

COSMIC ENTHUSIASM

The cultural impact of space
exploration on the Soviet Union
and Eastern Europe since the
1950s



International conference, January 22-24, 2009.

Conference venue: University of Basel, Historisches Seminar, Hirschgässlein 21, 4051 Basel

Day 1 Thursday, Jan 22, 2009

9.30 **Welcome and Introduction (Organizers)**

10.00 **I. Spaces of thought - theoretical and literary approaches**

Limited or Infinite? Concepts of Space in Geometry and Semiotics of Literature:
Andrea Zink / Christof Weber (University of Basel)

A Dream Come True. Close Encounters with Outer Space in Soviet Popular
Scientific Journals of the 1950's and 60's: Matthias Schwartz, (FU Berlin)

Commentary and discussion: Michael Hagemeister (University of Basel)

12.00 Lunch break

14.00 **II. Representations of Soviet spaceflight from the 1950s to the 1970s**

Visualizing Spaceflight: The Films of Pavel Klushantsev: Cathleen Lewis
(Smithsonian Institute, Washington D.C.)

The Heroic and the Ordinary: Photographic Representations of Soviet Cosmonauts
in the Early 1960's: Iina Kohonen (University of Design and Art, Helsinki)

The Historical and Cultural Space Heritage Propaganda - the Experience of a
Russian regional public organization: Vladimir Sadyr (Krasnodar)

Constructing Cosmic Enthusiasm: A Case Study of the Krasnodar Territory: Anna
Eremeeva (Krasnodar State University of Culture and Arts)

Evening program:

Soviet space movies from the 1950s to the 1980s

Day 2 Friday, Jan 23, 2009

9.30 **III. Space, utopia and children/youth**

'Let's Find Out Where the Cosmonaut School Is':
Soviet Girls and Cosmic Visions in the Aftermath of Tereshkova": Roshanna
Sylvester (DePaul University, Chicago)

Kosmos and Cosmology: Space exploration and atheist education in the late Soviet
period": Victoria Smolkin (University of California, Berkeley)

The Rise and Fall of Cosmic Millenarianism in Russia: Dmitry Shlapentokh (Indiana
University)

Commentary and discussion: Monica Rùthers (University of Constance)

12.00 Lunch break

13.45 **IV. Spaceflight as popular culture and cultural export**

Soviet cosmonauts and American astronauts in Yugoslavia - Who did the Yugoslavs love more?: Radina Vučetić (University of Belgrade)

Unresolved Tensions: Mass Culture and Secrecy in the Soviet Space Program: Asif A. Siddiqi (Fordham University; New York)

Space Exploration in Western and Soviet Popular Culture: Wishful Thinking vs Conspiracy Theories: Andrei Rogatchevskii (University of Glasgow)

Commentary and discussion: Ulrich Schmid (University of St. Gallen)

16.15 **V. Space memories**

Memories of Space and the Spaces of Memory: Remembering Sergei Korolev: Slava Gerovitch (Massachusetts Institute of Technology)

The presentation of the first spaceflight and the generation of 60-s in the contemporary Russian historical museums: Anna Lyubivaya (Polish Academy of Science, Warsaw)

Commentary and discussion: Ekaterina Emeliantseva (University of Zürich)

Day 3 Saturday, Jan 24, 2009

9.30 **VI: Space heroes and heroines**

Truth and Legend: The New Soviet Man and Yuri Gagarin in Soviet Propaganda: Trevor Rockwell (University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada)

Two Images of a Spaceman in Estonian Art: The Missing Myth of a Hero and the Fable of Failure: Anneli Porri (Tallinn / Estonia)

Laika: First cosmonaut and space hero: Roman Marek (University of Paderborn)

Valentina Tereshkova and the transcontinental battle of the sexes: Julia Richers (University of Basel)

Commentary / Discussion: Carmen Scheide (University of Basel)

12.30 **Final Discussion**

We thank the following organizations for their support and cooperation:



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