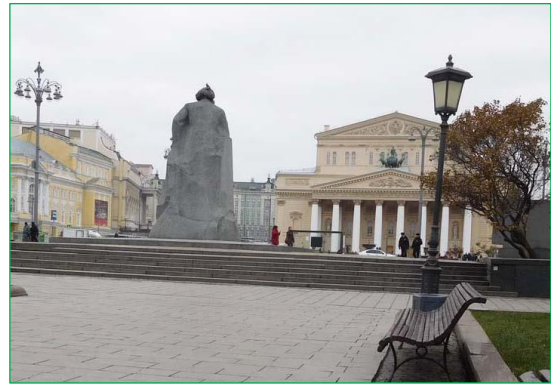




Statue Still Standing: Worker and Peasant, VDNKh, Moscow



Statue Still Standing: Karl Marx Facing Bolshoi, Moscow

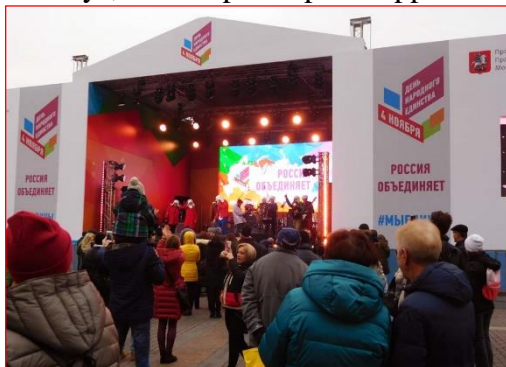
REES Academics Visit Moscow for Research and to Observe Events Related to the 100th Anniversary of the Great Bolshevik Revolution of 1917

Christopher Mark Davis
15 November 2017

On Sunday 5th October Chris Gerry and I travelled to Moscow together for academic work related to our joint and individual projects on economics of health and health reform in Russia. While in Moscow we observed the official National Unity Day celebrations (4-6 November) and a Communist Party of Russia rally to mark the 100th anniversary of the October Revolution (7 November). We also viewed an exhibition of the well-known (Beijing Olympics) Chinese fireworks artist, Cai Guo-Qiang, entitled *October: On the Occasion of the October Revolution's Centenary* at the Pushkin Fine Arts Museum.

Our joint academic project (since 2013) is based in the *Research Laboratory on the Economics of Health and Health Reform* at the *Russian Presidential Academy of the National Economy and Public Administration* (RANEPA). Chris G. and I devoted much of Monday (a public holiday) to reviewing and discussing a 200-page technical doctoral dissertation on health economics in Russian language that was prepared by a researcher in our project. This was in preparation for a practice doctoral defence seminar on the following day that we were scheduled to co-chair and to act as reviewers.

However, we had some free time on Monday to observe the tail-end of the celebration of *National Unity Day*, the new holiday introduced in 2005 to replace the traditional Soviet one dedicated to the *Great October Revolution* on 7 November. Numerous events were held around Red Square and in other places in Moscow. Selected photos are shown below of a family-oriented concert and fair held just outside the Kremlin walls. The turnout was low relative to more established Russian holidays, but the participants appeared to be enjoying themselves.



National Unity Day Stage, Outside Kremlin Walls, Moscow



Band Singing "Ghostbusters" on National Unity Day, Moscow



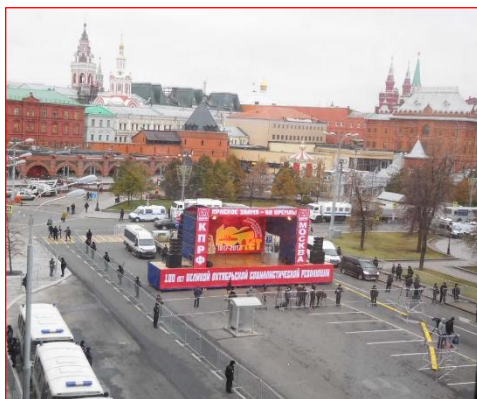
Participants in National Unity Day
Concert, Moscow



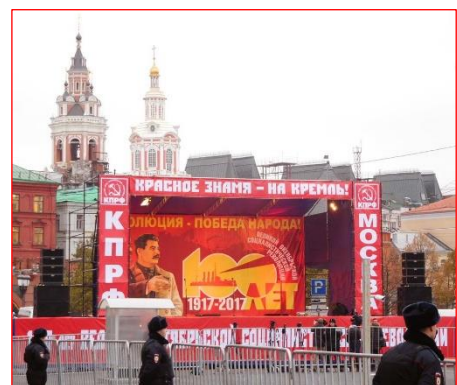
Folk Dancers at National Unity Day
Fair, Moscow

The practice doctoral defence seminar on Tuesday 7 November was held in a conference room of the *Ministry of Finance Scientific Research Finance Institute*. This was due to the fact that the Director of NIFI, Dr. Vladimir Nazarov, is a Co-Director, with Chris G. and me, of the RANEPА health project and he had a tight schedule with obligations at the Ministry. The event was successful in that the candidate obtained useful feedback that will help her to revise her written work and PP presentation. This was followed by a RANEPА project workshop in which all participants reviewed their recent research and outlined their individual plans for 2018. Then the Co-Directors of the project held a planning meeting, at which it was confirmed that the RANEPА project had been extended for a fifth year, through 2018.

After these meetings Chris G. and I walked down Tverskaya to a photographic studio, so that he could obtain new visa photos. As we approached Red Square and our hotels, we noticed heightened security, with barriers along the streets and large numbers of police, National Guard, and OMON troops. It turned out that the government had authorised a rally by the Communist Party of Russia to celebrate the 100th anniversary of October Revolution. The stage was located in a heavily-guarded area in Revolution Square, next to the park with the Karl Marx statue (see below). By coincidence, the rally was held directly below the window of my room at the front of the Metropol Hotel (hence the photos taken from above). The backdrop of the stage paid tribute to the leaders of the Revolution and the Soviet Union, notably Lenin and Stalin. The Communist Party supporters arrived with a large banner with the message *Hail to the Great October Socialist Revolution!*. The reasonably well-attended rally (relative to the confined space) had music, singing of revolutionary songs, and speeches by political and cultural leaders.



Stage for Communist Rally in
Revolution Square, Moscow



Stage Backdrop Paying Tribute to
Bolshevik Leaders, Moscow



Communist Supporters Arrive Early
with Great October Banner, Moscow



Communist Party Rally at Its Peak,
Moscow

During the three years before Chris G. took up his academic position at Oxford REES in September 2017, he held a post of *Professor of Economics* at the *Higher School of Economics – St. Petersburg* and established its *Center for Health Economics, Policy and Management (CHEMP)*. On the Wednesday he travelled to St. Petersburg to help appoint a new Director of CHEMP and to attend to some residual teaching, examining and administrative chores.

I remained in Moscow and devoted Wednesday and Thursday to RANEPa project administration and planning, as well as to revising a new journal article I had co-authored with a Russian health economist colleague entitled: *Motivation of Doctors in the UK and Russia, 2000-2020: Concepts, Doctors' Perceptions, and Evidence*. It argues that the motivation of doctors in both countries is multi-dimensional, with commitment to serve their communities being a major factor. In neither country is performance-based remuneration a popular or effective incentive. Evidence is provided to show that motivation varies by gender, stage of career, birth cohort, and generation. It is argued that the growing numbers of doctors *Generation Y* (born 1980-2000) have different attitudes and aspirations than do those of previous generations (*Generation X* and *Baby Boomers*).

I met my co-author, Prof. Sergey Shishkin of the Higher School of Economics, on the Thursday to discuss revisions of the article that need to be carried out before we meet again in Moscow in December. I have known Sergey since the early 1990s and have been a Visiting Fellow in his department. He was the Chair of the *Working Group on Health* for Russian government's *Strategy 2020* published in 2012. He now holds the equivalent position in the preparation of *Strategy for Russia During 2018-2024*, which will cover the period of the next Presidential administration.



Poster of Cai Guo-Qiang October Exhibition at Pushkin, Moscow

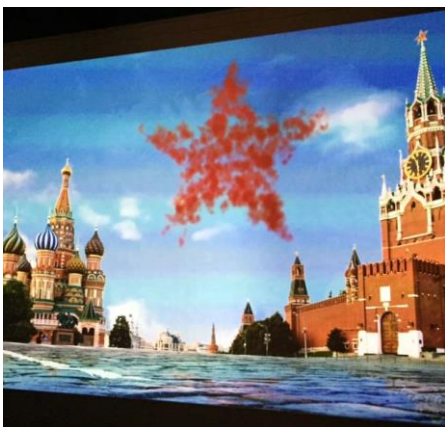


Cai Guo-Qiang Sketches of Proposed October Fireworks in Red Square

The internationally renowned artist Cai Guo-Qiang (<http://www.caiguoqiang.com/>) was influenced by classical Russian painters in his youth and then by talented Soviet art teachers who worked in China while he was developing. As a result, he has had a long-standing interest in Russia and wanted to commemorate the history-altering Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 by producing a fireworks display on the scale of the Beijing Olympics in Red Square, Moscow on its centenary. He developed sketches and elaborate plans for the production of the fireworks. However, the government of Russia, while appreciating the gesture, decided for a variety of reasons that it could not authorise such an extravagant fireworks display on 7 November 2017. But the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts decided to host an exhibition of the artist's work related to the *October* project. Several photos are included in this blog. The exhibition was most impressive, especially the video of the hypothetical fireworks display in Red Square, the hammer & sickle carved in a wheat field and view from a mirrored ceiling, and the large gunpowder compositions of *The River* (black-and-white) and *The Garden* (colour).

In sum, the centenary of the Great October Revolution of 1917 was not entirely ignored in Moscow last week.

Photographs in this blog were taken by Christopher Davis and Antonia Cunliffe-Davis.



Screen-Grab from Video of Proposed October Fireworks in Red Square



Hammer and Sickle in Wheatfield Reflected in Roof Mirror, Pushkin

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