



New Eastern Europe

(<https://neweasterneurope.eu/>)

Subscribe to NEE

(<https://neweasterneurope.eu/become-a-member-of-new-eastern-europe/>)

"Russia: its history, literature, and culture, have become pariahs"

A conversation with Professor Hubertus Jahn on the intellectual consequences of Russia's war against Ukraine. Interviewers: Dina Gusejnova and Simone Geggie, with editorial support from Dorine Schellens.

February 25, 2026 - [Dina Gusejnova](https://neweasterneurope.eu/post-author/dina-gusejnova/) (<https://neweasterneurope.eu/post-author/dina-gusejnova/>) [Hubertus Jahn](https://neweasterneurope.eu/post-author/hubertus-jahn/) (<https://neweasterneurope.eu/post-author/hubertus-jahn/>) [Simone Geggie](https://neweasterneurope.eu/post-author/simone-geggie/) (<https://neweasterneurope.eu/post-author/simone-geggie/>) -  [Interviews](https://neweasterneurope.eu/category/interviews-50/) (<https://neweasterneurope.eu/category/interviews-50/>)



A view of the Kremlin in 2017. Photo: Dina Gusejnova

This article consists of an in-depth interview with Cambridge historian Hubertus Jahn, who describes how Russia's war has transformed Russian Studies, creating a "déjà vu" effect of Soviet-era restrictions. He outlines practical adaptations, such as the emergence of informal networks, alternative archives in former Soviet republics, and electronic sources. Jahn sharply criticizes examples of western manifestos advocating negotiations with Putin as "*Realitätsverlust*" (loss of reality), tracing a "blood trail" of assassinations and wars proving Russia operates as a "mafia state". Drawing on German experiences with the Nazi legacy, he suggests that Russia will need a similar post-imperial reckoning. He advocates for media literacy education, support for independent Russian media in exile, increased funding for Eastern European Studies, and decolonizing rather than abandoning Russian history.

DINA GUSEJNOVA: How has Russia's ongoing war against Ukraine affected you and your subject area?

HUBERTUS JAHN: As someone who has travelled through the Soviet Union many times, well before *perestroika*, I remember academic and many other restrictions too well to be taken aback by the recent changes. In some ways, the current situation comes as a déjà vu to me. Indeed, by a rather

symbolic coincidence, some of my oldest and best friends in the USSR had spent time in prison in the Brezhnev years, a fate now shared, until recently, by a former student of mine who is one of the contemporary prominent victims of political persecution. Although history supposedly doesn't repeat itself, the Soviet or Russian carceral tradition clearly straddles generations and continues to live up to its reputation.

The fate of my elderly intelligentsia friends who are too old now to emigrate, the future of my courageous students, anxious emails from younger colleagues asking for help to find jobs outside Russia, the hundreds of life stories from displaced Ukrainian colleagues that I read in the summer of 2022 as part of the Cambridge Ukrainian Academic Support Scheme – this all has made the current situation deeply personal. I'm experiencing a profound feeling of loss and anger. The enthusiasm for a country and a subject I lived and cared for most of my life has been dragged into the mud. The genuine motivation with which we taught Russian history and culture, the excitement we instilled in our students, are gone or at least hard to sustain in light of the ongoing atrocities.

How can we teach history when the present is all overwhelming and demands action rather than contemplation and bookish pursuits? The actual destruction of Russia herself carried out by the current regime, in addition to its war against Ukraine, deeply affects everyone who studies the country. I can understand and feel all too well the despair and the shame of many of my Russian colleagues.

Russia, its history, literature, and culture have become pariahs.

What are the prospects for researchers in the field of Slavonic Studies under the current circumstances?

Luckily, I'm retired and will not be responsible for graduate students anymore, but if I were, I would presume that long forgotten practices from Soviet times will become useful again. They include above all informal networks and keeping personal contact with trusted scholars in Russia who can help to gather archival materials as long as travelling to Russia is logistically very difficult or simply morally repugnant. Then there are the various alternative repositories, depending on someone's research topic, archives in the former Soviet republics from Riga to Tbilisi, and, hopefully soon again, Kyiv could be a helpful way forward.

Not to forget some of the well-established and easily accessible western institutions like the Helsinki Slavonic Library, Dumbarton Oaks, the Hoover Institution, and so forth. There will certainly be an increased reliance on electronically available sources and data collections or published materials such as newspapers and other print and visual media.

But these will be limited to a relatively small number of research areas and methodological approaches. Consequently, people will have to adapt their topics and take accessibility of source materials more into consideration than they used to in the past. Indeed, if there is one small positive aspect of the current war, it'll be a closer focus on the histories of the peripheries of the Russian and Soviet empires.

How would you recommend students to gain insights into imperial Russian and Soviet history now?

As someone who has been studying the history of Georgia and the Caucasus for quite some time, I can only recommend having a closer look at libraries and archives at the former Soviet peripheries. The new changes in research topics will, in the long run, affect the discipline of Russian and Eastern European history more generally.

The job market will necessarily change and move further away from a Russian/Soviet focus. Recent advertisements already reflect a shift towards the inclusion of "non-Russian" regions. But the elephant in the room is not research logistics or the future development of our academic discipline. It is much more essential. And it is crucial for the future of Russia and her people. The question is: how can we properly decolonize Russian history and how will historians deal with the current situation in the future? The first will have to go back to the roots of our discipline in the 18th and 19th centuries, in order to dissect historical myth-making and imperialist historiographic traditions, all the way to Putin's blatant falsifications of history. The second will be an even more daunting task.

You are German, of course. Do you think this gives you a particular perspective on this time?

As a German, I grew up with the Nazi legacy and the various attempts to come to terms with this ugly past. I know personally that this de-Nazification process was not easy, and it took a very long time. Indeed, two generations, beginning with the complete defeat of the country in 1945, the Nuremberg Trials, western re-education programmes and the 1968 student movement.

How, if, and when Russians will eventually engage in a post-imperial *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (reconciliation with a traumatic national history), a proper de-Putinization, and long overdue de-Stalinization is the biggest challenge of the present time. The answer to this challenge will define not just the future of academic disciplines, but the order and wellbeing of Europe and the world more generally.

One of the striking features of our times is the repeated discussions of "reality" or "realism". There's no consensus any more about what that actually means. People seem to adopt a particular worldview and then define "realism" in a way that aligns with it. Take, for instance, the document penned by former leading members of Germany's Social

Democratic Party, in which they call for what could be mildly described as “de-escalation” between the West and Putin. From their perspective, realism means: you can’t defeat Russia, so you have to make peace with it, or come to terms with what it’s doing. But from another point of view, one could argue that realism also means recognizing international law, including Ukraine’s entitlement to sovereignty.

Over my academic career, postmodern history, cultural history became very much en vogue. Everyone did it. The word “discourse” was all over the place to the point that I really hated it because in the end it didn’t really provide that much intellectual traction. It is important to bear that in mind as a historian, discourses are per se an important historical factor that we need to study, but they’re not everything.

You have to understand all sides. You have to be aware of narratives, you have to be aware of fakes, and you have to be aware of plain facts and of what a source is. What is so mind-boggling today is the widespread absence of factual knowledge and basic source criticism. The 101 of the historians’ trade seems to have gone out the window, not just among many of these letter and manifesto writers, but also among some journalists.

The SPD members who wrote the manifesto and signed it (most of them, by the way, retired which is another telling aspect) have no expertise in Russian history. Much the same applies to the UK, where a collective letter in the *Guardian* (<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/jun/13/russia-adviser-fiona-hill-alarming-conclusion>) accusing Fiona Hill and British officials of “warmongering”. Its authors are mostly retired academics and former diplomats – people who are not really on the frontline, who have not had their students arrested in Russia as I had, who have not experienced the bombs right next to them, as I had in 2008 in Georgia, in a war that Russia conducted as a kind of dress rehearsal well before its attacks on Ukraine in 2014 and 2022.

Of course, this is where you need to think in historical dimensions, in the long durée; you need to think about the *blood trail*, quite literally, that moves through the Russian system. I would start even before Putin became president, back when he was already politically active and had become the head of the FSB, just before Galina Starovoitova’s assassination in 1998.

And then, of course, you have the many other assassinations that followed, including Yuri Shchekochikhin in 2003 (investigative journalist, 1950–2003), Anna Politkovskaya (investigative journalist, 1958-2006), Alexander Litvinenko (former FSB officer, 1962-2006) and Natalya Estemirova (human rights activist, 1958-2009). This goes all the way up to the murder of Boris Nemtsov in 2015, the poisonings of Vladimir Kara-Murza in 2015 and 2017, the murder of Zelimkhan Khangoshvili in 2019, and, finally, the killing of Alexei Navalny in 2024. If you look at this by far not exhaustive list, you have to ask yourself: what are we dealing with here? Are we dealing with a regular political system? I would say definitely not. This is a mafia state, pure and simple, as has been said many times before.

The idea that we can trust or negotiate with such people in good faith as has been suggested in the SPD manifesto and the *Guardian* letter, is simply hilarious. We have discussed for ages. They negotiated two Minsk (<https://ecfr.eu/article/ukraine-russia-and-the-minsk-agreements-a-post-mortem/>) agreements. They have been conducting all sorts of other discussions all the way up to February 2022, and what came of it: full blown war in Europe.

There is nothing to negotiate in a situation like this. That doesn't mean that we shouldn't think about scenarios of what will come after the war or the collapse of the regime. That is a completely different story, and something that members of the Russian opposition and politicians in the West have to think about. But to repeat, we shouldn't discuss with a war criminal who, as we can see time and again, is not willing to discuss anyway.

From this perspective, where do you see the responsibility of academics? Where does one's role within the educational institution end, and when does it become necessary to step outside of it? Where within education or research is protection of critical sensibility truly needed?

I think we should make students much more media savvy. Not in the sense that they should look at their phones *even more*, but in the sense that they should learn to critically question whatever they see and to understand the mechanisms of communication and propaganda. For that, we need to teach them historical and social contexts and methodological skills.

The current war is to a large extent also an information and disinformation war, and we need to be much better prepared for this. I remember when I was doing seminars at the European External Action Service (https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/creation-european-external-action-service_en) in the 2010s, I was advising EU officials already then to not give up on major media outlets like BBC World Service, Deutsche Welle, Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe, including their unique networks of country specialists and local reporters. In short, I was saying that we need better and more effective counter propaganda. Because at that time, Russian propaganda was already all over the place, but it was not yet recognized as such because it was done in a very subtle and underhand way, which continues to this day but now on a much larger scale.

[...]

When I first went to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the early 1980s, my friends told me how important it was for them to be able to get the news from BBC, Radio Liberty, etc.

It is similar now, just that shortwave radio receivers have been replaced by computers. People in Russia who know how to use VPNs can still get around government restrictions and access western media. The bigger problem is that the majority of the Russian population doesn't really care about the real news anymore. They are lulled into the state TV fairytales about a collective West out to destroy Russia, Ukrainian Nazis, the decadence of Gayropa, the greatness of Russia

and so forth. It is much more difficult and by now probably impossible for western media to reach these people. But one thing which we should nevertheless do, is continuing to support Russian journalists and news outlets in exile who can step in and run proper media operations once the regime collapses.

Some European actors have actually signalled that they want to protect or preserve European public media, how do you see that playing out?

That's good. These news outlets need to continue, need to be supported. But beyond these quality media, the big struggle is really against what I see as a general lack of seriousness when it comes to verifying and analysing sources, and the fact that particularly in social media everyone repeats something usually unchecked and often with some tweaks and changes in meaning.

I'm not entirely sure what you mean by sources?

Sources don't always have to be archival documents or written texts. Let's take language and terminology, for example, which can be investigated as historical phenomena. I remember during the *perestroika* years when the word "*demokrat*" was something of a badge of honour, and then a few years later, during the Yeltsin years – "*demokrat*" became "*der*"*mo*-*krat* (a pun combining "democrat" with *der'mo*, the Russian slang for "shit".) If you want to understand how people think, how their perceptions of reality or complex concepts such as democracy change over time, you need to pay attention to their use of language which reflects these changes, as in the case of "*demokrat*".

But that's a lot to ask for right? You're suggesting the readers of the SPD manifesto to disregard the entire narrative of the manifesto, instead read Putin's speeches and messaging, understand what he is saying, and learn that he is not trustworthy.

At least make an attempt to be aware of the manipulative aspects of political speech in Russia, which, by the way, have been brilliantly dissected in Riccardo Nicolosi's new book about Putin's (<https://www.wallstein-verlag.de/9783835391840-putins-kriegsrhetorik.html>) *Kriegsrhetorik* (<https://www.wallstein-verlag.de/9783835391840-putins-kriegsrhetorik.html>) (war rhetoric).

Riccardo shows very persuasively all the rhetorical registers which are used by Putin and Russia's propaganda machine to legitimize the war. It is exactly this kind of rhetoric that continues to fool the various manifesto and letter writers. They take its messages as a fact and don't see that it is a rather smart ruse and employed with a purpose.

But the authors of the *Guardian* letter are also not without blame when it comes to manipulative speech. In the letter against Fiona Hill (<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/jun/13/russia-adviser-fiona-hill-alarming-conclusion>), they almost casually slipped in the word "warmonger", thereby consciously tapping into Putin's vocabulary about the collective West in their attempt to undermine Hill's expertise and authority. One word can make all the difference; it sets the context

and leads the audience astray. This is why the letter published in support of Hill (<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/jun/20/there-is-only-one-warmonger-on-the-european-stage-vladimir-putin>) and signed by more than sixty experts in the field underlined specifically the importance of empirical evidence, which, when applied, by default makes Putin the only warmonger in Europe. In his typically laconic way, Boris Pistorius, the German defence minister, similarly referred to the absence of empirical facts in his criticism of the SPD manifesto. Cutting through its twisted assumptions and ideological noise, he characterized it with just one simple word: *“Realitätsverlust”* (<https://www.mdr.de/nachrichten/welt/osteuropa/politik/ukraine-krieg-merz-pistorius-manifest-spd-gespraeche-russland-100.html>) (a loss of grip on reality).

Realitätsverlust sets in when you don't have the open mind or the will to see things for what they are. This mindset is really frustrating, and I don't quite know where to start tackling it in an educational setting. How should we deal with the ever-growing drift into secluded virtual worlds and information bubbles?

I could observe this development first-hand during my years at Cambridge. I taught a very popular seminar on fin-de-siècle Russia from 2001 onwards all the way to my retirement two years ago. In the early years, I could always hear a lot of noise as I approached the classroom. The students were chattering and talking with each other. Then, sometime halfway through the 2010s, it became more and more quiet. Everyone was just sitting at their tables looking at their phones or playing on their laptops – there was hardly any interaction.

And there were definitely *no* provocative political discussions anymore. Sometimes I, as an older teacher, had to provoke them to think more critically about what they were getting taught and make connections to current affairs and the real world.

A Cambridge education should be above all an education that makes people think critically. But only few of those in the younger generations seem to have the drive or joy of doing that. Maybe because the economic situation is so dire, maybe because of the pandemic, maybe because they are afraid of the future. “When are we going to get a job?” “How are we going to cope with the environment as we get older?” I completely understand this. These issues are not new. If I were young today, I probably wouldn't be very optimistic either.



Listen to the latest *Talk Eastern Europe* podcast episode:



"Russia Failed Strategically in Ukraine" | Carl Bildt

Jun 16 • Talk Eastern Europe

Save on Spotify

20:33

Even within my lifetime, the changes have been significant. People often talk about a “polycrisis” – and there’s definitely a sense that multiple dramatic, existential concerns are converging. It feels as though people are now forced to choose which cause they’re most passionate about, as if prioritizing one over others has become a necessity.

We had some questions about your German background in general, the German historical legacy and how it helps you understand what’s going on now, and how to approach it. I think one of the things that seems relevant here is the question of taking Putin’s intentions seriously and sorting them into a time frame. When did the beginnings of his current “policies”, to use a euphemism, begin to take shape? I recall some paradigms from the historiography on National Socialism, such as the contrast between intentionalism and functionalism. Do you find yourself somehow moving closer to this framework in dealing with rethinking the origins of the Putin regime?

I am not a big friend of such paradigms. That’s why I became a historian – to break out from them and question them. In a way, I’m a natural revisionist. I always try to dig through and find out what’s behind the “big stories”. I’m also rather reluctant and careful when it comes to making grand statements. So, my functionalist side would not claim that Putin had everything set up beforehand. There were many other possibilities over time.

I mean, “what if?” is a classical question among historians. What if Boris Nemtsov had succeeded Yeltsin as president and not Putin? What if in 2008 Georgia would’ve been supported properly by the West? Because the Russian army then was not in its best shape. That’s why they started military reforms after 2008. There are numerous turning points in Russian history which didn’t quite turn. But then, and this is where the intentionalist side kicks in, there is also this proclivity in Russia to political violence.

The attempted coup against Gorbachev in 1991, Yeltsin shelling the Russian parliament, the White House in 1993 – these were all very important signposts in the development of Russian society’s political culture which then of course accumulated in Putin’s regime and the blood trail mentioned before.

The background to all of this is, of course, the Stalinist tradition and the fact that post-Soviet Russia has never had a proper lustration process. In this respect we were luckier in Germany, but it wasn’t all that straightforward either. Here are some stories from my own family.

My father was too young to be drafted into the Wehrmacht. But he experienced the Nazi years as an adolescent, and then he passed some of his experiences onto me: his dislike of populist politics, mass rallies, these kinds of things. He was an individualist to the core.

His mother on the other hand was a Nazi, basically because her husband, who died already before

the war, had been the local party leader in a very small Franconian village (he was the forestry official, the *only* official in that small place, and thus a typical representative of the Nazi party's early enrolment). I don't know the reasons why my grandfather joined the party, whether they were ideological or had to do with his career, but my grandmother kept up his memory through the years, and as far as I remember never really reflected on what it meant to be a Nazi. But when she died, we found all kinds of paraphernalia, like badges, commemorative booklets and insignia. I even remember a hand-knitted pillow with a swastika on it.

But we also found, and this is crucial, a number of propaganda leaflets that had been dropped over Franconia by the RAF, which my dad as a boy picked up when he strolled through the forest in the mornings. Of course, if he had been caught it would've landed him in prison or worse. These leaflets talked about the German losses at Stalingrad and the systematic extermination of the Jewish population. I found the fact that my grandmother kept this material together with the Nazi stuff quite intriguing. In a very direct way, it drove home to me the absurdity of the whole discussion about Germans not knowing anything about the Nazi crimes – of course they knew if they wanted to.

I suppose your father was not very far from Nuremberg and must have witnessed the trials which took place there between 1945 and 1949. Was there any discussion of the trials at his home?

I don't know. But my father told me that he was once arrested at the building where the trials took place. He was cycling into Nuremberg dressed in a military coat (the only thing he could find to keep himself warm). A policeman mistook him for a soldier but quickly released him once he noticed the mistake. This immediate post-war period was still marked by poverty. People didn't have much and had to improvise, like wearing old but still useful army clothes.

Apart from the odd story on my father's side, the war also affected my mother's family. They were Sudeten Germans, which meant that they became refugees after the war was over. This experience of loss of *Heimat* (homeland, belonging) is something which stuck with her all her life, and it probably transferred onto my sister and me an odd kind of subconscious anxiety. She often talked about how she was actually speaking Czech in kindergarten, how the Czech police in the village protected them, but that they had to leave anyway. They were clearly on good terms with the local Czechs, but then world politics interfered and everything turned upside down. As a young peasant girl, she couldn't really make any sense of this bigger picture. So, for her, this flight became a lifelong issue. When she had dementia in her old age she remembered and sang several verses of Czech children's songs, which came as quite a surprise to me.

But to go back to the previous question about the German historical legacy, I remember that I did not really learn much about the war and the Nazis in my school (we are talking about the late 1960s and early 1970s). Obviously, several teachers had been soldiers in the war or had already been adults during that time, and the history teachers in particular managed to tweak the

syllabus. It would have included the Second World War and the Nazis, but they somehow managed to get stuck in classical antiquity, with lots of stuff about the Greeks and Romans. In that way, when the school year came to its end, we somehow just got up to the First World War, and that was it. However, a few years later, the focus of history teaching in my school was squarely on the Holocaust and the Nazis.

Clearly, there was a generational shift among the teachers, with a new cohort coming in that had been at university during the 1968 student movement. Although I was too young to be in that movement, I already followed the discussions of the time in the media and observed some of the street demonstrations through the fence of my school.

Even if I didn't learn much about National Socialism in school, there were plenty of other opportunities outside the classroom: vivid media images and political discussions; Willy Brandt's symbolic acts, his *Kniefall* in Warsaw in 1970, on black-and-white TV news; and later major debates like the *Historikerstreit* (historical debate) or the *Wehrmachtsausstellung* (Wehrmacht exhibition).

Remembering these efforts of coming to terms with the past, but also the strong resistance that was put up against them at a time when West Germany was wealthy, prosperous, and had no reason whatsoever not to face its past, shows me how difficult it is going to be to get to this point in Russia. I don't think it will happen any time soon, if at all.

Memorial (<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-59853010>?) did of course try to come to terms with the Stalinist past and the human rights violations of the present. But the fact that they were repressed and eventually closed down in Russia tells you a lot about where the country is heading. Indeed, as I have said elsewhere (<https://www.historyworkshop.org.uk/a-war-on-history-patriotism-and-propaganda-in-contemporary-russia/>), Putin's regime and in particular the war against Ukraine is also a war on history.

SIMONE GEGGIE: To close, we were wondering in your view, what institutional or organizational responses are most needed right now? You talked about media literacy and counterintelligence, but is there anything specific that you would like to add?

The strength of the international courts to carry out their verdicts and arrest war criminals. The international law system needs to be strengthened again because it has been weakened all around in a very cavalier way.

DINA GUSEJNOVA: Yes, but within science, diplomacy, or educational programmes?

Spend more money on language teaching and on language and history departments. Our field is in many ways a child of the Cold War. Although professorial chairs in East European history existed in Berlin and Vienna since the early 20th century, and SSEES (School of Slavonic & East European

Studies) in London was founded shortly afterwards, the growth of the field, the establishment of more institutes and university chairs came as a result of the Cold War.

However, this development has ended in recent years. The fact that after my retirement the History Faculty at Cambridge does not have anybody anymore who teaches and studies imperial Russian history is one indication of these changes.

But was it also an overcorrection? Because you mentioned decolonization before. One of the consequences some people have drawn from the current war is to remove the study of Russian history altogether from their agenda.

That wouldn't make sense. But as I have said before, we need to decolonize Russian history and put it into a broader context. Russia is one of the biggest colonizers in the world. It has been through centuries. I mean, from the 16th century onwards. Russian history to a large extent is also Global history simply by its geographic dimensions. For example, when studying the Caucasus, which was for some time part of the Russian and Soviet empires, you are always confronted with the question where it actually belongs to, institutionally speaking. Which university department should be in charge of it? Russian Studies? Middle Eastern Studies? Oriental Studies? Global History? A case can be made for each one of them.

When I started my academic career, Global history as we know it today didn't exist. My early experience was Russian Area Studies. You study a region in a comprehensive fashion because you have the language, you know the literature, the politics, the ethnography, the history of a specific area, and of course its wider context as well. Various area studies could also intersect and overlap. The same can be done for the study of empires.

This kind of "inter-imperial history" is something that I find fascinating, where you deal with imperial borderlands from various sides. You look at the Russian Empire, the Persian Empire, the Ottoman Empire, and what you get in Georgia is an interplay of all three of them.

This interview took place on June 17th 2025

Professor Hubertus Jahn is a German historian who has spent over four decades studying Russia and the Soviet Union. He first travelled to the USSR in 1982 and has maintained extensive personal and professional connections in the region throughout his career. Until his retirement two years ago, he taught Russian and Soviet history at Cambridge University, where he remains a Fellow at Clare College. He is chair of Friends of Academic Research in Georgia (FaRiG (<https://www.farig.org/>)), a London-based charity that supports research in the Humanities in Georgia. His research has taken him throughout the former Soviet space, including Georgia during the 2008 war. He has witnessed firsthand the evolution of Russian politics from the Soviet period through the Putin era.

Dina Gusejnova is Associate Professor in International History, London School of Economics and Political Science and a Researcher at the Conflict and Civiness Group at LSE Ideas. She received her BA, MPhil and PhD from the University of Cambridge, where supervisions and lectures by Hubertus Jahn proved a significant influence. She is a co-founder of the EU-funded Eastern Academic Alliance and Project 2022, connecting her research interests in the cultural and intellectual history of two World Wars with contemporary policy-oriented work in support of scholars at risk.

Simone Geggie is a recent graduate of the London School of Economics and Political Science and Columbia University's dual MA/MSc programme in International and World History, where she specialised in Cold War security and diplomacy. This interview was conducted as part of Project 2022, an initiative led by Dina Gusejnova and Dorine Schellens (Leiden University) examining the impact of Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine on research and education in Europe. Simone works across Project 2022's editorial and communications portfolio, interviewing contributors, editing articles, and overseeing its media presence.

🔗 [Russia \(https://neweasterneurope.eu/tag/russia/\)](https://neweasterneurope.eu/tag/russia/), [Russian culture \(https://neweasterneurope.eu/tag/russian-culture/\)](https://neweasterneurope.eu/tag/russian-culture/), [Russian imperialism \(https://neweasterneurope.eu/tag/russian-imperialism/\)](https://neweasterneurope.eu/tag/russian-imperialism/), [Russian invasion of Ukraine \(https://neweasterneurope.eu/tag/russian-invasion-of-ukraine/\)](https://neweasterneurope.eu/tag/russian-invasion-of-ukraine/), [Russian studies \(https://neweasterneurope.eu/tag/russian-studies/\)](https://neweasterneurope.eu/tag/russian-studies/)

TERMS OF USE ([HTTPS://NEWASTERNEUROPE.EU/2014/01/01/NEW-EASTERN-EUROPE-WEBSITE-TERMS-OF-USE/](https://neweasterneurope.eu/2014/01/01/new-eastern-europe-website-terms-of-use/)) | [COOKIE POLICY \(HTTPS://NEWASTERNEUROPE.EU/2013/05/14/PRIVACY-COOKIE-POLICY/\)](https://neweasterneurope.eu/2013/05/14/privacy-cookie-policy/) | COPYRIGHT 2026 KOLEGIUM EUROPY WSCHODNIEJ IM. JANA NOWAKA-JEZIORAŃSKIEGO ([HTTP://WWW.KEW.ORG.PL](http://www.kew.org.pl)) 31-153 KRAKÓW
AGENCJA DIGITAL: [HAUERPOWER \(HTTPS://WWW.HAUERPOWER.COM\)](https://www.hauerpower.com) STUDIO KRAKOW.
[Cookies settings](#)