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Call for Papers

Conference "Public sphere, Ideology, Transformation of Power"

Doctoral College *European Historical Dictatorship and Transformation Research*
University of Vienna, Department of Contemporary History

The conference will take place on **November 24-25, 2011** at the **University of Vienna**

Deadline for Proposals: **April 30, 2011**

The conference *Public Sphere, Ideology, Transformation of Power* represents the second part of the conference organized by the Doctoral College *European Historical Dictatorship and Transformation Research* located at the Department of Contemporary History, University of Vienna

The key words of the conference title correspond to crucial aspects for the formation, functioning, and fighting for political hegemony of authoritarian regimes while being under pressure of adjusting to constantly changing external and internal factors in a fast-paced 20th century Europe.

The conference aims to address the field of 'public sphere', the category 'ideology' and the process 'transformation of power' in a twofold approach:

On the one hand, strategies of the regime's representatives to maintain their once gained power will be illuminated as state-driven approaches of shaping public opinion in order to achieve the regime's goals. Top-down perspectives should broaden our understanding of structural mechanisms and the functions attributed to (non-)formal means of communicating within these political frameworks.

Complementary, bottom-up initiatives introduced by social groups as a response to authoritarian state rule will be examined. Investigating mobilisation processes within different social settings a society helps identifying key opinion leaders and recognizing social needs the regime itself is not able to fulfill 'from above'. Moreover, by analyzing factors of social coherence of people under authoritarian regimes processes of individual and collective identity are to be explored.

Therefore, we are interested in papers that might include, but are not limited to, the following questions in light of European pre and post war authoritarian regimes in the 20th century:

- Cluster A - Public sphere:
 - Which formal mechanisms were available to regimes in order to restore order?
 - Which functions had an informal participating public sphere according to elite groups and regime?
 - Which spheres were occupied by resistance or resistant behaviour? Where can borders be delineated between public and privacy?
- Cluster B - Ideology:
 - Which social/ elite groups are recognized as bearer of ideology? Do they represent a support for the regime or are they seen as antagonising factor?
 - In which sphere is hegemony of interpretation being negotiated? Public vs. private? To what extent does transnational influence play a decisive role?
 - Which values are attributed to national ideology? Questioning of the past or justification of the present as motivational theme in ideology?
- Cluster C - Transformation of Power:
 - Which social groups are identified in the processes of transformation of power?
 - In which spheres does political power undergo transformation?
 - Which extrinsic/ intrinsic factors can be detected as trigger of change?

Working language of the conference: **English**

The conference is intended for young faculty, doctoral students and senior post graduate students in political science, sociology, history and other related disciplines from Austrian and international universities.

We invite both contributions discussing methodological approaches and case studies. We encourage comparative/ transfer analytical and interdisciplinary approaches; priority will be put on papers that include more than one of the mentioned key aspects and highlight the interdependence of these questions.

Please send your **300 words** proposal, together with your contact details and a short CV, to florian.kuehrer@univie.ac.at by **April 30, 2011**.

Successful candidates will be informed per e-mail by **May 31, 2011**.

Travel and accommodation expenses for candidates with accepted presentations up to a limited amount will be covered by the organizers of the conference.