

## Institut za etnologiju i folkloristiku i znanstveni projekt Hrvatske zaklade za znanost **Naracije straha** pozivaju vas na predavanje

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## NARRATIVES OF HOPE AND FEAR. INSIDER-OUTSIDER PERSPECTIVES ON WARTIME MICROCOSM OF KORČULA

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Izlaganje će biti na engleskom, a popratna diskusija na hrvatskom jeziku.

## **Bojan Aleksov (University College London, SSEES)**

## Narratives of Hope and Fear. Insider-Outsider Perspectives on Wartime Microcosm of Korčula

Rise of nationalism, dissolution of Empires and rise of new states and totalitarian regimes in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century unleashed massive migrations out but also to the Southeast Europe. Some of those were forced as when thousands of Central European Jews (and often their non-Jewish partners) fled to the Balkans from 1933. Many of them were stuck there and brutally murdered after Yugoslavia and Greece were invaded in 1941. Others survived war years in the Balkan highlands or Adriatic islands hiding or joining local resistance movements.

No other place provides a better microcosm of the Second World War calamities seen through multiple perspectives of survivors than the island of Korčula in the South Adriatic. From 1933 onwards, Korčula became a destination for emigrants—mostly artists and political opponents to the Nazis. During the war years under the Italian occupation, Korčula became an internment site for several hundred Jews, among others, and a remarkable oasis of safety in Europe. The writings of Csokor and Sacher-Masoch, who found themselves among the exiles, provide the backbone for this lecture in addition to later historical research, interviews and memoirs of other survivors. Evaluating narratives which supplement patchy traditional historical sources is used in an effort to contribute or correct the existing knowledge of the Second World War and Holocaust in the region.

**Bojan Aleksov** is an associate professor of the history of South-eastern Europe at the University College London School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies. In 2020 he published *Wars and Betweeness: Big Powers and Middle Europe 1918-1945* (co-edited with Aliaksandr Piahanau, Budapest CEU Press), and co-authored "Transnational perspectives on Jews in the Resistance" and "Camps as crucibles of transnational resistance" in *Fighters across frontiers: Transnational resistance in Europe, 1936-48* (Manchester University Press). Last year Aleksov also wrote a polemic "Questioning Western Approaches to Religion in the Former Yugoslavia," published in *Balkanologie* XV, n°1, and available in open access.

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