PRESS RELEASE

"Nonconformism and Dissent in the Soviet Bloc: Guiding Legacy or Passing Memory?"

The Ukrainian Studies Program, Harriman Institute at Columbia University, is presenting a conference entitled "Nonconformism and Dissent in the Soviet Bloc: Guiding Legacy or Passing Memory?" to be held at Columbia University March 30th - April 1st, 2011. The conference is being presented twenty years after the fall of the Soviet Union, a time of continued uncertainty in Eastern Europe.

The conference will focus on political and cultural nonconformism in Ukraine, Russia, and Poland in the 1960s to 80s. It will bring together an international assemblage of scholars studying that period of time as well several noteworthy dissidents and artists. The conference will offer a historical overview of the period and will present the latest research conducted on the subject. Additionally, the conference will provide an analysis of the political and cultural legacies of these movements in today’s Ukraine, Russia, and Poland.

Among the questions the conference aims to address are: Where are the dissidents and cultural leaders of the Soviet era underground today? Are they in positions of power? Are they influential political figures or gurus in contemporary culture? Do they represent their people in the world as they once did? What media forums are available for their voices? Do Ukraine, Russia, Poland, and the world need them today?

The conference will examine these issues through a series of scholarly panels as well as roundtable discussions featuring prominent Soviet-era dissidents and nonconformist artists. The three-day conference will begin with an evening keynote address by Dr. Myroslav Marynovych, former Ukrainian dissident and prisoner of conscience and, currently, Vice-rector for the University Mission of the Ukrainian Catholic University (L'viv, Ukraine); the address will be followed by a reception. Days two and three will include panels and roundtables followed by cultural programming in the evenings showcasing achievements in nonconformist film, music and literature of this era.


The Conference will conclude with a special North American concert by Victor Morozov, a legendary nonconformist cultural figure in Soviet Ukraine and a major recording artist in Ukraine today.
The conference is free and open to the public.

All conference panels and roundtables, as well as the keynote address, will be held in Rm. #1501, International Affairs Building, 420 West 118th St., Columbia University, New York, New York 10027. The keynote address and reception will take place on March 30th at 7PM. The panels and roundtables will begin at 9:30AM on March 31st and at 10AM on April 1st.

The film presentation will be held on March 31st at 8PM in Rm. 717 Hamilton Hall.

The Victor Morozov concert will be held on April 1st at 8PM at the Ukrainian Museum, 222 East 6th Street, New York, NY 10003.

The conference is presented by the Ukrainian Studies Program at the Harriman Institute, Columbia University.

It is organized in collaboration with the East Central European Center (Columbia University), the Polish Cultural Institute (New York), and The Ukrainian Museum.

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