

Call for Papers

1918-1938-2018: Dawn of an Authoritarian Century?

Conference: 4th- 7th September 2018

Location: Schloss Eckartsau (Lower Austria) [Accommodation in Bratislava]

Organised by the Federal Agency for Civic Education (Bonn/Berlin) and the University of Vienna

Submission Deadline: 15th April 2018

2018 will see the commemoration of several important historical events from recent European history, remembered with varying degrees of intensity: the end of the First World War (1918); the “Anschluss” of Austria, already eroded by Austro-fascism; the destruction of the democratic Czechoslovakia through the Munich Agreement; and the escalating disenfranchisement and discrimination against Jews in National Socialist Germany, which led to the orchestrated violence of the November pogrom (“Kristallnacht”) in 1938.

In the context of recent developments that have seen an undermining of parliamentary democracy, different aspects of the historical events in question will be focused on over the course of four half days, incorporating longitudinal and cross-sectional studies and the shifting spatial and geopolitical perspectives:

Session 1: Political Culture in Europe 1918 to 1939

This session will look at the fall of young democracies in Europe in the interwar period and analyse their consequences as well as the impact of different constructions of history stemming from this period and up until today. How are the failed democracies of the interwar period, civil wars and authoritarian/totalitarian regimes remembered and incorporated into current political legitimisation processes?

Session 2: The Escalating Persecution of Jews and Aggressive National Socialist Expansion Policies 1938

The second session focuses on the aggressive expansionist policies and the extreme racism of National Socialist Germany. Although the expansion of German territory and the terror inflicted on the Jewish population took place before the eyes of the world, no effective international measures were taken. The result of the rapid acceleration of events that led in 1938 to a ‘point of no return’ for the Jewish population will be examined at different levels. Aspects and topics such as migration and escape, exile and diaspora, and the revocation of minority rights will be central, and addressed from both historical and modern perspectives.

Session 3: Democracy and Authoritarianism 1918 to 2018. A *Longue Durée* Perspective

This session addresses the current debate about the state of parliamentary democracy. It should reflect the thesis that “the long period of democratic growth in Europe between 1945 and 1989/91” has ended and the galvanising experience of the Second World War has been lost as a result of generational change. The European context is central, with a specific focus on Eastern Europe.

Session 4: The Future of Democracy in the 21st Century

The final session is dedicated to the future perspectives and political courses of action for the reform and stabilisation of parliamentary democracy and political education. The main focus is on human rights, migration, education, gender-democracy and the influence of the media on democratic discourse. The question of to what extent the export of democracy can be understood as a transatlantic model of success will be discussed.

We invite academics and experts from the field of political education and artists and activists who work in projects relating to fascism, anti-fascism, authoritarianism and the promotion of democracy to submit a presentation for the conference. Submissions from a wide range of academic disciplines are welcome, in particular from the fields of history, law, political sciences, sociology, European ethnology, cultural and social anthropology. The analysis of individual countries is welcome as well as comparative studies. Applicants are free to choose which of the four sessions they find most fitting, however the final decision lies with the organisers.

Presenters are not subject to the conference fee. Refreshments at the conference and the transfer from Bratislava to Schloss Eckartsau will be provided. Applicants whose institutions are unable to cover the cost of travel can apply to the organisers for a bursary to cover the costs. To apply, please send an email to the organisers as soon as your paper is accepted (the cost of visas cannot be covered, but an invitation letter can be supplied if necessary). The participation of all presenters for the duration of the entire conference is a requirement, to ensure a lively discussion and facilitate an active exchange of ideas and perspectives.

To apply, please send an abstract of your contribution (incl. the title) of no more than 1500 characters (incl. spaces) and a brief résumé of no more than one A4 page to the following address: eckartsau2018.zeitgeschichte@univie.ac.at. The submission deadline is 15th April 2018. Submissions can be in German or English. The conference language is English and presentations should be no longer than 20 minutes. Applicants will be informed of the outcome of the selection process in May 2018.

Cooperation Partners (in alphabetical order):

- Austrian Cultural Forum Bratislava (Rakúske Kultúrne Fórum Bratislava)
- Austrian Embassy Bratislava (Österreichische Botschaft Pressburg)
- Austrian Federal Forests (Österreichische Bundesforste)
- Institute for German Culture and History of South-eastern Europe at the Ludwig-Maximilian University, Munich (supported by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media)
- Institute for Human Sciences (IWM)
- Leo Baeck Institute - New York | Berlin

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Conference Committee:

Hans-Georg Golz, Caroline Hornstein Tomić, Johannes Piepenbrink (Federal Agency for Civic Education, Bonn/Berlin) and Linda Erker, Johann Kirchknopf, Oliver Rathkolb (University of Vienna)

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