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Intersections among Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Polish and Czechoslovak Art Photographers from 1960s to Early 1990s

Research on the history of art photography mainly focuses and describes prominent individuals, photography groups and schools if they were isolated in one country or even city, but the research of influences and inspirations that helped in development of art photographers' main styles is still very minor. Was there a community of like-minded artists? What were the stylistic, aesthetic, conceptual and technical influences between Czechoslovak, Polish, Ukrainian, Lithuanian and Latvian art photography schools? How did they differ between these places?

The aim of the research is to provide historical awareness on social intersections between the Czechoslovak (Josef Koudelka, Jan Saudek Jindřich Štreit), Polish ("Zero 61" and "Lodz Kaliska" groups), Ukrainian ("Keturi" and "Vremya" groups), Lithuanian (Vitas Luckus, Vitalijus Butyrinas, Aleksandras Macijauskas) and Latvian ("A" group) photographers, to trace the process of migration of creative ideas and technical approaches in photography, how the context of the censorship shaped the outlook of schools of photography, how in some case particular photographers and organizations benefited from it, while some were pushed to form underground movements.

The thesis of the study is that the contacts and visual inspirations between mentioned groups and photographers were extensive and there was a place for visual inspirations for photographers from Lithuania, Latvia and Ukraine by their colleagues from Poland and Czechoslovakia, which had longer history of photography and had even less strict censorship than Baltic states. It is supposed that the evidence will show that the works produced reflect these interactions which resulted similarities between individual photographers, influences by individuals on styles that were used during those times and created platforms for emerging photography art groups in countries mentioned above.

The first part will briefly discuss the state of photography as it shifted from believing in the documentary aspects of the photographic image to acceptance of photography as an art form internationally. The second part will reveal the history of the art photography groups and some individuals that had an impact on the medium of photography locally and globally, and their strategies in attempt of communication between each other. The third part will consist of analysis of selected art photographers with examples of their works of art (techniques, materials, approaches), their similarities and radical differences.

The time period from the late 1960s to 1990s will be studied as an important period of the development of art photography. Information on each group will consist of time frames of

when and under which circumstances it was founded, highlighting the main styles used, from which field they came to photography, their role in the developing of new ideas and changing medium of photography and their strategies of sharing their artworks with photographers from other republics.

Social art history will include finding and summarizing biographical data about the important figures, relying on published sources, personal interviews, and access to archival photographs and written materials. Visual analysis of specific works produced during the time period studied.