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Reactions to the Soviet interventions in the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, amongst French and Italian Communist Party members in the shipbuilding towns of La Seyne and Monfalcone.



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Whilst registered as a candidate for the above degree, I have not been registered for any other research award. The results and conclusions embodied in this thesis are the work of the named candidate and have not been submitted for any other academic award.

¹ (Szonyi, 2006, n.p.).

ABSTRACT

1956 was punctuated by a series of events that shook the world, and is seen as having been not only a watershed for the international communist movement but also a turning point in the Cold War. This thesis is an in-depth study of a specific and under-researched aspect of French and Italian communism i.e. the responses of ordinary Communist Party members of what were the two largest and most important non-ruling Communist Parties to these historic events. Its aim has been to recover thoughts, feelings and responses of those ‘on the ground’ to these events via a series of personal interviews supported by national, regional and local archival evidence in a multiple case study. The regional nature of the study reveals variations between responses at local and at national levels; and the cross-cultural, transnational perspective highlights the role of historical experience and other factors in explaining variations in the responses in the two locations. It looks at the way in which the Soviet interventions were handled by the Federations of Var and Gorizia e.g. by their initiating, facilitating or closing debate in cells, sections and Federation Committees. It reveals extents to which local and regional factors, perspectives and contexts affected the responses to this crisis on the part of the rank and file, mid-level cadres and the regional Party leaderships. It looks at Party cultures and at levels of critical awareness within the regional Party membership bodies as indicated by their willingness to question Soviet actions and the official ‘Party line’. In so doing it identifies differences in understandings of ‘communist militancy’ *per se* at this conjuncture, despite the international communist movement’s being, in principle, a coherent ideological and political entity. This study reveals clear convergences in responses across the multiple case-study, but it also reveals distinct and indeed astonishing divergences, dispelling in the process any myth that post-war Western European communism was a ‘one size fits all’ phenomenon.

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ABBREVIATIONS:

| | |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| AMG: | Allied Military Government |
| CPUSA: | American Communist Party |
| ANACR: | Association des Anciens Combattants de la Résistance |
| ANPI: | Associazione Nazionale Partigiani d'Italia |
| AVO: | Allamvedelmi Osztaly (Hungarian State Security Agency) |
| CC: | Central Committee (Communist Party) |
| CGI: | Confederazione generale del lavoro |
| CGT: | Confédération du travail |
| CNL: | Comitato di liberazione nazionale |
| CNR: | Conseil nationale de la Resistance |
| CPSU: | Communist Party of the Soviet Union |
| CPUSA: | Communist Party of the United States of America |
| CRDA: | Cantieri Riuniti dell'Adriatico |
| DC: | Democrazia Cristiana |
| ECSC: | European Coal and Steel Community |
| EOKA: | National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters |
| FCM: | Forges et Chantiers de la Méditerranée |
| FG C I: | Federazione giovanile comunista italiana |
| FLN: | Front de Libération Nationale |
| FO: | Force ouvrière |
| FDS: | Fronte democratic sloveno |
| FVG: | Friuli-Venezia-Giulia |
| JC: | Jeunesses communistes |

| | |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| LPVM: | Le Petit Varois la Marseillaise |
| MRP: | Mouvement républicaine populaire |
| MSI: | Movimento Sociale Italiano |
| NLF: | Front nationale de la Libération |
| OVRA: | Organizzazione per la vigilanza e la repressione dell'antifascismo |
| PSDI: | Partito Socialista Democratico Italiano |
| PCF: | Parti communiste français |
| PCFG: | Partito Comunista Federazione di Gorizia |
| PCI: | Partito comunista italiano |
| PCJ: | Partito comunista jugoslava |
| PCRG: | Partito comunista della Regione Giulia |
| PCTLT: | Partito comunista del Territorio Libero di Trieste |
| PDS: | Partito democratico della sinistra |
| PR: | Partito della rifondazione comunista, |
| PSI: | Partito socialista italiana |
| RGR: | Rassemblement des Gauches républicaines |
| SFIO: | Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière |
| SPF: | Secours populaire français |
| TLT: | Territorio Libero di Trieste |
| UAIS: | Unità anti-fascista italiana e slovena |
| UDI: | Unione donne italiane |
| UDCA: | Union de Défense Commerçants et Artisans |
| UFF: | Union des Femmes Français |
| UNRRA: | United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration |

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DISSEMINATION

‘Reactions ... A discussion of methodological approaches’, PBS / CEISR Postgraduate Half-Day Conference, University of Portsmouth, 14th May, 2008.

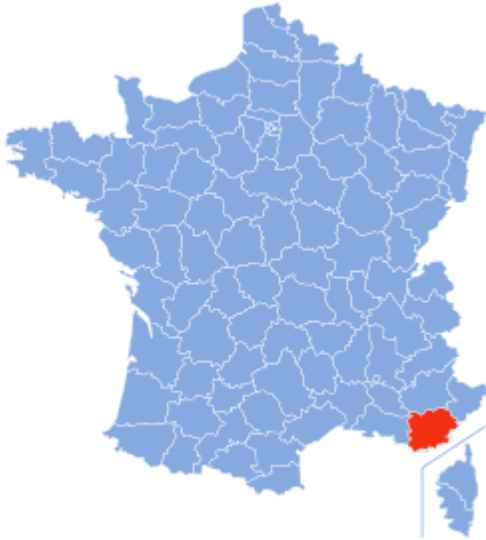
‘Reactions ...Implied comparisons with Monfalcone,’ PBS / CEISR Postgraduate Half-Day Conference, University of Portsmouth, 13th May, 2009.

‘Reactions ... Understandings of communist militancy *per se* in La Seyne in 1956’ ASMCF 30th Annual Conference, University of Portsmouth, 3rd September 2009.

‘Oral History Workshop’, British Academy UK-Africa Academic Partnership, University of Portsmouth, 16th – 17th April, 2010.

‘Memories of ‘Resistance’ and the concept of ‘Party’ within communist communities in the Var and Venezia-Giulia’, PBS / CEISR 5th Postgraduate Conference, University of Portsmouth, 12th May 2010.

Map of the Var region of France ²



² (Yahoo images, n.d.)

Map of Friuli-Venezia-Giulia ³



³ (Yahoo images, n.d.)

