

Valsts drošības komitejas zinātniskās izpētes komisija

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International Conference August 11-13 2016 "BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU: KGB and its Front Organizations" Commemorating the 25th anniversary of the dissolution of the KGB in Latvia

08.02.2016

International Research Conference Commemorating the 25th anniversary of the dissolution of the KGB in Latvia caused by the Soviet coup d'état attempt in 1991: "BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU: KGB and its Front Organizations". 11-13 August 2016, Riga, Latvia

The security services were the key element of the all countries of the Soviet bloc. The Soviet regime was supported by the Soviet political secret police, the so-called Cheka, founded in 1917 as The All-Russian Extraordinary Commission. In 1940 when USSR occupied Baltic States, the functions of Cheka were brought to the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (*NKVD*). The oppressive and extent apparatus searched for and physically eliminated opponents and suspected opponents of the Bolshevik power until the restoration of independence in 1991. Soviet political persecutions affected hundreds of thousands of inhabitants of the Republic of Latvia. Renamed as *NKVD-NKGB-MGB-MVD-KGB* Cheka controlled society by holding it in horror and fear in the light of systematic terror as methodology of the Soviet governing. Now, when Latvia celebrates 25 years since it regained independence from the Soviet Union, the public pressure to publish the lists of KGB agents who spied on their family, neighbors, colleagues and countrymen is growing. Between the end of the World War Two and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 nearly thirty thousand of the KGB covert agents and informers have operated in Latvia. The conference theme, however, extends beyond the totalitarian context and encourages its participants to reflect on the question of how commemorating and communication practices in a post-totalitarian society, media, art communication are involved in generating social memories of past, selves, related narratives of shame, guilt, fear, nostalgia, cultural trauma and post-totalitarian national identity (re)building.

The conference is organized by the **University of Latvia and the Government Commission for KGB Research**. The Commission had been established by the Cabinet of Ministers on August 5, 2014 to carry out scientific research as it is specified by the law "On maintenance, use of documents of the former Committee for State Security (KGB) and establishing the fact of collaboration of a person with the KGB" and for coming with conclusions until May 31, 2018 on the Soviet totalitarian and bureaucratic authoritarian regime and its crimes, as well as on the KGB as the tool for ensuring the occupation regime. These conclusions must enable full public access to the KGB documents.

Languages of the conference will be Latvian, English and Russian. All those interested in conference are encouraged to participate – both as presenters and as auditors. The organizers will cover the accommodation and travel expenses for the presenters. Participation is free of charge. Abstracts will be published in a PDF Abstract Book. Full papers submitted until on September 1, 2016, will be published.

Topics

Topics of interest include, but are not limited to:

- emerging and evolution of the Soviet *NKVD-NKGB-MGB-MVD-KGB* system, transplantation to Baltics and evolution of managing their counterparts in other countries;
- everyday functioning of the security services community of the Soviet bloc countries, its ideological, political, legal and social narratives; methods of control in the Soviet bloc totalitarian society;
- case studies of covert operations by secret services of the USSR and the Soviet satellite states in the field of intelligence, counterintelligence, antireligious matters, fighting against the Church, so called ideological subversion, infiltration into Western societies, etc.
- the digitization of the secret services archives;
- social, and political impacts of the declassifying and the revealing Soviet-era archive files open to the public;
- the influence of the Communist parties, especially the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, on operations of the security services community of the Soviet bloc countries.

Submission

Participants may submit more than one proposal, but only one paper by the same author will be accepted. Abstracts should contain a clear outline of the argument, the theoretical framework, and, where applicable, methodology and results. An abstract of your paper of 1500-2500 characters with spaces in Latvian, Russian or English (as well as, in exceptional cases, in German) and Curriculum Vitae (both *.pdf of *.doc file format) should be sent to vdk@lu.lv until March 15, 2016.

Timeline

Deadline for papers proposal is March 15, 2016.

Notification of acceptance: March 31, 2016.

Conference program will be available by April 15, 2016.



LPSR VDK zinātniskās izpētes komisija un eksperti 2015. gada 16. decembrī starptautiskajā zinātniskajā konferencē. Kristīnes Jarinovskas foto.

Deadline for submission of the full papers (optional): September 1, 2016.



Information

University of Latvia: www.lu.lv/vdkkomisija/eng/

Call for papers

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