

Crossing the Lines between Marxism and Christianity in the 20th Century East-Central Europe

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Transnational interactions between Marxism and Christianity that emerged outside the sacred canopy of official institutions of East-Central European socialist states had been largely overlooked in the post-1989 narratives. Yet, these contacts that spanned from the interwar years to the fall of communism offer a good insight into intellectual, cultural, and political dynamics of the 20th century East-Central Europe.

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The conference will explore various aspects of these transnational interactions that underscored the uneasy relationship between Christianity and Marxism such as, for example, Christian Socialists' revolt against interwar Catholic integralism and their cooperation with communists during World War II, the postwar emergence of Marxist revisionism and shared Christian-communist visions of humanist socialist community, the issues of persecution and accommodation of clergy, or Vatican's encounters with socialist states. These and other issues occurred, sometimes in a dramatic way, in a multi-religious Yugoslavia, infamous for its link between religion and ethno-nationalism, but also in other countries thus requiring a wide geographical, topical, and temporal approach to the subject.

Considering newly available sources and new research perspectives, the goal of the conference is to launch a broad academic debate that will provide novel insights into the following issues:

- 1) Theological and philosophical achievements of left-oriented Christian thought in the interwar *Zwischeneuropa* and the postwar *Other Europe*;
- 2) Intellectual transfers between religious and secular milieus of East-Central Europe and the ones of Western Europe and the Americas;

3) Visions and concepts of Christian socialist movements in Yugoslavia, Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and elsewhere;
3) Issues of ideological and political confrontation between Christian political agency and socialist establishments;
4) Significance of Christian-Marxist dialogue across the “Iron Curtain” for the Vatican’s Ostpolitik;
5) Post-1989 potentials of emancipatory political theological thinking in the New Europe and beyond.

Historians as well as scholars from the fields of social sciences, international relations and study of religion who will take into account themes broadly outlined in the description above are encouraged to apply. Contributions dealing with comparative and transnational aspects are especially welcomed as well as papers that take a multidisciplinary approach. All contributions are expected to be based on advanced archival and scholarly research, since we plan to publish papers from the conference in an edited volume by the end of 2021.

The conference will be organised by the Science and Research Centre Koper, Slovenia, and financially supported by the Slovenian Research Agency. Participants will be responsible for traveling costs while limited funding opportunities for accommodation will be available.

Submission: Please send a paper title and an abstract of max. 400 words by 15th February 2021 to Jure Ramšak (jure.ramsak@zrs-kp.si).

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