



CENTRE FOR CULTURAL
AND HISTORICAL RESEARCH
OF SOCIALISM

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3rd International Conference Socialism on the Bench
COMMUNISTS AND COMMUNIST PARTIES: POLICIES, ACTIONS, DEBATES
Pula, September 28-30, 2017

CALL FOR PAPERS

The series of biennial international conferences titled *Socialism on the Bench* was launched in 2013. At the time, in the one-year old Centre for Cultural and Historical Research of Socialism, with this title we wanted to communicate that we place socialism on a pupils' or students' desk as a research subject, on the court bench for all that was done wrong, and on a substitutes' bench due to its potential that might be better used in the future. Moreover, our approach was a generational one and it mainly came from the perspective of those who had no personal experience with living under Yugoslav socialism since they were still sitting at school desks, while nowadays they approach that period as researchers. In 2013 the topic of the first conference was *Cultural and Historical Interpretations of Yugoslav and Post-Yugoslav Societies*, while in 2015 the topic was *Socialism: Construction and Deconstruction*, so it broadened the area covered and attracted around a hundred participants. Already in 2013, many conference papers were published in the edited volume *Socialism on the Bench* and in 2014 in the special issues of three Croatian academic journals (*Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, *Historijski zbornik*, *Narodna umjetnost*). A selection of papers from the second conference will be published in an edited volume in 2017.

While the themes of the last conference reflected the anniversaries of 1945 and 1990, with the beginning and end of state socialism, the third *Socialism on the Bench* conference will again be echoing historical events. With the theme *Communists and Communist Parties: Policies, Actions, Debates*, we want to encourage research into communist activity in a broader geographical area than the one covered by socialist Yugoslavia, and during a period lasting longer than the existence of that country. Primarily moved by the centenary of the October Revolution, we are open to all presentations that will consider realized and unrealized communist policies, successful and failed actions, fertile and sterile debates. In other words, all the stratified currents within the communist circles who have fought for power, or gained it, kept it and lost it, all the weight of the relationships between communists and towards anti-communist forces, all the successes and failures of communist activities in the fields of internal and foreign politics, social and economic relations, education, science, culture and art. Being aware of the fact that the last two conferences gathered scholars who are mainly working on Yugoslav themes, and that this interest will continue in the future, we emphasize another important commemorative motive: the 80th anniversary of Josip Broz Tito's rise to the head of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and the beginning



of its federalisation with the establishment of the Communist Parties of Croatia and Slovenia. The League of Communists of Yugoslavia, the width of its impact and the amount of various available sources, are urgently demanding new researches and interpretations. We expect that the conference subjects will include: leading and anonymous party members, former communists, as well as those defined as their internal and external enemies; the events that communists initiated, the processes they managed, the occurrences they could not control; the theories and ideals they promoted, as well as the practices which confirmed the chosen line or forced them to divert from it. A look at the chronology would reveal even more major and minor anniversaries which also can be a theme of the conference, but 1917 and 1937 are strong enough catalysts for this conference call, and can help us to prepare the terrain for an exciting three days discussion in September 2017. Until then, participants will have almost a year time for research and for thinking through their submissions, which we are very much looking forward to receive.

The goal of our conferences, as well as the entire mission of the Centre, remains the same: strengthening the cooperation among scholars with similar research interests, revealing topical, methodological and interpretational similarities, hearing various interpretations, enhancing dialogue and new research.

The conference languages will be Croatian (and mutually understandable languages) and English. Invited keynote speakers will deliver three plenary lectures. Participants' presentation time is 15 minutes within small panels. We accept individual applications and only exceptionally entire panels with 3-4 speakers. Depending on the participants' interest, it will be possible to agree on joint publication projects after the conference.

The conference will be held at the Juraj Dobrila University of Pula and in partnership with the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation. There is no conference fee. Participants will have to arrange their own trip and accommodation. Conference organizers will provide two dinners and two suppers and arrange a discount at the recommended hotel.

Application deadline is **April 1, 2017**. Please, fill in the application form and send it to **ckpis.conf@gmail.com**. By April 30, applicants will be notified about the acceptance of their proposal and will receive further details about the conference. All information is available at <http://www.unipu.hr/index.php?id=klupa2017>.

We are looking forward to your submissions!

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