

# **Beyond the Paradigm: Communism and The Cold War, 30 Years After**

## **CALL FOR PAPERS**

### **Date**

20 December 2019, 9.00am - 6.00pm

### **Type**

Conference / Symposium

### **Venue**

University of Bucharest

### **Organizers**

FJSC/ University of Bucharest, “Nicolae Iorga” Institute of History

How to think beyond the Cold War paradigm, 30 years after the fall of communist regimes?

One question may explore the way the Cold War shaped representations, accounts and narratives for more than half of the past century. Another may seek into the structures of a thought pattern, a worldview configured, in the absence of a direct conflict, by the dynamics of a geopolitical tension. Moreover, it may investigate how a specific ideological dispute was translated into an implicit theoretical model: one that still informs the way local histories of communism are considered, one that still provides a conceptual framework for various topics related to the communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe.

Positioned as the first conference in future annual series of academic meetings, this event aims to set a critical lens on current paradigms, in the sense given by Thomas Kuhn (1996, p. X): a theoretical model of a given time, a temporary consensus within a scientific community on what should be analyzed, on types and structures of questioning, and on pattern of interpretation. Building on the 30 years interval since the fall of communism not only as an anniversary, but also as a needed temporal distance, this conference will focus on the Cold War paradigm calling for a broader perspective, for interdisciplinary approaches with new methods, new sources, new problematizations, and more globally, with a new way of seeing, that may lead (or not) to a paradigm shift.

This conference calls for contributions that add to the recent efforts directed to establish strategies of overcoming Cold War binaries that have been dominating the existing literature since before the fall of communism, and propose novel ways of thinking traditional Cold War topics such as the new approach of media studies (Mihelj, 2014; Gumbert, 2014; Zhuk, 2010), as well as the Nep4Dissent Cost Action program launched in 2017 (CA16213) campaigning for an enlarged understanding of the notions of resistance and dissent under communism and towards expanding the field of research by identifying underrepresented and understudied themes, actors and phenomena. Cold War-era concepts acted not only on the demonization of the Other (the enemy, the alien), but also on the rhetoric of the competition, calling for specific narratives and visual frames that may well be re-visited within different angles on a local and transnational level. As such, in the last decade, a significant body of scholarship on Europe's recent past emerged with sound research on socialist media, artistic communities, underground movements and cultural practices that transcend the formal and symbolic borders of the Iron Curtain.

In brief, the focus of this conference is to examine older subjects in a new way, to bring a fresh perspective on past topics within the countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union and to welcome different conceptual approaches, as well as new methodological tools that may shed a new light on previously researched subjects, sources, archives and territories.

Presentations based on empirical research and interdisciplinary approaches include, but are not limited to the following themes:

- Media and culture under surveillance
- Media and culture in the grey zone
- Alternative cultures

- Cultural memory of dissent
- Museums of memory
- New archives/ new sources
- Everyday life in communist countries
- Other aspects of art and cultural heritage
- Any other topic related to the main theme of the conference.

**The conference languages are English and French.**

### **Abstracts**

Abstracts (200 words) should be sent to alexandra.bardan@fjsc.ro by November 15, 2019.

The following information should be included: title of the paper, author's name/authors' names, author's institution affiliation, address and e-mail contact; the purpose of the research, design /methodology/approach, (expected) findings, (possible) practical implications, originality of the study, references. The references will not be included in the word count.

### **Venue**

University of Bucharest, Faculty of Mathematics, 14 Academiei Street, 010014, Bucharest, Sector 1, 4th floor, Room 416.

### **Scientific committee:**

Mioara Anton ("Nicolae Iorga" Institute of History), Natalia Vasilendiuc (FJSC/ University of Bucharest), Alexandra Bardan (FJSC/ University of Bucharest).