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#MemoryDays2022

Agenda

#7

17 – 26
February

2022



MEMORY DAYS

#memorydays2022

Languages: **Albanian, English**

© Institute for Democracy, Media & Culture
Address: Bardhok Biba Street,
Trema, Entrance A, 11th Fl.,
Tirana, Albania
www.idmc.al

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Address: “Dëshmorët e Kombit” Blvd.
Twin Tower 1, 11th Fl.,
Tirana, Albania
<http://www.kas.de/albanien/>

Contact

Mirela Sheraj,
IDMC Programme Coordinator,
mirela.sheraj@idmc.al

Klaudja Zerva,
KAS Programme Coordinator,
kludja.zerva@kas.de

Agenda

Thursday
17
February

LIVE

OPENING CEREMONY OF MEMORY DAYS 2022

Scanderbeg square
Online

16:30 – 17:00 **Artistic performance “The Fall of Myths”**

17:00 – 17:30 Welcoming Address
Jonila Godole
Director of IDMC
Tobias Rüttershoff
Director of KAS in Tirana
Agron Gjekmarkaj
Deputy Speaker of the Assembly
Luigi Soreca (tbc)
EU Ambassador to Albania
Marek Mutor
President of the Platform of European Memory and
Conscience (PEMC)
Former Persecuted

17:30 – 18:00 Public Announcement of the **Petition for
Decommunization and Justice**, IDMC & Partners

Friday
18
February

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: “COMMUNIST MYTHS, BEFORE AND AFTER THE SYSTEM CHANGE”

Tirana International Hotel, Abret Room
Online

09:30 – 10:00 **Registration**

10:00 – 10:30 Welcoming Address
Vincenzo Del Monaco
Head of OSCE Presence to Albania
N.E
Ministry of Education
Marek Mutor
President of PEMC
Idrit Idrizi
Historian, University of Vienna

Moderator: **Jonila Godole**, Director of IDMC

10:30 – 11:00	<p>Keynote Speech I: “How foreign is the country of the past? Approaching communist myths in Albania” Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers Social Anthropologist, United Kingdom</p>
<hr/>	
11:00 – 12:30	<p>Panel I: Communist myths in literature, science and music</p> <p>“Albania and the three Romes”: The political myth of resistance through the novels of Ismail Kadare Enis Sulstarova, University of Tirana</p> <p>The myth of volunteering in the literature of socialist realism Anjeza Xhaferaj, European University of Tirana Alban Reli, University of Tirana</p> <p>We are autochthonous - The instrumentalization of archaeology and ethnology in communism Inis Shkreli, Mediterranean University Zhaneta Gjyshja, University of Michigan</p> <p>Communist myths in songs - An analysis of the collection “Për Partinë Shqipe Mali” (“For the Mountain Eagle Party”) Rovena Vata Mikeli, Academy of Albanian Studies</p> <p>Moderator: Valentina Duka, University of Tirana</p>
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12:30 – 13:30	Lunch Break
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13:45 – 15:15	<p>Panel II: Political myths of Albanian communism, within and outside the country</p> <p>Was the communist party of Albania a political party? Çelo Hoxha, Director of ISKK</p> <p>Myths of parasitism Egin Ceka, Researcher, Vienna Doan Dani, University of Torino</p> <p>Images of communist Albania and Enver Hoxha among Marxist groups in Kosova Mrika Limani Myrtaj, University of Prishtina</p> <p>From friend to foe: Hoxha’s Albania in the socialist Yugoslav imagination and policy Isabel Ströhle, Researcher, The Hague</p> <p>Moderator: Klejdi Këlliçi, University of Tirana</p>
<hr/>	
15:15 – 15:45	<p>Poster presentations: Ardit Metani, Ardita Dylgjeri & Irgen Xhyra, Aris Dougas Chavarria, Etleva Cani, Ines Stasa, Irena Gorica, Nuredin Nazarko, Vojsava Kumbulla</p>

15:45 – 17:00

Panel III: Communist myths after the fall of the regime

Demythification and the reproduction of communist myths under a new guise in post-socialist Albania

Artan R. Hoxha, Academy of Albanian Studies / University of Pittsburgh

Real heroes, false ones: “Martyrs’ cemetery” and the moving corpses in post-socialist Albania

Klejd Këlliçi, University of Tirana

The shared victimhood narrative: A psychological study into the role of communities in communist crimes

Blerina Këllezi, Aurora Guxholli, Andrew Livingstone, Juliet Wakefield, Mhairi Bowe, University of Nottingham Trent, Helsinki University, Exeter University

Moderator: **Merita Poni**, University of Tirana

17:15 – 17:45

Keynote speech II: “Myths of transitional justice”

Lavinia Stan
St. Francis Xavier University, Canada

17:45 – 18:30

Panel Discussion

“Communist and Post-Communist Myths”

Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers
Lavinia Stan
Enis Sulstarova

Moderator: **Idrit Idrizi**, University of Vienna

EXHIBITION: “CENTURY OF MARTYRS”

National Historical Museum

18:30 – 19:30

Presentation of the exhibition “Century of Martyrs”, organized by PEMC and MEMO

Lukasz Kaminski
Historian, PEMC
Wojciech Bednarski
Project Manager, PEMC
Gjon Radovani
MEMO

Saturday
19
February

STUDY VISIT TO SITES OF MEMORY IN SHKODËR

Shkodër

Sunday
20
February

EXHIBITION: EVERYDAY LIFE IN SPAÇ PRISON – SKETCHES CREATED ON THE SURVIVOR'S TESTIMONY

Destil Creative Hub Tirana

16:30 – 17:00	Registration
17:00 – 17:15	Welcoming Address Tobias Rüttershoff Director of KAS Agron Shehaj Founder of 'Kujto.al'
17:15 – 17:25	Presentation of the project Admirina Peçi 'Kujto.al'
17:25 – 17:35	To sketch the pain... Ina Elezi Sketch artist
17:35 – 17:45	My 21 years in Spaç Prison Gëzim Çela Former Prisoner of Spaç Accompanied tour of the exhibition

Monday
21
February

DISCUSSION: HISTORY THROUGH DOCUMENTS – COMMUNIST INDOCTRINATION IN CULTURE AND ART

Institute of History, Academy of Albanian Studies

10:30 – 11:00	Registration
11:00 – 11:15	Welcoming Address Tobias Rüttershoff Director of KAS Afrim Krasniqi Director of the Institute of History
11:15 – 11:45	Professional assessments on volumes and historical Memory 1945-1990 in the field of indoctrination in culture and arts Beqir Meta Institute of History Persida Asllani Faculty of History and Philology Dhurata Shehri Faculty of History and Philology Olsi Lelaj Institute of Cultural Anthropology and Art Studies
11:45 – 12:30	Q&A

OPENING OF THE MULTIMEDIAL EXHIBITION “FACES OF THE DICTATORSHIP”

Vila 31, Bilok

17:00 – 18:00 Welcoming Address

Jonila Godole
Director of IDMC
Momchil Raytchevski
Ambassador of the Republic of Bulgaria to Albania
Tobias Rüttershoff
Director of KAS
Anticommunist Association in Albania

Presentation of the exhibition

Çelo Hoxha
Director of ISKK

Accompanied tour of the exhibition

Tuesday
22
February

DOCUMENTARY SCREENING: “WHEN MOM WENT TO WORK EARLY - WOMEN IN GDR”

Europe House

16:30 – 17:00 **Registration**

17:00 – 17:10 Welcoming Address
Peter Zingraf
Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany

17:10 – 17:55 **Documentary screening**

17:55 – 18:45 Panel discussion
Anna Kaminsky
Director of Bundesstiftung zur Aufarbeitung
Flutura Aça
Writer, Deputy of DP
Nevila Nika
Historian, UET

Moderator: **Elsa Ballauri**, Activist of Human Rights,
Director of “Women Museum”

OPENING OF THE EXHIBITION “UNLIBERATED, WOMEN BETWEEN PRODUCTION AND REPRODUCTION”

Berk, Tirana

16:30 – 17:00 **Registration**

17:00 – 17:10 Presentation of the exhibition

Anna Shkreli
Berk Publishing House
Sokol Çunga
Archivist

17:20 – 17:30 The current condition of women studies in socialism
Klejd Këlliçi
Lecturer, UT

17:30 – 17:40 Welcoming speech
Tobias Rüttershoff
Director of KAS

Accompanied tour of the exhibition

Wednesday
23
February

DOCUMENTARY SCREENING AND PRESENTATION OF ISKK BOOK SERIES

Rogner Hotel, Antigonea Room

09:30 – 10:00 **Registration**

10:00 – 10:20 Presentation of “**Vademecum Albania**” Brochure by
Bundesstiftung zur Aufarbeitung & IDMC

10:20 – 11:00 **Documentary screening “Architecture in
communism”**
Ergys Mërtiri, Researcher

11:00 – 11:15 **Coffee Break**

11:15 – 14:00 **Presentation: Publications of ISKK 2021**

Encyclopedia dictionary of victims of communist
terror

“Tokë e bukur, kohë e shëmtuar” (Beautiful land, ugly
times)

Kaso Hoxha, Author

“Mollat e Vjetit të Ri” (Apples of the New Year)

Filip Guraziu, Author

“Arratisja” (The escape)

Ylli Tabaku, Author

Voices of Memory – Vol. VII

Luljeta Lleshanaku, Author

Liri Lubonja: “Far away and amidst the people.

Memories of internment 1973-1990”

Feride Berisha

Publisher

Cord Pagenstecher

Translator

“Zisi Vangjeli, Intelektuali i Madh i Qytetit të Vogël”

(Zisi Vangjeli, the great intellectual of the small town)

Xhafer Sadiku, Author

“Jeta e një fëmije ‘kulak’ në diktaturë” (Life of a ‘kulak’
child in dictatorship)

Ilmi Plaka, Author

“Dokumente mbi cënimin e pronës në periudhën
komuniste (1944-1946)” (Documents on property
encroachment during the communist period 1944-
1946)

Alvin Saraçi, Author

“Nikollë Dakaj, mes përkthimit të Antikes dhe
përndjekjes” (Nikolle Dakaj, between the translation
of the Antiquity and persecution)

Leka Ndoja, Author

- Acts of the scientific conference “Legality during
the communist regime 1944-1990” (papers)

- Study Journal “Memory” (scientific articles)

- “Elaborate Dictionary of the Albanian Language”

Benedikt Dema, Author

OPEN FORUM: “MEMORY BOOKS”, UETPRESS

EUT, Concilium Room, Building A

13:00 – 13:10 Presentation of the “Memory books” series of UETPRESS

Suela Mino

Editor-in-Chief of the UETPRESS Publishing House

13:10 – 13:40 Panel Discussion: The Contribution of Books in Collective Memory

Belina Budini

Dean of the Faculty of Human Sciences, Education and Liberal Arts, EUT

Nevila Nika

Researcher, EUT

Jonila Godole

Director of IDMC

13:40 – 13:50 Conversation with Authors

13:50 – 14:00 Q&A

OPEN FORUM: “LEST WE FORGET!” WITH STUDENTS, TEACHERS, FORMER PERSECUTED

Rogner Hotel, Antigonea Room

[Online](#)

16:30 – 17:00 **Registration**

17:00 – 17:15 Welcoming Address

Lukasz Kaminski

Historian, PEMC

Vojsava Kumbulla

National Association of History Teachers

17:15 – 18:00 Presentation of “Lest we forget” – Albanian version of a reader for older secondary school students in Europe

Fatmiroshe Xhemalaj

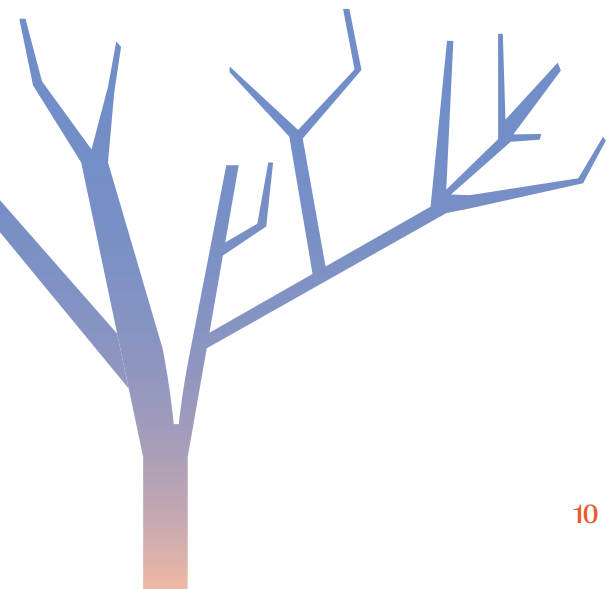
Expert of school curricula

Viktor Martini

Former political prisoner

Ylber & Shpresa Merdani

Former political persecuted



Thursday
24
February

DISCUSSION: “GOOD OLD TIMES?!” – A STUDY IN POST-COMMUNIST NOSTALGIA

The National Library of Tirana, American Corner

09:30 – 10:00 **Registration**

10:00 – 10:15 Welcoming Address

Tobias Rüttershoff

Director of KAS in Tirana

Alfred Lela

Journalist, Politico

10:15 – 11:00 **Panel discussion: How to look at the post communist nostalgia and how to deal with it?**

Maria Todorova

Historian, Bulgaria

Luljeta Lleshanaku

Writer, Researcher, ISKK

Mark Marku

Department of Journalism and Communication, UT

Moderator: **Alfred Lela**, Journalist

11:00 Presentation of the publication “Post-communist nostalgia”

ROUND-TABLE: MEMORY PLACES IN ALBANIA, CHALLENGES AND INITIATIVES

Tirana International Hotel, Onufri Room

10:30 – 11:00 Registration

11:00 – 11:10 Welcoming Address

Andreas Maislinger

Executive Director of Austrian Service Abroad

11:10 – 11:30 Project presentation of “House of Responsibility”

Daniel Schuster

Head of Vienna Office at Austrian Service Abroad

11:30 – 13:00 Places of memory in Albania and in other countries

Lukasz Kaminski

Former President of PEMC

Representative of Ministry of Culture

Representative of Municipality of Tirana

Daniel Schuster

Head of Vienna Office at Austrian Service Abroad

Gjon Radovani

Tepelena’s camp project, MEMO organization

Etleva Demollari

Director of “House of Leaves” Museum

Moderator: **Jonila Godole**, IDMC

Friday
25
February

DISUSSION: MISSING WOMEN DURING COMMUNIST REGIME

Faculty of Social Sciences

10:30 – 11:00	Registration
11:00 – 11:10	Welcoming Address
11:10 – 13:00	Workshop with students on the problems of the study of women missing during the communist regime Teuta Starova Professor, UT Mirela Bogdani Professor, UT Marcel Hila Historian, AIDSSH

LOCAL ACTIVITIES UNDER THE MOTO: “MEMORY AS A MISSION”

KORÇA

INAGURATION OF THE EXHIBITION: “KORÇA REMEMBERS”

Venue: The Cathedral Square, Korça

11:00 – 11:25	Welcoming Address Maria Dojçe Author of the exhibition Jonila Godole Director of IDMC Sotiraq Filo Major of Korça municipality Gëzim Topçiu Major of Maliq municipality Ana Verushi Chairwoman of the Korça regional council
11:25 – 12:00	Importance of collective memory Ylber Merdani The head of former persecuted Assoc. in Korça Metin Venxha History-Geography Department, Korça Gjergji Koki Cultural Heritage Department, Korça

12:00 – 12:30 Accompanied tour of the exhibition

BERAT

ANTI-COMMUNIST MOVEMENTS 1945-1991

Venue: “Drita e Dijes” School, Berat

11:00 – 12:30	“Remembering” Artistic-cultural activity to commemorate important events of 1945-1991 Eljona Plaku Director of “Drita e dijës” school, Berat
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KUÇOVA

REMEMBERING LOCAL HISTORY

Study Visit with High School Students in the Former Communist Women Prison, Kuçova

14:30 – 16:00	Workshop: “Remembering Local History” Anduela Dhimitri Teacher, “5 Tetori” high school, Kuçova
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LEZHA
REMEMBERING LOCAL HISTORY
Study Visit with High School Students in Memory Places in Lezha

SARANDA
REMEMBERING LOCAL HISTORY
Study Visit with High School Students in Memory Places in Saranda

MOVIE SCREENING: “THE PLANTING OF TREES”

Destil Creative Hub in Tirana

16:30 – 17:00 **Registration**

17:00 – 17:30 **Movie Screening “The Planting of Trees”**

17:30 – 18:30 Panel discussion
Ylljet Aliçka
Author
Fabio Seferi
Producer of the documentary
Fatmiroshe Xhemalaj
Expert of school curricula
Hektor Ruci
Professor, UNYT
Former persecuted

Moderator: **Erblin Vukaj**, Journalist, tibo

Saturday
26
February

18:00 – 19:00

CLOSING CEREMONY OF #MEMORYDAYS2022

MEMORIAL OF LIGHT – Commemoration of the victims of communist dictatorship in Albania. With massive participation of the politically persecuted, citizens, youth, representatives of civil society, politics, media, etc.

Scanderbeg Square

MEMORY DAYS 2022

On 17 – 26 February 2022, the 7th edition of MEMORY DAYS will be organized with a special focus on the myths about communism that prevail to this day. MEMORY DAYS is a project initiated by the Institute for Democracy, Media & Culture (IDMC) in partnership with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) since 2016. During MEMORY DAYS 2022, in collaboration with other institutions, such as OSCE Presence in Albania, Austrian Embassy in Albania, PEMC, ISKK, kujto.al, MEMO, former persecuted institutions, etc., different activities will be presented to the wider public. MEMORY DAYS aims to raise the Albanian society's awareness about the consequences of the dictatorship's crimes and at strengthening dialogue about the past through debates, exhibitions, conferences, commemoration events, movie screening, etc.



The activities of #MemoryDays2022

17.02	Opening Ceremony of Memory Days 2022 by IDMC & KAS
18.02	International Conference: “Communist Myths, Before and After the System Changed” by IDMC, KAS, University of Tirana, University of Vienna, ISKK & Embassy of Austria
19.02	Study visit to sites of memory in Shkodra by IDMC & KAS
20.02	Exhibition: Everyday Life in Spaç Prison – Sketches on the Survivor’s Testimony by KAS & kujto.al
21.02	Discussion: “History through documents – Communist indoctrination in culture and art” by KAS & Institute of History
21.02	Inauguration of the Multimedial Exhibition “Faces of the Dictatorship” by IDMC, ISKK & Political Persecuted Association
22.02	Documentary Screening: “When Mom Went to Work Early - Women in GDR” by IDMC & Bundesstiftung zur Aufarbeitung
22.02	Exhibition: “Unliberated – Women between production and reproduction” by KAS & Berk
23.02	Documentary and Book Presentation by ISKK
23.02	Presentation of the Exhibition “Century of Martyrs” by PEMC & MEMO
23.02	Open Forum: “Memory Books” by UETPRESS
23.02	Open Forum: “LEST WE FORGET!” with students, teachers and former persecuted by IDMC, PEMC & National Assoc. of History Teachers
24.02	Discussion: Good Old Times?! – A Study in Post-Communist Nostalgia by KAS and Politiko
24.02	Round Table: Sites of Memory in Albania, Challenges and Initiatives by IDMC & Austrian Service Abroad
25.02	Workshop: “Missing Women during Communist Regime” by OSCE Presence in Albania
25.02	Memory as a Mission - Local Activities in Korça, Berat, Lezha, Saranda, Kuçova, Lushnja by IDMC and partners
25.02	Movie Screening: “The Planting of Trees” by IDMC
26.02	Closing Ceremony “Memorial of Light” by IDMC & KAS

Below you will find a general overview of each activity.
For more information about MEMORY DAYS 2022 visit:

<https://idmc.al/en/memory-days-22.html>

An excerpt from the keynote address of **Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers**, Social Anthropologist

‘The Past is a Foreign Country’, the late David Lowenthal’s classic monograph of 1985, and the ‘Revisited’ version of 2015 remind us of the malleability of the past in the present, contingent on context, interests, and needs of the present. Such a simultaneously instrumentalist and constructivist approach to history has been applied to Albanian historiography. When it comes to the remote past, there exists an established canon of myths (in the sense of formalised narrations of pasts long gone), which have long served nationally unified identity construction vis-à-vis both internal and external contestations (Malcolm 2002; Schwandner-Sievers 2004). This doesn’t mean that such evocations of remote pasts can’t still evoke heightened emotions, such as in situations when national identifications matter, but their study has long transited from ‘the phenomenology of memory to the epistemology of scientific history’ and history has become ‘verified memory’ which can be interpreted as such, as Paul Ricoeur summarises in his discussion of Pierre Nora (Ricoeur 2004: 91; Nora 1992: 626)

This is quite different when it comes to memories of lived history. The *ars memoriae* of those generations who experienced a certain, recent past that is still being negotiated and, perhaps, it is only being attempted to formalise; when there are tensions between survivors of traumatic pasts who need to deal with a ‘wounded memory’ of the era in question, vis-à-vis those whose memories of the same period lean more towards an uncritical, nostalgic character and oblivion, such formalisation remains contested (Ricoeur 2004). Rather than petrified, formalised memory, a plurality of memory might be part of a democratic landscape. Yet the memory of communist Albania appears deeply divided and often antagonistic to outside observers, as most poignantly evident in the recent debate around Lea Ypi’s (2021) memoir. The scope of living memories of life under ‘Monism’ (the one-party rule), i.e., of Albania’s communist-totalitarian past, seems to demarcate continuous societal and political dividing lines that align with the beneficiaries and the victims of either the past or the present or both.

About the Keynote Speaker



Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers (MA, Berlin; PhD, London) is Assoc. Professor in Applied Anthropology and co-director of the Research Centre for ‘Seldom Heard Voices: Marginalisation and Societal Integration’ at Bournemouth University, UK. She has an academic background in social anthropology and ‘Balkanologie’, and has specialised on Albanian cultures and societies, both in the wider region and transnational, since the late 1980s. From 1997 – 2003 she served as the

first Nash Fellow for Albanian Studies at University College London, introducing a social-constructivist approach to Albanian history (co-edited with B. J. Fischer, *Albanian Identities: Myth and History*, London: Hurst 2002).

Her ethnographic research in post-socialist Albania, post-conflict Kosova, and with Albanian migrants in trans-local contexts (since the late 1980s), has led to numerous publications focusing on questions such as identity constructions in recourse to contested pasts. More recent publications focus on topics such as Transitional Justice, epistemic justice, and participatory arts-based interventions. In collaboration with her colleagues at the University of Prishtina, she recently concluded leading the ‘Kosovo-Strand’ projects of an AHRC/GCRF-funded international project of working with young people and civil society through contested and divided histories in post-conflict countries worldwide, known as *Changing the Story*. Since 2018, she has also led two large Erasmus schemes, enabling student/staff exchange between the University of Prishtina and Bournemouth University. She currently leads the academic research component of a UK government-funded development project, RAYS, which critically explores the role of hip-hop and its potential for the empowerment of youth at risk in Albania.

An excerpt from the keynote address of **Lavinia Stan**, Political Sciences Expert

Regardless of their chosen method of effecting transitional justice, and the pace at which the process was allowed to unfold, Eastern European countries have seemingly shared a number of myths regarding their politics of memory.

Rather than being coherent systems of thought explaining reality, these myths are beliefs whose foundations transcended logic, and thus it is unlikely that any amount of evidence can shatter their pseudo-cognitive immunity. These myths revolve around several fundamental assumptions, presumptions and simplifying arguments which have informed public policy in the area of transitional justice, underpinned public debate regarding the utility, desirability, legitimacy and feasibility of the process, and framed the scholarly literature examining national efforts of dealing with the authoritarian past.

Many an observer of post-communist transitional justice has fallen prey to these ‘mythological constellations’, as French anthropologist Gilbert Durand termed mythical constructs belonging to a common theme and structured around a central vision. Rather than wild justice or no justice at all, post-communist transitional justice policies have offered partial justice, and therefore constituted a politically feasible and morally defensible solution that was, nevertheless, far from being perfect.

Aware of the pitfalls of moving into un-chartered territory, I will present several myths which have informed the debate on post-communist transitional justice, bringing examples from different Eastern European countries and examining different components of the politics of the past to illustrate the way in which each and every myth reflects and distorts reality. My aim here is to spell out these mental constructs and challenge the commonly held assumption that transitional justice leads to knowl-edge of the ‘truth’ about the communist regime more than it gives the society a chance to engage in a cathartic experience of moral cleansing permitting victims some belated but well-deserved closure for the injustices they suffered at the hands of communist hacks.

About the Keynote Speaker



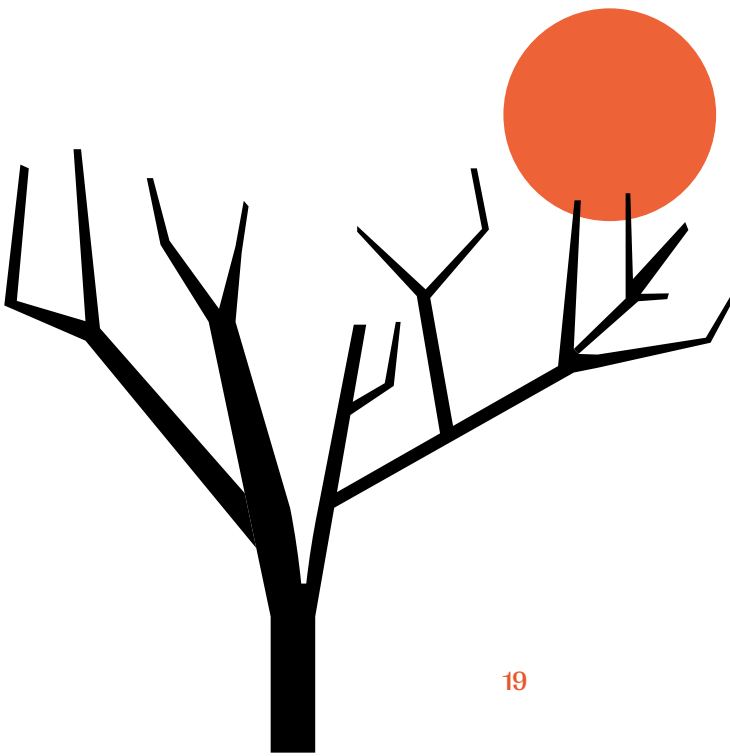
A Comparative Politics specialist, **Lavinia Stan** is a professor at St. Francis Xavier University in Canada.

Most of her research focuses on transitional justice, as well as religion and politics, in post-communist Europe.

She is the author or editor of fifteen books, including *Encyclopedia of Transitional Justice* as well as *Transitional Justice in Post-Communist Romania*, both published with Cambridge University Press, and close to fifty peer-reviewed journal articles.

Stan's research has been generously funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and a number of other foundations and granting agencies.

She has been involved in designing transitional justice proposals for the United Nations and the European Commission for post-communist countries, North Korea, and some Arab Spring countries.



Activities Overview

DAY 1

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17TH

(Hybrid Activity)

Venue 1: Scanderbeg Square

Parallel Venue 2: Live on Facebook

OPENING CEREMONY: MEMORY DAYS 2022

The 7th edition of MEMORY DAYS 2022 will be opened on 17 February at the Scanderbeg square in the physical and virtual presence of partners, local and foreign actors working in the field of memory.

During the opening ceremony an artistic performance titled “The fall of myths” will take place, organized by DoArt. Some short speeches will be held by our event guests and then a new initiative of IDMC and its partners in the field of decommunization will be announced publicly for the first time.

The ceremony will be hosted by IDMC and KAS and it is a public event, opened via Facebook and Youtube to everyone who interested on the issue of dealing with the communist past.

Languages: Albanian, English

DAY 2

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18TH

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: “COMMUNIST MYTHS, BEFORE AND AFTER THE SYSTEM CHANGED”

(Hybrid Activity)

Venue 1: Tirana International Hotel, Abret Room

Parallel: Zoom & Live on Facebook

An international conference on “Communist Myths in Albania, before and after the System Change” will be held in the context of this year’s Memory Days. It will feature two

keynote speakers, Prof. Lavinia Stan and Prof. Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers, who are dedicated to topics in the field of transitional justice in post-communist countries.

Other participants will deliver a wide range of academic arguments in three panels: 1) communist myths in literature, music, and science; 2) the political myths of Albanian communism, inside and outside the country; 3) communist myths after the fall of the regime. Each of them will have presentations delivered by distinguished professors and academics in the fields of history, political science, and transitional justice.

Panels will be moderated by Prof. Dr. Valentina Duka, Prof. Merita Poni, Dr. Klejd Këlliçi. Dr. Idris Idrizi will moderate a special discussion at the end of the conference with the two foremost speakers and Prof. Enis Sulstarova.

Languages: Albanian, English

EXHIBITION: “CENTURY OF MARTYRS”

Venue: National Historical Museum

The exhibition “Century of Martyrs” created by PEMC and MEMO brings photos and testimonies of 28 martyrs from many countries around the world, including Albania, resisting the fascist, Nazi and 20th century regimes.

DAY 3

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19TH

STUDY VISIT TO SITES OF MEMORY IN SHKODRA for our international guests and partners.

DAY 4

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 20TH

EXHIBITION: EVERYDAY LIFE IN SPAÇ PRISON – SKETCHES CREATED ON THE SURVIVOR’S TESTIMONY

Venue: Destil Creative Hub Tirana

Since 1968, when it was first established, Spaç Prison was projected as a labor camp where political prisoners of the communist regime would be used to work at the site of a

copper and pyrite mine, in a remote and mountainous area in the center of the country. Their life in this camp was closely connected with mining. But how did the days there pass? What were the living and working conditions? Where did they sleep, what did they eat, where and how did the rituals of difficult life take place in this camp...

Already, three decades after its closure, when time is slowly erasing many traces of life there, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and Kujto. al, realise this project that combines art with research and aims to visually memorize the days and activities of prisoners there through a series of graphics.

Languages: Albanian, English

DAY 5

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 21ST

DISCUSSION: HISTORY THROUGH DOCUMENTS – COMMUNIST INDOCTRINATION IN CULTURE AND ART

Venue: Institute of History, Academy of Albanian Studies

The four volumes “Documents on political culture and indoctrination of society by the Albanian communist state 1945-1990” are the best illustration of the mechanism of propaganda, fear, censorship, and violence on freedom of thought in communist Albania. In a system based on indoctrination, there is no individual but collective, there is no talent and inspiration, but a defined system of thought and creation, there is no competition and value, but a system of evaluation in function of official political line.

The volumes were prepared by the researchers Prof. Beqir Meta, Prof. Afrim Krasniqi, and Dr. Hasan Bello from the Institute of History. The Institute of History has been engaged in the years 2017-2021 in telling the history of communist Albania through documents and facts. Volumes on indoctrination in culture and arts are part of this commitment in collaboration with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, which will continue in the coming years.

Languages: Albanian, English

OPENING OF THE EXHIBITION: “FACES OF THE DICTATORSHIP”

Venue: Villa 31, Bllok

DAY 6

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 22ND

DOCUMENTARY SCREENING: “WHEN MOM WENT TO WORK EARLY – WOMEN IN GDR”

Venue: Europe House

When life in the GDR was evaluated after 1989, the situation of women was one of the positively evaluated aspects of life in the dictatorship, in contrast to many other areas. Women’s equality was often presented as a prime example of successful women’s policy. But how did women actually live in the GDR? Were they really equal - or was this merely on paper? A job, a child, a family, a fulfilling partnership, self-realization... In the GDR, too, these were tasks and demands that women had to juggle every day, just like everywhere else in the world.

Freya and Nadja Klier asked women from different GDR generations, from the city and the countryside, for their memories. They used original material from GDR television and asked experts such as Prof. Dr. Hildegard Maria Nickel from the Humboldt University in Berlin for their assessments. The result is a differentiated documentary that provides personal insights into a woman’s life in the GDR.

This documentary was released in 2017 and is in German with English subtitles. After the screening, the human rights activist Elsa Ballauri, will moderate a discussion between Ana Kaminski, Flutura Aça, and Nevila Nika. The activity is supported by Bundesstiftung zur Aufarbeitung and German Embassy in Albania.

Languages: Albanian, English

EXHIBITION: “UNLIBERATED – WOMEN BETWEEN PRODUCTION AND REPRODUCTION”

Venue 1: Berk, Tirana

The post-World War II policies of socialist Albania were generally inspired by the Soviet Stalinist model. The gender

policy model, particularly the party-state attitude towards women, had the same source of inspiration. However, this model shows no attempt to liberate the woman but her involvement in a mechanism of production and reproduction. Emancipation is considered an inherent reconciliation with the return of tradition, which is re-proposed through particular policies and cultural propaganda items rather than a rupture with the past. This exhibition intends to demonstrate the lack of a feminist freeing attitude to women vs. the official discourse of manipulating women's freedom by addressing a number of critical issues.

The exhibition is a production of Berk and KAS.

Languages: Albanian, English

DAY 7

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23rd

DOCUMENTARY SCREENING AND PROMOTION OF ISSK BOOK SERIES

Venue: Rogner Hotel, Antigonea Room

The Institute for the Studies of Communist Crimes and Consequences in Albania organizes the screening of the documentary "Architecture under Communism". The discussion panel will focus on the traces of cultural heritage and the relationship that totalitarianism has with architecture and its effects on society, lifestyle, and forms of urban organization today.

ISSK will also present the series of publications of 2021, including the presentation of the X volume of the "Encyclopedic Dictionary of Victims of Communist Terror, supplements (A-DH)", which is one of the most important long-term projects of this institute that serves as a database of all forms of punishment, such as internment, imprisonment, shootings, etc., for every individual who suffered communist repression.

IDMC will also make the presentation of „Vademecum Albania“, a brochure done in collaboration with Bundesstiftung zur Aufarbeitung, which serves as a guide for sites of memory and institutions working in the field of memory in Albania.

Meanwhile, an exhibition about the persecution of the clergy will be presented by the historian, former president of PEMC Lukasz Kaminski, and Gjon Radovani, representative of MEMO.

Languages: Albanian, English

OPEN FORUM: “BOOKS ON MEMORY” BY UETPRESS

Venue: EUT, Concilium Room, Building A

UETPRESS has published over 30 books by authors with prominent public intellectual profile as an attribute to cultivate our collective memory. Our publications Scripta Manent and Literature embody the authentic traces of the painful understanding of the people of the society and of the Albanian individual in the school of the communist years. Through the authentic stories of the protagonist witnesses, these testimonies of a precious fund in the corpus of historical memory of the Albanians.

Languages: Albanian, English

OPEN FORUM: “LEST WE FORGET!” WITH STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND FORMER PERSECUTED

(Hybrid Activity)

Venue 1: Rogner Hotel, Antigonea 1 Room

Parallel: Live on Facebook

The Institute for Democracy, Media and Culture (IDMC), in collaboration with the European Platform of Memory and Conscience (PEMC), presents the book “Lest We Forget”, the Albanian version of a reader with stories of politically persecuted by totalitarian regimes for high school students across Europe.

IDMC’s contribution to the preservation of historical memory and its transmission to the younger generation is best fulfilled through the publication of this book in Albanian. It shows the younger generation how people resisted the Albanian dictatorship, including the stories of former political

persecuted Viktor Martini or Ylber and Shpresa Merdani.

Languages: Albanian, English

DAY 8

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 24TH

DISCUSSION: “GOOD OLD TIMES?!” – A STUDY IN POST-COMMUNIST NOSTALGIA

Venue: The National Library of Tirana, American Corner

A member of the new Albanian Parliament urged the public to consider the ‘good things’ of the communist period. The previous Parliament was headed by a former Secretary of the Communist Party. Every year, in October and November, a few people demonstrate in Tirana holding portraits of Enver Hoxha, the communist dictator. Is this political provocation or pure nostalgia? Is this longing for communism or ‘social dementia’? How should post-communist nostalgia be considered and dealt with? The Konrad Adenauer Foundation and Politiko have translated and published in Albanian „The post-communist nostalgia“, a body of research on how the former communist countries in the Balkans are coping with the social and political transition. How is Albania doing it? This topic will be discussed with a panel of researchers and academics.

Languages: Albanian, English

ROUND-TABLE: MEMORY PLACES IN ALBANIA, CHALLENGES, AND INITIATIVES

Venue: Tirana International Hotel, Onufri Room

The discussion is about the identification of challenges for the memory places in Albania and evaluating possible solutions to them. The attendees include Daniel Schuster, Head of the Vienna Office at the Austrian Service Abroad, Dr. Lukasz Kaminski, former President of the Platform of European Memory and Conscience. They are going to present

examples of musealization of historical places and buildings across Europe. Together with them, part of this discussion will be local organizations and institutions that have worked on this concept for sites of memory in Albania.

Languages: Albanian, English

DAY 9

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25TH

DISCUSSION: MISSING WOMEN DURING COMMUNIST REGIME

Venue: The Faculty of Social Sciences

As a result of serious systematic violations of human rights during the communist era in Albania, thousands of individuals are still classified as missing. During 1944-1991, over 6,000 persons were executed in Albania, with or without a court decision, and their bodies, in general, were not given back to their families for burial. According to the Institute for the Studies of Communist Crimes and Consequences, 5,577 men and 450 women were executed to death during the regime.

After the '90s, little has been done to identify and recover the remains of the missing people. In a communication to the Conference of States parties to the Committee on Enforced Disappearances in 2016, Albania reaffirmed its commitment to investigate and punish the crimes and violations of human rights committed under the communist regime and to search, locate, and identify the remains of persons executed during the communist time.

Following on its previous efforts and initiatives, the OSCE Presence in Albania is currently supporting academic and technical discussions on the issue of missing persons. Two research papers, supported by the Presence, tackle legal-related issues and the situation of missing women from the communist past. Based on these, and in collaboration with the Centre for Justice and Transformation/Tirana University, the Presence will organize on 25 February a workshop at the Faculty of Social Sciences. It will serve as a platform for discussions on the issue of missing persons from the communist past through gender lenses, where the findings of the before-mentioned research paper will be presented.

Languages: Albanian, English

MOVIE SCREENING: “THE PLANTING OF TREES”

Venue: Destil Creative Hub in Tirana

This short movie aims to raise awareness about persecution during the communist dictatorship in Albania.

Ylljet Aliçka, the screenwriter, tells the story of a mother whose son is imprisoned for owning a banned book. Luiza Xhuvani, Kastriot Çausi, Roerd Toçe, Alert Çeloaliaj, Myzafer Zifla, and Gulielm Radoja play their role by showing what life was like inside Burrel’s prison for political persecuted.

A panel discussion between Aliçka and the director Fabio Seferi will shed light on their experience in bringing to life a work of art that focuses on persecution under the dictatorship and the importance of commemorating the victims of the communist regime.

Languages: Albanian, English

LOCAL ACTIVITIES UNDER THE MOTTO: “MEMORY AS A MISSION”

Venue: Korça, Lezha, Berat, Kuçova, Saranda

IDMC partners in Korça, Lezha, Berat, Kuçova, and Saranda are organizing their local activities in the framework of MEMORY DAYS 2022. This year, IDMC is being more inclusive, giving the opportunity to all young people across Albania to participate virtually or physically in our main activities through the events in their region.

An exhibition “Korça remembers” will be held in the main square of the Cathedral in Korça, with the presence of the majors of the municipalities of Korça and Maliq, as well as other actors related to the field. The exhibition contains information about the Swamp of Maliq during communism.

Young high school students in Berat are being active and creative by bringing in memory different events of the period

1944-1991 in songs, dances, acting, videos, etc.

At the same time, young students in Lezha, Kuçova, and Saranda are getting in touch with their local history. They will get to know and maybe visit sites of memory in the area for the first time.

DAY 10

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26TH

CLOSING CEREMONY OF #MEMORYDAYS2022

Venue: Scanderbeg square

MEMORIAL OF LIGHT – Commemoration of the victims of communist dictatorship in Albania on the occasion of the anniversary of 26.02.1951, when 22 prominent intellectuals of Tirana and Albania were shot without trial and without guilt.

IDMC is creating a new ritual in the main square of Tirana to commemorate all those who suffered from the communist regime whose memorial is missing there.

For more information about MEMORY DAYS please visit:

<https://idmc.al/en/memory-days-22.html>

Organizers:

IDMC – The Institute for Democracy, Media & Culture is a non-profit organization that uses an interdisciplinary approach to study and promote the development of democratic values, culture, and media in Albania. The institute aims to promote dignity and human rights as key elements of Europe and the European Union's (EU) democratic values and to raise awareness amongst young people about the history of the EU and the crimes committed by totalitarian regimes, including the dictatorship in Albania, through:

- educational training, school curriculum, and creative projects in multimedia, film, and awareness-raising events;
- the publication (in print and online) and translation of books and materials that enable scientific and cultural exchange, both European and international; and
- scientific surveys of public opinion about media and peace.

IDMC's activities on dealing with the past, such as MEMORY DAYS, are supported by Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

Website: www.idmc.al

KAS – The Konrad Adenauer Foundation is a political foundation of the Christian Democratic Union of Germany. Konrad Adenauer (1876- 1967), the co-founder of the Christian Democratic Union and the first Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, brought together Christian, social, and conservative traditions with liberal traditions. His name is a symbol of the democratic reconstruction of Germany, the deployment of its foreign policy in a transatlantic community of values, the vision of a united Europe, and an orientation towards the social market economy. His spiritual heritage is, at the same time, our duty and commitment.

Website: www.kas.de/albanien/sq/

Partners & Supporters

“MEMORY DAYS 2021”:

- Anti Communist Association of Former Politically Persecuted
- Austrian Embassy
- Austrian Service Abroad
- Berk Tirana
- Bundesstiftung zur Aufarbeitung
- EU Delegation in Albania
- European University of Tirana
- Institute for the Studies of Communist Crimes and Consequences
- Institute of History
- Kujto.al Foundation
- Municipality of Tirana
- Municipality of Korça
- Municipality of Maliq
- National Association of History Teachers in Albania
- OSCE Presence in Albania
- Platform of European Memory and Conscience
- Politiko
- University of Tirana
- University of Vienna

Venues

Skanderbeg Square, Tirana

Rogner Hotel

AL, Bulevardi Dëshmorët e Kombit, 1001
<https://www.hotel-europapark.com/en.html>

Tirana International Hotel

Sheshi Skënderbej 8, Tirana 1001
<https://www.tiranainternational.com/>

Destil Creative Hub Tirana

Zoçu I Blvd, Tirana 1001

Institute of History, Academy of Albanian Studies

Sheshi Nënë Tereza, nr. 3, Tiranë 1005
<http://asa.edu.al/site/ih/>

Villa 31, Bllok

Europe House

Papa Gjon Pali II Street, AL, 1000

Berk

<http://berk.al/>
Rruga Him Kolli, nr.14, Tirana, 1001

European University of Tirana

<https://uet.edu.al/>
Kompleksi Xhura, Rruga Xhanfize Keko, Tirana, 1000

Faculty of Social Sciences

<http://www.unitir.edu.al/index.php/fakulteti-i-shkencave-sociale>
Bulevardi Gjergj Fishta, Tirana

The National Library of Tirana

<http://www.bksh.al/>
Sheshi Skënderbej, Tiranë

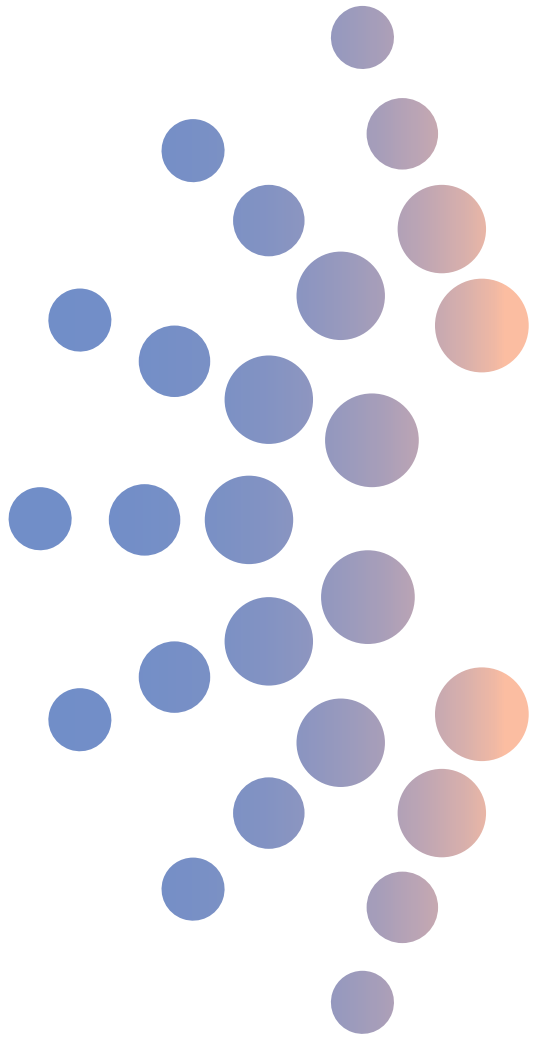
Korça

Berat

Kuçova

Saranda

Lezha



IDMC Social Media Accounts:

Facebook: **IDMC – Instituti për Demokraci, Media dhe Kulturë**

Instagram: **idmc_albania**

You Tube: **Instituti për Demokraci, Media & Kulturë**

Twitter: **idmc5**

#7

17 – 26
February

2022

MEMORY DAYS

ORGANIZERS:



PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS:

