost a month now have peacefully protested against the continuing autocratic reign of Alyaksandr Lukashenka and the repression of their voices. In SSEES Prof. Andrew Wilson's 2011 book *Belarus*, he writes that Belarus is invisible to and absent from the Western imagination due to its small size and giant neighbors, but in these last three weeks the eyes of the world have been on Belarus and have seen the incredible determination and unity shown by the Belarusian people, and their desires for freedom and self-definition. This edition of *Slovo* was directly impacted by the Belarusian's state attempt to control information by temporarily shutting off the internet and its continued censorship of the internet and mass media, and we stand in solidarity with our Belarusian and international colleagues and call upon Belarusian officials to respect the honor and dignity of journalists and members of the academic press as we attempt to tell the story of Belarus and its people.

This edition of *Slovo* features two reviews that focus on opening our eyes to the world around us. In Pal Bence Bodo's review of Richard Pomfret's *The Central Asian Economies in the Twenty-First Century*, they write that it continues Promfret's deep study into the increasingly internationally significant Central Asian states, looking at the various ways the region's economies function, their intranational processes and their international relationships. From looking at regions, to looking at cities, Miruna Iacob's review of Jonathan Bach and Michał Murawski's collection of essays *Re-Centring the City. Global Mutations of Socialist Mode*, looks into architectural symbolism, the relationship of power, urbanism and the built environment, and prompts readers to consider these intertwining relationships.

As *Slovo* gets ready to transition to another group of SSEES postgraduates, I would like to thank this year's editorial team: Capucine May, Kryssa Burakowski, Josephine Smith, Alisa Musanovic, Clarissa Siu and Gloria Trifonova for their service during the 2019-2020 academic year. COVID-19 definitely affected our journal but didn't impinge the team's outstanding work. I would also like to thank advisor Dr. Sergei Bogatyrev, our fantastic international peer review team and SSEES leadership for their support this year.