

Abstract

Labor Relations, Social Protest and Violence in the Shipyard Workers' and Dockers' Milieus on Both Sides of the Italo-Yugoslav Border During the Cold War

The project explores the shipyard workers' and dockers' milieus in the cities of Trieste and Monfalcone (Italy), Koper and Piran (Yugoslavia/Slovenia) as well as Rijeka (Yugoslavia/Croatia) during the Cold War. One of its goals is to open up potentials for a renewed history of labour and labour movements. In the aftermath of the Second World War and until the 1970s, the Italo-Yugoslav border area was characterised by a contested border and by two strong, yet contrary communist ideologies (the Yugoslav Titoist and the Italian, which had remained aligned to Stalin). In terms of its multi-ethnicity the region offers an additional apt playground for engaging in the writing of an entangled history of the Cold War divides.

The comparative micro study of workers' milieus on both sides of the border explores the workplace as a place of social and political life and engagements, providing for insights into the transformatory processes of Italian and Yugoslav society at their respective geographical fringes. Methodologically, the project puts *democracy* and *dictatorship* into a relationship with each other. Moments of *violence* - social protests, strikes and generally as a habit inherent in labour relations - stand at the centre of the research, as they focus legitimacy and ideological discourses and agendas. Discursive treatments of concepts like *justice*, *equality*, *solidarity* and, more generally visions of a *good society* in the framework of workers' self-management stand in opposition to exerted and threatened physical violence in plurifold forms, be they structured or individual, organised or spontaneous.