

Monday Lectures Series of the Branch Office Vilnius of the German Historical Institute Warsaw is primarily aimed at a specialist academic audience and offers communication platform for Lithuanian and German scholars. Our public lectures are also open to the general public. By presenting new research projects and methodological approaches from German-speaking scholarship, the series offers a stimulating discussion forum for researchers from different disciplines. Among the speakers are predominantly German-speaking historians and scholars from related disciplines.

Our monthly lecture series takes place at the University of Vilnius, Faculty of History, Room 211 on Mondays at 5 p.m. All lectures are held in English or German.

In cooperation with the University of Vilnius and Lithuanian Institute of History.

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Monday Lectures

Series 2022 / II



Branch Office Vilnius

3 October, 2022 | 5 p.m.

Prof. Dr. Iwan-Michelangelo D'Aprile (Potsdam)

The Lithuanian Experience. German-Lithuanian Literary Entanglements in the Spirit of Radical Enlightenment

Moderator: Dr. Alexander Mionskowski

The lecture will present three key protagonists of the German literary discourse on Lithuania from the late 18th to early 20th century: Salomon Maimon, Therese Huber, and Alfred Döblin. All three authors published on their Lithuanian experiences in non-fictional reports as well as in innovative literary forms and genres: Maimon's "Lebensbeschreibung" (1792/93) counts as one of the first and still most astonishing Jewish autobiographical novels in modern German literature. Huber's Vilnius-based novel "Destination Cloister" ("Klosterberuf", 1811) in a new way combines three genres and served as a prototype for later 19th century political female authorship. Döblin's "Travel in Poland" ("Reise in Polen", 1926) echoed in the first chapter of "Berlin Alexanderplatz" (1929) and was in various ways constitutive for its avant-garde literary programme. By transforming the common German stereotypes and prejudices on Lithuanian-Polish-Jewish backwardness into a critique of the hypocrisies, blind spots, and limitations of the established cultures of their times the three examples open up a fresh perspective on the history of modern German Literature: as a catalyst for a self-reflective radical enlightenment and modernity the seemingly peripheral Lithuanian experience reveals at its core.

Prof. Dr. Iwan-Michelangelo D'Aprile holds the Chair "Cultures of the Enlightenment" at the University of Potsdam. He is member of the steering committee of the German Society for 18th Century Studies (DGES) and was invited for guest scholarships at the Duke University Durham North Carolina, the National University of Ireland Galway, the Université Bordeaux-Montaigne, the Ludwig Maximilian University Munich, and the German Historical Institute Paris. His book publications include: *Das 18. Jahrhundert. Zeitalter der Aufklärung*, Berlin 2008, *Aufklärung und Kulturtransfer in Mittel- und Osteuropa* (co-editor), Wolfenbüttel 2009, *Die Erfindung der Zeitgeschichte. Geschichtsschreibung und Journalismus zwischen Aufklärung und Vormärz*, Berlin 2013.

24 October, 2022 | 5 p.m.

Prof. Dr. Bernhard Struck (St Andrews)

Out of the Shadow of the Cold War. Perspectives and Case Studies on Writing European History Transnationally, c.1750s–2000s

Moderator: Prof. Dr. Zenonas Norkus

How do we conceptualise and write a European history from the later 18th century to the early 2000s? That is not an easy question but indeed the main purpose of the book project "Modern Europe. A Transnational History, c.1760s–2000s" (co-authored with James Koranyi, Durham, and Jan Koura, Prague – Bloomsbury 2023). Since the 1990s and early 2000s, transnational and global perspectives are among the most innovative yet also challenging approaches in our discipline. And they remain disputed. This paper will focus on two aspects. First, it will introduce some of our key choices around structure, narrative, and periodisation in "Modern Europe". One of our key ambitions is to engage with and reorient the still dominant narrative of a Europe divided into East and West. Second, and in order to illustrate this, the paper will zoom into a vignette-like case study that sets the first partition of Poland-Lithuania in transnational and global perspectives.

Bernhard Struck, Reader / Associate Professor, University of St Andrews (since 2006). Founding Director of the Institute for Transnational & Spatial History, St Andrews. PhD in History Technical University Berlin & Paris IV Sorbonne, 2003. Key interests: European History 18th and 19th century, the history of travel, spatial history, comparative and transnational history. Principal Investigator of the project: Esperanto & Internationalism, c.1880–1920s. Visiting Professor Charles University Prague 2020. Publications: *Neither West – nor East. France and Poland in the Perception of Polish Travellers*, Göttingen 2006; *Shaping the Transnational Sphere. Experts, Networks, and Issues (c. 1850–1930)*, New York 2014 (ed. with Davide Rodogno and Jakob Vogel).

28 November, 2022 | 5 p.m.

Prof. Dr. Valentin Groebner (Lucerne)

In Your Face: Banality, Individuality and the History of the Advertising Poster

Moderator: Prof. Dr. Marija Drémaitė

In the 21st century, everything needs a face: from fundraising campaigns to consumer goods to national memory. These faces always have large, expressive eyes that they direct at their viewers, and they proclaim messages, often in the first person singular.

Such images are ubiquitous, and banal. I would like to take their banality as a challenge: What do you see in them when you look at them from an unfamiliar angle, from the past? Not who, but what do they actually show? My presentation is firstly about their models and forerunners: Where do such images come from? Secondly, about rules of visual representation: How do you turn the image of an individual person into a "we" that can embody the collective? Third, I would like to investigate the emergence of a particular concept with which these speech acts are linked today, namely identity. Is it indeed "historical"?

Valentin Groebner, received his Ph.D. in 1991 at the University of Bielefeld, Germany. He has taught as a Visiting Associate Professor in spring 2000 at the Department of History of Art and Architecture at Harvard University and in 2001 as a professeur invité at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris. Since 2004, he is Professor of Medieval and Renaissance at the University of Lucerne, Switzerland. His more recent books in German focus on the visual culture of self-representation: *Ich-Plakate. Eine Geschichte des Gesichts als Aufmerksamkeitsmaschine*, Frankfurt/a.M 2015 and on the history of tourism *Retroland. Geschichtstourismus und die Sehnsucht nach dem Authentischen*, Frankfurt/a.M. 2018.