



LUDWIG-
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MÜNCHEN



Newsletter

#2 Summer term 2024



Introduction

Greetings and welcome to the second quarterly newsletter of the Center for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences / Kolleg-Forschungsgruppe (KFG) "Universalism and Particularism in European Contemporary History" located at the School of History at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München.

This newsletter starts out with an engaging interview with Prof. Dr. Kiran Klaus Patel, one of the directors of KFG, which offers insights into our work and its underlying theoretical foundations.

In the following section we are thrilled to introduce the talented individuals who will be joining us as fellows for the upcoming summer term. Their diverse backgrounds and expertise promise an enriching colloquium and conference ahead.

Previous contributions to KFG colloquia and conferences can be accessed through the website of our cooperation partner, the L.I.S.A. Science Portal. Links to some of these insightful presentations are conveniently provided in the next segment of the newsletter.

We would also like to highlight two Call for Applications. If you wish to contribute to the KFG's research, consider applying as one of three Junior Fellows for the summer term of 2025. The submission deadline is June 16.

Additionally, if you are interested in joining our team as a student assistant, the submission deadline is May 31. Further information on both opportunities can be found in the respective section below.

Last but not least, this newsletter ends with a summary of upcoming events. Please note that additional workshops, conferences, etc. will be added to the event calendar throughout the semester. To stay up to date subscribe to this newsletter if you haven't done so already:

kfg20@lrz.uni-muenchen.de.

Interview with Prof. Dr. Kiran Klaus Patel

Our cooperation partners, the Gerda Henkel Foundation and the associated L.I.S.A. Science Portal, asked Kiran Klaus Patel, one of the three directors of the KFG, a few questions about last semester's research topic, the economy:

L.I.S.A.: Professor Patel, you are one of the three academic directors of the research group "Universalism and Particularism in Contemporary European History" (KFG) at LMU Munich. In our interview with your colleague and co-director Professor Martin Schulze Wessel, he emphasised that there is no rigid order, no clear assignment of the three areas of religion, business and human rights to the three directors. Nevertheless, there are certain responsibilities in terms of content and organisation. How would you describe yours?

Kiran Klaus Patel: Indeed, there is no rigid allocation of the three areas to one of us respectively - rather, we rely on joint responsibility and work, which also systematically involves the Distinguished Fellows and others participating in the KFG. To give a concrete example: In addition to subject-specific work, we also try to advance interdisciplinary dialogue on core concepts in the humanities and social sciences, such as "knowledge" or "neoliberalism" - because we often use the same word in various disciplines but mean very different things. Last semester I organised these sessions, this semester Martin Schulze Wessel has taken over.

[...]

L.I.S.A.: European history and the organisation of the economy are broad fields. What criteria were decisive for the selection of the thematic focus and the corresponding fellows? Is there a certain emphasis, for example a focus on contemporary topics?

Kiran Klaus Patel: It is important for us to bring different regional focuses, disciplinary backgrounds, and approaches into conversation. All Fellows work on contemporary European history since the 1970s; all demonstrate an interest in interdisciplinary dialogue; all conduct research that extends beyond a single society. We see the KFG as contributing to an understanding of contemporary issues yet we also try to avoid false presentism. To illustrate this with a specific example: Some economic policy approaches and practices from the early 2000s have already drifted quite far from us today. This applies, for example, to the question of whether the European Union serves as a model for economic policy in other parts of the world. In interdisciplinary discussions, we address such questions and examine them using new approaches and sources.

L.I.S.A.: How does the sector economy fit into the relationship between universalism and particularism? How universalist must an economic order be, to be rightly labelled as such? Does such an understanding encompass the entire globe? Is capitalism currently what one could call an almost universalist economic order?

Kiran Klaus Patel: We are interested in the claims of validity that underpin a particular economic model or practice. In addition, we analyse the nature and scope of its respective implementation. For an economic order to be considered universalist, it doesn't necessarily have to encompass the entire world – in fact, it would be strange if it did. Our working hypothesis is that universalisms are always confronted with particularisms or bring them about as defence mechanisms. Alternatively, they may be confronted with alternative universalisms that accuse the former of being merely particular. Capitalism does indeed exhibit universalistic traits. However, there are so many different varieties that it is worth taking a closer look.

The complete interview (in German) is accessible on [L.I.S.A.](#)

The current fellows of the KFG

Central to the KFG are its fellows, who work on their own research projects and contribute to the KFG's research on the concepts of universalism and particularism. Three Distinguished Fellows support the KFG's work for the entire duration of the project while Senior and Junior Fellows contribute throughout their stays in Munich, which can extend up to six months.

Distinguished Fellows in Munich this summer term are:

- **Prof Dr. Marta Bucholc**
Religious Family Values: Nationalism and Universalism Reconsidered

The KFG Senior Fellows of the summer term are:

- **Prof Dr. Yoshiko Herrera**
Privatization Expropriation and Inequality
- **Prof. Dr. Celia Donert**
'Women's Rights are Human Rights': Gendering Universalism and Particularism in (post-) socialist Europe
- **Prof. Dr. Sandrine Kott**
European debates on Multinational corporations. Global capitalism and local resistance (1960-1980)

The KFG Junior Fellows of the summer term are:

- **Dr. Filip Batselé**
Universalising the Rules of Investment Protection: Making the Eastern Bloc 'Safe' for Western European Investment (1976-1999)
- **Ida Richter, M.A.**
Claims to Universality in the Late Cold War: Intersections of Human Rights Discourse and Holocaust Memory in Western Activism on Behalf of Soviet Jewry
- **Dr. Ivan Kislenko**
Anti-Westernism of Knowledge Production in Russian Social Science in the State of War: Marginalization of the Epistemic Justice and Prospects for Eastern Epistemology
- **Prof. Dr. Grace Ballor (until May 31)**
Risk Management: European governance between Crises (EURISK)

Access the KFG's work online

As part of our aforementioned cooperation with the Gerda Henkel Stiftung's L.I.S.A. Science Portal we continuously upload contributions from our conferences and semesterly colloquia. Lectures of previous semesters include:

- John Connelly's lecture ["Nation as Tragedy: the Story of East and Central Europe"](#)
- Marta Bucholc's talk on ["The Rise of a National-Conservative International? Religious Foundations of Unlikely Global Alliances"](#)
- Alexander Libman's lecture on ["Reinterpreting Markets: Why Does Putin's Regime Keep Its Commitment to the Market Economy?"](#)
- Brian van Wyck's lecture on ["Race and the Making of Turkish Difference: Turkish Teachers and Imams in the Federal Republic of Germany, 1961 – 2006"](#)

Call for Applications

a. 3 Junior Fellowships

The Kolleg-Forschungsgruppe (KFG) 'Universalism and Particularism in European Contemporary History' at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München (LMU) is seeking to appoint three Junior Fellowships (Postdocs) for the summer term of 2025 (April-September). The KFG fellowships are awarded for 3-6 months. The deadline for applications is June 16, 2024. The preferred starting date is 1 April 2025. The KFG 'Universalism and Particularism' investigates universalist and particularist models of order in European contemporary history from the 1970s to the present. The KFG research program focuses on economic, religious/secular, and human rights regimes. More information on the KFG can be found [here](#). The call for applications is available [here](#).

b. Student Assistant

The KFG is looking for a student assistant to start on either July 1st or August 1st. Tasks include maintaining our website, organizing events, working on English-language texts. Further information can be found on our [homepage](#). The application deadline is May 31st.

Upcoming Events

a. Colloquium

As in previous semesters, the KFG will organize a weekly colloquium along with an interdisciplinary workshop. You can access the full program [here](#).

To get the reading material for each session, please contact us: kfg20@lrz.uni-muenchen.de.

If you wish to receive regularly information on the colloquium and other KFG events, please subscribe to the newsletter by emailing kfg20@lrz.uni-muenchen.de.

b. Conference:

Upcoming: Human Rights Between Universalism and Particularism

The KFG is organizing a conference on the topic of “Human rights between universalism and particularism”. Participants of the workshop will include **Angelika Nußberger** (Cologne), **Claudia Kraft** (Vienna), **Celia Donert** (Cambridge), **Frank Bösch** (Potsdam), **Michal Kopeček** (Prague), **Hélène Miard-Delacroix** (Paris) and **Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann** (Berkeley), the KFG directors as well as many more.

The conference will take place on June 6–7 at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte (Leonrodstr. 46b, 80636 Munich). Participation is possible in person or online. To register, please contact us at kfg20@lrz.uni-muenchen.de.

You can find the [full programme](#) on the KFG website.