NEWSLETTER

CENTRE FOR CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESEARCH OF SOCIALISM
CENTAR ZA KULTUROLOŠKA I POVIJESNA ISTRAŽIVANJA SOCIJALIZMA

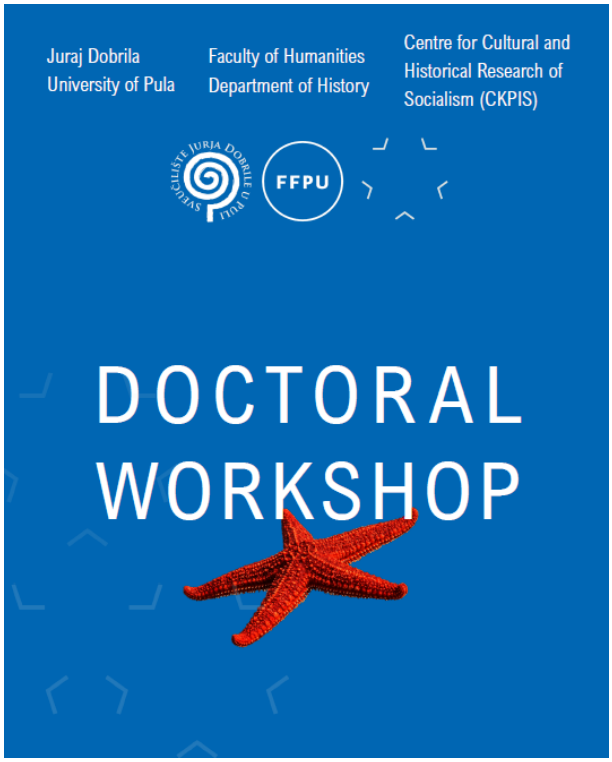
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Keep the Dates in 2027

Next year CKPIS will be organising two of its regular larger events. With the wish to make your planning easier, we are announcing the themes and timelines well in advance. Welcome to one or both events!



The **8TH SOCIALISM ON THE BENCH** will be held in Pula from 30 September to 2 October 2027, with the theme ***Between Nationalism and Internationalism.*** The call follows in December 2026, and 1 April will again be the application deadline. By the end of that month the selection of applicants will be over, and the programme composed by early July. We again hope to bring together at least 80 participants.



For PhD students only, there will be our annual **13TH DOCTORAL WORKSHOP**, this time with the theme ***Housing: Planning, Building and Living from the 19th Century to the Present***. The workshop dates are 1-4 September 2027. As usual, expect the call in mid-March with application deadline set on 15 May. Applicants will be selected by the end of that month. The workshop brings together around 15 PhD students.

INTERVIEW OF THE MONTH: Eric Ušić (pp. 8-10)

More Books Available for Download



Biblioteka CeKaPISarnica made two more volumes available for download, both published in print by Srednja Europa in 2023: Igor Duda's *Socijalizam na kućnom pragu. Mjesna zajednica i svakodnevica društvenog samoupravljanja u Jugoslaviji*, and the edited volume *Mikrosocijalizam. Mikrostrukture jugoslavenskoga socijalizma u Hrvatskoj 1970-ih i 1980*.

ERC Workshop in Rijeka



On 12 October, at the University of Rijeka the Center for Advanced Studies Southeast Europe (CAS SEE) brought together scholars currently involved in ERC projects, either as principal investigators or team members, to share insights, reflections, and discuss future cooperation. The workshop was jointly organized by CAS SEE with the ERC projects OpenBorders and HumanEuroMed, in collaboration with the ERC projects Housing.Yu, Revenant, Brokers of NAM, FeMMiWork, MemPop, Nepostrans, and Racial Socialism. CKPIS and Housing.Yu were represented by Igor Duda and Antun Dulibić. For more information, see the agenda and the CAS news.

The First Housing.Yu Conference in Zagreb





From 22 to 24 October, the conference *Right to Housing: Projects, Policies, and Knowledge Exchange after the Second World War* was held in Zagreb. It was organized by the ERC project Housing.Yu. Find out more here and on the project's website.

CONFERENCES AND CFP

62nd ITH-Conference: Gender and Labour after WWII: Political Rights, Social Justice, and Welfare Politics, Linz, 16-18 September 2027

The conference themes explore the roles of political rights, social justice, and welfare politics in Gender and Labour after WWII. The period between 1945 and the 1960s was marked by major turning points for workers' rights, political engagement, and the development of social welfare systems and saw the struggle for the advancement of political and social rights of women around the world. Key contexts shaping the struggles on gender and labour in this period included border-crossing population movements and racialized diversity, changing patterns of international governance and social movement internationalism, post-WWII reconstruction, the economic boom, late colonial rule and decolonization, state-socialist catch-up development, and global sociopolitical competition. (Read more)

Application deadline: 31 January 2027

"Temporary" Labor Migration, Difference, and Inequality in Cold War Western Europe, Athens, 10-11 September 2026

Perceiving migration as a process through which social categories and relations are continuously renegotiated, this Conference seeks to foreground the relational, intersectional, and changing character of "temporary" labor migrants' experiences in Western Europe during the Cold War. Rather than treating immigrant populations as homogeneous and unchanging national or social entities, it approaches migration as a field of differentiation, negotiation, and contestation in which multiple axes of power and inequality intersect and acquire new meanings over time. (Read more)

Application deadline: 15 January 2027

Bodies of Democracy - Civil society bodies and popular sovereignty in Europe in the 19th and 20th century, Berlin, 18-19 May 2027

The conference "Bodies of Democracy" seeks to explore how, in the 19th and 20th century, the imperative of popular sovereignty was pursued by theorizing, constructing, and juridically instituting an intermediary space between individual and state. It is interested in how actors of various kinds – business associations, trade unions, intellectuals, bureaucrats, political parties and pressure groups of various kinds – saw organized economic concerns and intermediary bodies as entities capable of giving substance to the principle of popular sovereignty, either as spaces of direct self-government or as units of popular representation in alternative to representation by suffrage. (Read more)

Application deadline: 10 January 2027

Humans, Animals, Nature: Everyday Life in (Post-)Conflict Societies in Eastern and Southeastern Europe and the Caucasus since 1989, Regensburg, 4-5 February 2027

War does not simply interrupt everyday life but transforms how it is experienced and organised. Research on "everyday war" and on violence becoming incorporated into the "ordinary" has shown how people across generations, genders, and social and geographical settings negotiate and reconstruct "normal" life during and after armed conflict. Alongside this focus on human experience, posthumanist thought has prompted scholars to reconsider animal agency and to place animals at the centre of narratives of everyday life. Beyond human–animal relations, "warfare ecology" treats preparations, war, and postwar activities as overlapping stages with consequences for both natural and social systems. (Read more)

Application deadline: 20 November 2026

16th Central and Eastern European Communication and Media Conference: Communication and Freedom, Belgrade, 16-17 September 2027

Freedom is neither a self-evident nor a politically neutral category. Communication may expand the agency and visibility of some actors while limiting the voice, safety, or participation of others. Measures justified by the defense of freedom – from content moderation and counter-disinformation policies to restrictions imposed in the name of national security – may themselves generate new forms of control. Understanding how freedom is contested between democratic decline and resilience raises questions that media and communication scholarship cannot avoid. How is media capture accomplished and sustained, and how can it be reversed? What happens to journalism, and to journalists, when practicing it becomes precarious or dangerous? (Read more)

Application deadline: 1 February 2027

Annual Conference of the Prague Center for Romani Histories: Citizenship, belonging, and emancipation in the 19th and 20th centuries, Prague, 31 May – 2 June 2027

This conference brings together histories of citizenship impacting different marginalized populations. As three core populations which have been left out of full citizenship across central and eastern Europe, submissions on the interrelated struggles of Roma, Jews, and people with disabilities are especially encouraged. Papers should explore the material and discursive connections between multiple groups, and the different strategies utilized by states, organizations, and individuals to advocate for citizenship access, and the change in statuses throughout time. (Read more)

Application deadline: 15 December 2026

PUBLICATIONS

Marta Verginella (ed.), *Women, Violence and Trauma in Wartime and Postwar Northeastern Adriatic* (CEU Press, 2026)

Focusing on the North-Adriatic region while moving beyond national frames, this interdisciplinary volume uncovers how violence did not end with ceasefires but continued to shape women's lives through displacement, sexual violence, loss, psychiatric suffering, and social exclusion. Drawing on a rich range of sources—psychiatric records, diaries, autobiographies, oral histories, literature, film, and archival documents—the contributors foreground voices long marginalized in official histories. Together, the chapters reveal both vulnerability and resilience, tracing how trauma was lived, narrated, silenced, and politically instrumentalized across different post-war contexts, from the early Cold War to post-socialist societies. (Read more)

Francesco Trupia, Jasna Dragović-Saso (eds.), *Memory in Transition in Southeast Europe: Generational Change in an Age of Turmoil* (Peter Lang, 2026)

This edited collection explores the multifaceted experiences of post-socialist generations in Southeast Europe through the lens of postmemory. At different levels of analysis, the concept of "memory in transition" highlights a historical period where radical changes and transformations are shaping different, non-linear, and often ambiguous narrations of the socialist past and, in some cases, of its violent end. The various chapters examine the reverberations of this memory in people's lived experience, as well as in politics, education and the urban memoryscape, in the context of geopolitical turmoil and generational change. (Read more)

Lucie Dusková (ed.), *The Making of a Socialist Night: Society, Imagination and Everyday Life in Czechoslovakia 1945-1960* (CEU Press, 2026)

Is there such a thing as a socialist night? And if so, what characterises it? What does it look like, what meanings are attached to it, who inhabits it, and what activities take place within it? In answering these questions, this book takes the reader on a journey through the mental world of post-war Czechoslovak society, the glamour and misery of Czechoslovak cities at night, and the lives and activities of various social groups for whom the night formed a natural environment. This is the first book to apply the insights of the field of night studies to the study of state socialism, uncovering often unexpected connections that emerge when the night is placed at the centre of analysis. At the same time, it raises the important question of what was actually "socialist" about the socialist night? (Read more)

Rebecka Katz Thor, Gal Kirn, Cecilia Sjöholm (eds.), *Struggling with Anti/Fascism: Contested Art, Politics, and Memory in the Recent European Past* (De Gruyter 2026)

The volume brings together scholars of cultural history, memory and cultural theory in a critical reflection of the recent authoritarian turn in European politics. Specifically, the contributors look at how monuments, art works and other forms of aesthetic expression commemorate historic anti-fascist movements. By illuminating how the arts are themselves intervening into the aesthetic, material, historical and environmental discourses that condition memory culture, it argues that art and memory are, in fact, more interdependent than is often acknowledged. Whilst taking empirical material and examples into account, the volume foregrounds theoretically informed research into the ideologically motivated "mnemonic" and "memory wars" unfolding today. It is concerned with critical examples of culturally produced memories of anti-fascist, but also widens the scope to include environmental perspectives. (Read more)



POSITIONS, GRANTS AND STIPENDS

Early-Stage Postdoctoral Researcher, IOS Regensburg

The successful candidate will be expected to develop a postdoctoral project, enabling applications for longer-term postdoctoral positions or other external funding. Drawing on the interdisciplinary approaches of contemporary area studies, the Leibniz ScienceCampus clusters researchers from various disciplines – including history, cultural and literary studies, law, economics and social sciences – to generate better understanding of the history of globality and of contemporary developments in transatlantic relations and entanglements. The LSC is interested in relations between the Americas and diverse regions of Europe in the period since the 19th century. The thematic focus of the LSC is on: (1) (In-)Security and Sovereignty; 2) Translating Knowledge and Cultures; 3) Uneven Supply Chains; 4) Refugee Worldmaking. (read more)

Application deadline: 30 November 2026

One-year scholarship program sponsored by the Free State of Bavaria for graduates of Central, Eastern and Southeastern European states for the funding year 2027/28

For the the academic year 2027/28, the Free State of Bavaria will once again be awarding one-year scholarships to graduates (with appropriate citizenship) from Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia and Ukraine. The scholarship is intended to finance postgraduate studies (i.e. Master's programs), PhDs or one-year research stays at a state or state-funded higher education institution in Bavaria. The one-year scholarship can generally be extended twice for up to 3 years. (read more)

Application deadline: 1 December 2026

Leibniz Summer Fellowships in the field of "German and/or European (including Eastern European) History in the Twentieth Century", ZZF Potsdam

These two-month fellowships provide international scholars an opportunity to pursue individual research in Germany while participating in the academic life of one of Germany's major historical research centres. Fellows are free to pursue research related to their own individual interests, yet we prefer applicants whose interests relate to one or more of the research departments of the ZZF: "Communism and Society", "Knowledge, Economy, Politics", "Regimes of the Social Sphere", "Contemporary History in the Age of Media and Information" and "Globalizations in a Divided World". (read more)

Application deadline: 30 November 2026

Edith Saurer Fellowships 2027

The Edith Saurer Fund awards research grants to outstanding domestic and foreign postdoctoral scholars whose current work specifically addresses issues of social inequality from the perspectives of gender, class and culture. Particular attention is paid to projects that deal with Europe from the early modern period to the 20th century and pursue comparative and transnational approaches. ESF grants are one-off, project-based and are only awarded to projects that are not yet completed. Exhibitions, events, travel costs (journeys, stays) and the like are not funded. By submitting a proposal, applicants commit themselves to completing their work within the deadline specified in the application. As a rule, this should not exceed two years, exceptions require a conclusive justification. (read more)

Application deadline: 31 December 2026

New Europe College Fellowships, 2027/2028

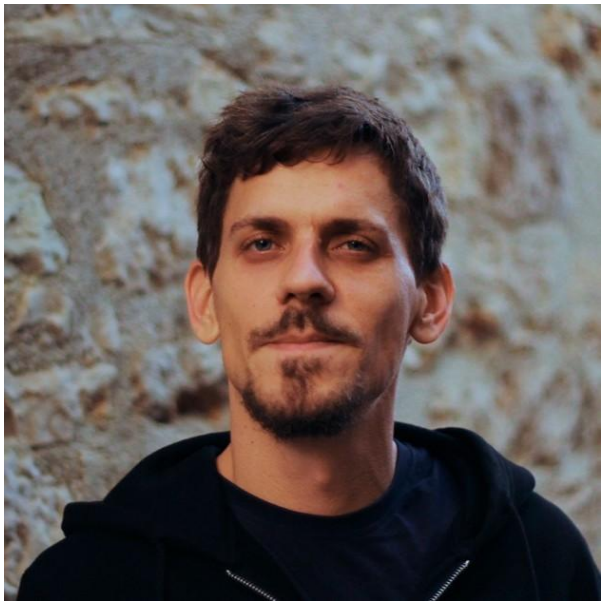
New Europe College (NEC), an Institute for Advanced Study in Bucharest (Romania), launches the annual competition for the 2027-2028 Fellowships. Focused primarily on individual research at an advanced level, NEC offers to young Romanian scholars and academics in the fields of humanities and social sciences, and to the foreign scholars invited as fellows appropriate working conditions, and provides an institutional framework with strong international links, acting as a stimulating environment for interdisciplinary dialogue and critical debates. Romanian and international postdoctoral scholars in the humanities and social sciences (all areas, including law and economics) are invited to apply. Around 25 Fellowships are available across eight programmes. (read more)

Application deadline: 17 January 2027

INTERVIEW OF THE MONTH

by Tina Filipović

Eric Ušić holds a PhD in Balkan Studies and is a new external associate of CKPIS (read more).



Eric Ušić

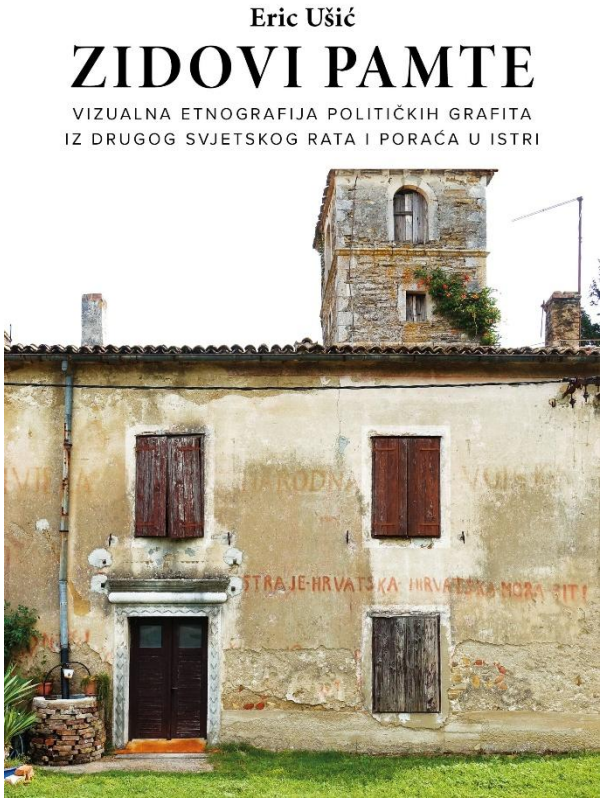
We are very pleased to welcome you as a new external associate of the CKPIS. To introduce you to our readers, could you briefly tell us about your academic background and your main research interests?

First of all, warm greetings to all your readers! I studied Cultural Studies at the University of Rijeka and completed my PhD in Balkan Studies at the University of Ljubljana in 2023, under the supervision of Professor Mitja Velikonja, with a dissertation entitled *Visual ethnography of (post)World War II political graffiti in Istria*. From 2025 to 2026, I worked as a postdoctoral researcher at the Department of Cultural Studies, University of Rijeka, as part of the MEMPOP research project, where I focused on exploring the intersections between memory culture and popular culture through film, popular music and graffiti/murals. Currently, my research interests lie in cultural and memory studies, historical anthropology and political graffiti studies, with a particular focus on memory practices, popular culture and memoryscapes in the Northern Adriatic borderlands and the broader post-Yugoslav context.

In your book on political graffiti in Istria during the Second World War and its aftermath, you explore texts and symbols reflecting partisan resistance, political attitudes, and the redrawing of state borders. Who were the people behind these inscriptions, and what can their graffiti tell us about the changing historical contexts in which they were created?

During the war, political graffiti were written mainly by young antifascists, particularly members of SKOJ and AFŽ. Graffiti served as symbolic means of resistance through which their writers could disseminate antifascist messages and slogans in public space, communicate with the local population, and subvert the dominant landscape while challenging fascist control over public space. In the immediate postwar period, during the struggle over the border between Italy and Yugoslavia, graffiti were used to inscribe pro-Yugoslav texts and symbols across Istria. Their primary objective was to communicate "the will of the people" to live in Yugoslavia, thereby providing symbolic legitimacy to the

demands for the incorporation of Istria and the wider region into Yugoslavia. In other words, in the postwar period, graffiti helped inscribe a new political geography and ideological formation onto the landscape. Thus, by reading these graffiti, we can trace how their functions shifted in response to changes in the broader historical and political context: from messages of resistance in the struggle against fascism, to symbolic markers of political and territorial claims, to tools of inscription of a new ideological imaginary into the regional landscape.



Ušić's book published by Srednja Europa in 2024

What is the memory role of graffiti in the landscape?

I will focus on two aspects, as the role of graffiti in the landscape is multilayered. As a starting point, we can broadly distinguish between historical and contemporary graffiti. Historical graffiti, such as those from the 1940s in Istria, have survived for decades despite radical socio-political changes, functioning as a kind of open-air archive. They preserve traces of past political movements and ideological formations. Moreover, considering that we are talking about antifascist, communist and pro-Yugoslav graffiti, that is, expressions of an ideological formation that stands in opposition to the dominant ideological framework established since the 1990s, we can also understand these historical graffiti as a kind of counter-archive, or a form of counter-memory in public space. On the other hand, contemporary graffiti and murals have become prominent elements of memory culture and sites of contestation between different politics of memory. One only needs to look at what is happening in Croatia and Serbia: on the one hand, murals commemorating the Croatian War of Independence, often accompanied by Ustaša symbolism, and on the other, the proliferation of murals and graffiti depicting Ratko Mladić throughout Serbia. While some serve as "surrogate monuments" and new sites of commemoration, others contribute to historical revisionism and the rehabilitation of criminal figures and ideologies from the past. In this sense, contemporary mnemonic graffiti and murals reflect broader trends in memory culture and the current political climate. The attitudes of authorities and institutions towards them are equally revealing, as they reveal which narratives and symbols are tolerated and, consequently, normalized in public space.

Do all walls and places in Istria "remember" in the same way, or can we identify particular places, communities, or circumstances that have shaped what has been preserved and what has been unwritten or forgotten?

Most of the places I have researched in Istria still bear traces of World War II graffiti. They are least common along the western coast, particularly in areas affected by intensive touristification, while the highest concentration is found in the interior and northern parts of the peninsula. Based on conversations with local residents, I would say that people generally recognize these graffiti as traces of the past. In one case, a homeowner even preserved and restored an inscription while renovating his house.



Political graffiti in Istria from the 1940s

Although this is an isolated example, many people have expressed the need to protect these graffiti. This suggests the existence of a vernacular memory culture in Istria that values them as historical documents and a form of antifascist heritage. Of course, this is something that would require further research.

Photography is an important part of your research practice, but you also work in filmmaking, scriptwriting, and the organisation of a local film festival, exploring often overlooked aspects of Istria's past, identity, and everyday life. Can you tell us more about these activities?

For the past six years, I have been organizing the Vodnjan Film Festival in Fažana Film Festival together with a group of friends. The festival is dedicated to unconventional filmmaking and offers a somewhat different approach to both the film medium and the traditional festival format. Together, we also make fiction films, exploring lesser-known locations across Istria. In our film *La Predstava*, which portrays a theatre troupe associated with the resistance movement during World War II, we played with the Italian-Croatian linguistic hybrid characteristic of Istria. This linguistic interplay also has an important role in our third film, *When God Left the Church*, which is set during the time of the Inquisition and the spread of Protestantism in Istria. In this third film, we continue to explore different locations across the peninsula, playing with the past and the present through humour and satire.

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