

Please register until 12 November 2019 at:

menschenrechte-demokratie@univie.ac.at

We thankfully acknowledge the financial support granted by the Faculty of Historical and Cultural Studies for this event.

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About the research group:

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Organisation:

Sarah Knoll, Claudia Kraft

University of Vienna

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European Research Council
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Workshop Human Rights and Autonomy Rights in European Perspective

14 November 2019, 14:00 – 19:00

University of Vienna, Main Building (Universitätsring 1),
Sitzungszimmer des Veranstaltungsmanagements

Forschungs-
gruppe
Geschichte der
Menschenrechte
und der
Demokratie

Programme

14:00–14:30

Welcome and Presentation of the Projects

The Myth of Homogeneity: Minority Protection and Assimilation in Western Europe, 1919–1939

Emmanuel Dalle Mulle/Mona Bieling (Graduate Institute Geneva)

Non-Territorial Autonomy. History of a Travelling Idea

Börries Kuzmany (University of Vienna)

14:30–15:30

The Ambivalent Legacy of Minority Protection for Human Rights

Emmanuel Dalle Mulle/Mona Bieling (Graduate Institute Geneva)

Comment: Börries Kuzmany (University of Vienna)

15:30–16:00

Coffee break

16:00–17:30

The Russian Career of an Austro-Marxist Idea: Non-Territorial National Autonomy in the Early Soviet Union

Matthias Battis (University of Vienna)

Far-Right Appropriation of Non-Territorial Autonomy: the Sudeten German Party Case

Oskar Mulej (University of Vienna)

Comment: Katharina Kreuder-Sonnen (University of Vienna)

Final Discussion

Chair:

Sarah Knoll (University of Vienna)

Abstracts and Biographies

The Ambivalent Legacy of Minority Protection for Human Rights

Emmanuel Dalle Mulle / Mona Bieling

The recent literature on the history of human rights has stressed the transition, at the end of the Second World War, from (collective) minority to (individual) human rights. In such a perspective, minority protection and human rights are often portrayed (implicitly or explicitly) as being contradictory, a feature to be found also in the human rights law literature. At the same time, many human rights historians have depicted interwar minority protection as a step forward in the evolution of human rights. Hence, this article proposes an assessment of the ambivalent legacy of the minority protection regime set in place by the League of Nations after the Great War for the human rights system established after 1945. It will mainly look at the innovations and flaws of such a regime as well as at how its basic principles have resonated (or not) in later human rights instruments.

Emmanuel Dalle Mulle is postdoctoral researcher at the Graduate Institute Geneva
Mona Bieling is PhD candidate at the Graduate Institute Geneva

The Russian Career of an Austro-Marxist Idea: Non-Territorial National Autonomy in the Early Soviet Union

Matthias Battis

It is one of the ironies of Soviet history that a state that dismissed nationalism as a bourgeois smokescreen designed to weaken

class-consciousness actually ended up promoting national consciousness. And it is one of the lesser known aspects of this irony that this paper sets out to explore; namely the paradox that a state, which in theory rejected the Austro-Marxist idea of cultural and extra-territorial national autonomy as a particularly insidious form of nationalism, in practice institutionalised nationality in arrangements highly reminiscent of that very idea. As a result, the Soviet state was much more committed, however inadequately, to the protection of group rights than to those of the individual, which were always subordinate to the former. Arguably, this paradigm also influenced the USSR's stance during the post-war debates on a global human rights protection regime.

Matthias Battis is post-doctoral researcher in the ERC project Non-Territorial Autonomy

Far-Right Appropriation of Non-Territorial Autonomy: the Sudeten German Party Case

Oskar Mulej

The presentation investigates the far-right adaptations of non-territorial autonomy during the interwar period, closely focusing on the ethno-federalist model developed by the Sudeten German Party. It explores how German minority activists in Czechoslovakia, who were familiar with the pre-war Moravian Compromise, the Austro-Marxists' writings, as well as with the recommendations of the Congress of European Nationalities, adapted an originally liberal idea to the language and needs of an illiberal, völkisch ideology.

Oskar Mulej is postdoctoral researcher in the ERC project Non-Territorial Autonomy