

Photography in the Russian Empire & Soviet Union (Moscow, 2-4 Oct 13)

German Historical Institute Moscow, Oct 2-04, 2013

Deadline: Feb 28, 2013

Isabelle de Keghel

Call for papers

International Workshop

Photography and Visual Orders in the History of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union

Photographs are two-dimensional simplifications of a four-dimensional reality; they often possess a greater power of suggestion than the natural visual sensation. This, along with their technical reproducibility, explains the rise of photography to one of the most important everyday representations of people, places, and events since the late 19th century. It seems logical to search for the symbolic orders in and behind this new world of images (whether familial, political, or economic), as well as for their origins and medial transmission, and their producers and recipients. The workshop is organized in cooperation with the German Historical Institute Moscow and the Collaborative Research Center (CRC) "Threatened Orders" of Tübingen University and devotes itself to these topics using the example of Russian / Soviet History between 1840 and 1990. The purpose of this, first of all, is to lay down thematic guidelines for further research and to coordinate running projects.

The following four thematic fields will serve as starting point:

1) Method and Theory

What contribution can photo-historical approaches and questions make to the study of both Russian and Soviet History, and to the study of (threatened) orders (also in a transnational context)? Orders are considered to be threatened according to the CRC-terminology, when options for action become insecure, patterns of behaviour and routines are called into question, and when a threat communication is established.

2) Images of the Other

Photographs are considered to have a causal connection to reality.

Therefore, they play a key role in visualising foreigners and foes. What strategies of inclusion, exclusion, defamation, or romanticization can be observed?

3) Ideas of Order

Photojournalism, which was considered the most important genre of Soviet Photography since the end of the 1920s, visualised the ideals of the New Soviet person and his / her society. In this context, we are not only interested in how achievements in industrialization, space travel, or sports were represented by means of photography, but also if and in what context threats were visualized.

4) Practices, Techniques, Media

What did the social and organizational infrastructure behind the worlds of images visualizing order and threat look like? Through which agents and media did their dissemination occur? How did amateurs apply or alter the official picture language? What motifs and presentation techniques were formative?

Interested scholars from all disciplines, who work on the History of Photography in Russia or the Soviet Union, please send a proposal for a talk (25 minutes, length: maximum 400 words) and a short CV until 28 February 2013 to Isabelle de Keghel (keghel@gmx.de).

Applications may be submitted in German, Russian or English. Conference Languages will be Russian and English (with simultaneous translation).

Proposals from the entire field of the History of Photography in Russia and the Soviet Union between 1840 and 1990 are welcome. Particular attention will be paid to the thematic fields mentioned above.

The number of speakers is limited to fifteen. Applicants will be notified of the chosen proposals by 30 March 2013.

The conference is funded by the GHI Moscow and the CRC 923 "Threatened Orders" of Tübingen University. The expenses on travel and accommodation will be covered by the organizers. A publication of selected articles is planned.

We are looking forward to your proposals!

Organisation/Contact:

Dr Isabelle de Keghel, University of Konstanz (keghel@gmx.de)
Dr Katharina Kucher, University of Tübingen
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Reference:

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(accessed May 13, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/4372>>.