

CALL FOR PAPERS

“War and Democracy in Austrian History and Culture”

**2022 Conference of the Austrian Studies Association
New Orleans, 12-15, April 2022**

The Event

Center Austria: The Austrian Marshall Plan Center for European Studies, together with the Institute of Contemporary History, the Brenner Archives for Literature of the University of Innsbruck, and the Austrian Studies Association are jointly organizing the 2022 Conference of the *Austrian Studies Association*.

The conference theme is *War and Democracy in Austrian History and Culture*. In particular, the conference seeks contributions that explore how both armed and ideological conflicts, at home and abroad, have shaped the trajectory of Austrian history. We are interested in how such conflicts emerged from, and have ultimately transformed, ideas about nation and empire, democratic subjectivity and representation, individual agency, and collective belonging.

We encourage papers that revisit, expand upon, and reevaluate this history, highlighting historical actors, organizations, and processes that have been previously neglected in scholarship, and that offer new insights into the ways that war and democracy have been represented in the arts, media, and literature. Papers might consider the following topics:

- Theories of democracy and democratic subjectivity in the Austrian context
- Austrian and Habsburg colonial legacies
- Challenges to democracy in the Austrian First Republic
- The Austrian Civil War
- National Socialism and its legacies
- Austrian memory culture and mythologies of Austrian Victimhood
- Narratives of exile and repatriation
- Austria and the Cold War
- Populism in Austria in the 20th & 21st centuries
- Reckonings with race, identity, and democracy in Austrian history
- Art and resistance
- Representations of war and its effects in literature, film, and the performing and visual arts

In addition to the main conference theme, the organizers welcome submissions that focus on earlier time frames and that engage with a broad spectrum of topics, artistic forms, historical perspectives and methodologies.

Submission Details

Paper submissions will be accepted until November 30, 2021. Please submit your proposal through the following link: <https://www.conftool.net/asa2022/>.

Acceptance notices will be sent by December 31, 2021.

Individual papers or full panels of 3 papers submitted as a block may be proposed; the conference committee may request modifications.

Graduate student submitters should add a note if they would like to apply for travel funds from the ASA and other sources.

Presenters are required to be members of the Austrian Studies Association. To join the Association, subscribe to its journal by visiting the ASA website at <http://www.austrian-studies.org> and clicking the “membership” link in the menu bar. You will be redirected to the University of Nebraska Press, publisher of the *Journal of Austrian Studies*.

Conference Theme

Austrian history has been indelibly shaped by wars and their repercussions. From the eighteenth-century until 1848, Austria, not any individual German-speaking state, or group of those states, was the most powerful military threat in Central Europe. The democratic polity of the newly independent Austrian First Republic that emerged at the end of World War I was characterized by armed political camps that engaged in a low-intensity civil war for most of the interwar years. Many soldiers returned from the war and imprisonment with physical and/or mental ailments, which affected their families at home. During the National Socialist incorporation (“Anschluss”) of Austria, Austrians participated in National Socialist war crimes, including the Holocaust.

After a ten-year long occupation by the victorious powers of World War II, independent Austria was reestablished in 1955, but it took the Second Republic a long time to force a public reckoning with the memory of World War II and the legacy of Austrians as victims and perpetrators. The destabilization of Austrian democracy through the rise of right-wing populist parties in recent years has made clear that the project of coming to terms with the past remains critical today.

The period that de Gaulle referred to the second “thirty years war,” from 1914 to 1945, left many traces in Austrian cultural production. Before his suicide during World War II, Stefan Zweig wrote a notable autobiography about his life in the late monarchy, World War I, and in the First Republic. Sigmund Freud and his school tried to understand the psychological causes and effects of the war on individuals and collectives. In literature, writers and critics such as Karl Kraus wrote epic works about the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in World War I, while Bertha von Süttner shaped the anti-war movement through her powerful pacifist novel, *Die Waffen nieder!* More recently, novelists and dramatists, including Thomas Bernhard, Hans Lebert, Christoph Ransmayr, Elfriede Jelinek, and Arno Geiger, as well as visual artists, filmmakers, performance artists and composers, have tackled World War II and its memory in Austria, leaving a rich oeuvre on both wars.