

# David King's Red Star Over Russia now available in German

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David King's *Red Star Over Russia: A Visual History of the Soviet Union from 1917 to the Death of Stalin* is now available in German translation published by Mehring Verlag. The book can be ordered directly from the publishing house. Details are given below.

*Red Star Over Russia* is a gripping visual history of the USSR from 1917 up until the death of Stalin. The rousing style of the book, drawing from cinéma vérité, firmly plants the reader in the turbulent events raging in the world's first workers' state—a time of hope, chaos, heroism and terror. It traces the first revolutionary upheavals, which were followed by civil war and famine. Imagery can be found from Stalin's Great Terror of the 1930s and the Nazis' brutal invasion that came afterwards. The volume closes with the intrigues surrounding the death of the Soviet dictator in 1953.

In this remarkable book, King presents over 550 photographs, posters and works of art in the highest quality, accompanied by informative texts. Many of the photos are on show for the first time. Against the panorama of great historical events the author has concentrated his attention on individual moments and the fate of individual figures. Drawing on the work of outstanding Soviet designers, artists and photographers, King has rescued many long forgotten heroes, as well as rogues, from oblivion.

David King is the author of *The Commissar Vanishes: The Falsification of Photographs and Art in Stalin's Russia* (1997) and *The Victims of Stalin* (2003), as well as many other books about the Soviet Union. He was the editor of the arts section of the London *Sunday Times* from 1965 to 1975 and possesses one of the world's most important collections of Russian revolutionary art.

In December 2008, David Walsh, the arts editor of the *World Socialist Web Site*, interviewed David King, who was finishing *Red Star Over Russia* for publication at the time.

In the interview King stated, "I've written a text, an introduction, explaining how I found the material. There are explanatory captions. The book works as a documentary cinéma vérité, each spread treats a particular visual aspect of what happened in the USSR. The reader can contrast and compare with the official version of what took place. It's roughly chronological."

King pointed out one thing in particular that he thought Walsh would be interested in. "I obtained 50 of the mug shots of the defendants of the Moscow Trials—Zinoviev, Kamenev and some of the prominent victims, but also the lesser-known," he said. (In the introduction to *Ordinary Citizens*, King had noted that the mug shots of the Moscow Trials defendants were "hidden to this day in secret archives, some of them in Siberia.")

"According to my sources in Russia, the defendants in the third Moscow Trial, Bukharin, Rykov and the others, were never photographed, they used their passport photos. This is what they told me, and I have no way of verifying or disputing it.

"So there are the mug shots of Zinoviev, Kamenev, Radek, Sokolnikov, but also minor characters—the lesser-known victims. Some of these individual shots have been viewed, but never the entire bunch. The mug shots were hidden in an archive in Omsk, in a former GPU archive.

"I have everybody from the first trial, everybody from the second trial, and a substantial group from the Bukharin trial. As I said, I was told that the authorities used his passport photograph. Also, Iagoda, the former secret police chief. It was his GPU photograph they used."

King's book, which first appeared in September 2009, in English has been warmly received:

Here are a few examples:

"David King's *Red Star Over Russia*, a partnership of text and pictures, delivers an icon of the Soviet era, done with an artist's eye by a master of the archives"—Karl Miller, *Times Literary Supplement*, Books of the Year,

2009

“This book should be in every public library, in every secondary school and in the hands of anyone who aspires to understand what has made Russia the state it is today.... Buy one to keep and one to give away”—Donald Rayfield, *Literary Review*

“A magnificent work”—Alexander Rabinowitch, Professor Emeritus of History, Indiana University Bloomington

“A gold mine ... A picture book like no other”—Eric Gibson, *Wall Street Journal*

“A mammoth collection ... a cinematic panorama”—Steven Heller, *New York Times Book Review*

“Picking it up is hard enough, putting it down even harder... King is clearly one of the world’s great collectors”—James M. Murphy, *Times Literary Supplement*

“A magnificent work of stunning emotional power”—Laurent Pericone, *La Tribune*

“This wonderful book is enriching and stimulating”—*Le Figaro*

Price: €39.90 or \$50.00

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