



- Call for Papers -

Coalescence or Collapse?

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Challenges for German and European Studies in the 21st Century

Interdisciplinary Conference celebrating

25 Years of DAAD-funded Centers for German and European Studies

8th – 10th of December 2016, BMW Center, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the DAAD Centers for German and European Studies, we are delighted to announce the scholarly networking conference **“Coalescence or Collapse? Challenges for German and European Studies in the 21st Century”**, which will take place from **8th to 10th of December 2016** at the **BMW Center at Georgetown University** in Washington, D.C, one of the first three Centers of Excellence in the program.

The BMW Center and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) kindly invite **paper proposals** from senior and junior academics at currently and formerly DAAD-funded Centers for German and European Studies as well as from researchers active in the field of German and European Studies at universities in Germany and abroad to submit a paper proposal. The panels will be made up of papers from various disciplines, with an **interdisciplinary approach** being an essential aspect of the conference as a whole. We welcome submissions especially from the social sciences, humanities and cultural studies, e.g. political science, law, sociology, history, geography, literary studies, linguistics, art history and economics.

In celebrating **25 years of the DAAD Centers program**, which started in North America and grew to include Centers in Europe, Asia, Israel and now Latin America, the conference aims at bringing together various perspectives on Germany’s and Europe’s role when it comes to dealing with contemporary global issues. An interdisciplinary approach is essential, as is a combination – or juxtaposition - of different perspectives informed by different cultural and academic backgrounds. The conference aims at gaining additional insights into contemporary Germany- and Europe-related questions by going beyond a bi-lateral approach, gaining added value precisely through the network’s extensive array of perspectives. The view of Germany “from the outside” that the Centers offer, therefore, helps opening up a unique kind of sensibility for the manifold interactions, transfer processes and mutual influences linking Germany and Europe with other regions and (cultural) spaces.

The **conference theme** highlights the fact that current developments and events affecting states and communities but also scientific systems and contemporary research all over the world make knowledge creation and a common “understanding” of global issues ever more challenging. Current and ongoing far-reaching and often interconnected crises test our abilities and the way we see ourselves as academics seeking deeper knowledge, meaning, and understanding in the world in

which we live. At the same time, the increasing complexity of contemporary issues may also pose an opportunity, precisely for a transnational and multi-disciplinary network of scholars from various backgrounds who share a common interest in Germany and Europe. Taking German and European Studies as a common denominator, the conference aims to foster a dialogue between regional perspectives on global issues and approaches informed by various academic backgrounds. In doing so, we aim to create a deeper understanding of the challenges, as well as the opportunities, of the current political and cultural role(s) Germany, the EU and Europe play on the world stage, explicitly including historical perspectives.

We cordially invite senior and junior scholars representing the different disciplines that encompass German and European Studies to submit a short 1-page proposal for one of the focus topics outlined below (see page 4ff.). Proposals relating to the conference theme and going beyond the topics outlined below are also possible. We particularly welcome proposals allowing for inter- or transdisciplinary approaches and relating to contemporary issues and questions with regard to Germany and Europe.

Panels will be made up of three to four papers from academics with different disciplinary backgrounds, to be selected by the conference's Advisory Board, which is made up of selected Center directors and junior academics at Centers representing the worldwide network.

In order to ensure sufficient opportunity for discussion between panelists and with the audience, successful applicants will kindly be asked to **submit their finished papers at least 8 weeks prior to the conference**. The password-protected papers will be made available exclusively to conference participants in advance. **At the actual panels, we kindly ask panelists to present a ten minutes summary of their papers**. Written papers should ideally be around 10 pages long plus bibliography (font size 12pt., line spacing 1.5 lines). All panels will be moderated by experienced members of the DAAD Centers' network.

The DAAD Centers Conference 2016 will take a bilingual approach. **Papers can be submitted either in English or in German**, and contributions are welcome in either language during the conference. A good passive knowledge of the respective other language is therefore essential. The DAAD actively supports multilingualism and the use of German as an academic language.

Call for Posters:

In addition to the call for papers outlined above, all Center Directors are cordially invited to **nominate one junior academic** (a PhD student or an advanced Master student) at their Center to take part in a poster presentation. The presentation aims to include junior academics from all 20 Centers and will be split into two parts, one focusing more on historic and past events and their influence on contemporary issues and the other focusing on possible future outcomes and scenarios emitting from present-day events. Nominations should be made by submitting via e-mail (see below) a short academic CV as well as a short outline of the research topic to be presented.

The **deadline** for paper submissions and nominations for the poster presentations is

Monday, 13th of June 2016.

Paper submissions should be **one page only**, containing the paper abstract (roughly 500 words), a short biographical profile and at most 5 bibliographical references. **Please also indicate which of the main topics below your paper would be best suited for.**

Submissions should be e-mailed to the DAAD, Section P33: Christian Strowa strowa@daad.de

Information on whether your paper has been accepted will be sent out by the DAAD most likely by mid-August.

Financial Support:

Upon request, the DAAD is happy to offer applicants whose paper has been accepted, as well as junior scholars presenting a poster, financial support in the form of **conference grants**, subject to the availability of funds. **Conference grants include travel, board** (breakfast, lunch, coffee breaks) and **accommodation** at the conference venue for the duration of the conference (Thursday evening until Sunday morning, including an evening reception on opening night, excluding Friday and Saturday evening meals).

Further information will soon be accessible at <http://www.daad.de/des>

Please forward this call to colleagues at your institution or at other institutions that might be interested.

All scheduled panels are expressly interdisciplinary, open to viewpoints based in various disciplines and their intersections, e.g. political science, history, economics, and culture. The topics outlined below are to be seen as suggestions. We welcome paper and panel proposals going beyond the topics outlined below as long as they fit into the general theme of the conference.

Focus Topics:

1) Germany in Europe/Germany in the EU: Politics, Economics and Cultures

In this panel the key question is: How has Germany's role and significance in Europe evolved over the six+ decades since the end of the Second World War?

During the Cold War years Germans began to think of themselves in tandem with Europe: "Germany in Europe". In other words, German identity became entwined with a broader attachment to and in Europe. Is this an accurate or useful way to think about Germany? If so, did this embrace of Europe take different forms in the political, economic, and cultural realms? Are there still fundamental differences between the suspected or detected motives which the various levels are based on?

2) Historical Studies and Social Sciences in an intertwined world: New approaches to research

Taking the methodology of intergovernmental comparison as a starting point, historical and social sciences have increasingly been dealing with the circulation and interweaving of cultural and national spaces. So-called cultural areas that were formerly analyzed as closed spaces are now increasingly being viewed as permeable and interdependent. German Studies too, and possibly particularly so, had to face the challenge of doing justice to the questions of exile, of migration and of a shift in the balance of power following the World Wars and finding a suitable methodological approach. What consequences for traditionally comparative approaches emerge from these challenges? And how can newer methodologies (e.g. *histoire croisée*, histories of transfer) and research approaches help do these questions justice?

3) "German Europe": Achievements and Risks

Long the economic heavyweight of Europe, Germany is also acknowledged as a politically leading member of the European Union. But controversy abounds over Germany's ability and willingness to "lead" Europe. How have Germans greeted this steady accretion of power? What impact has it had on German national identity? Positive and successful manifestations of German power have come to crowd out old fears and to reshape German national identity, but do Germans still see themselves as a "big Switzerland?" Are Germany's actions informed by an awareness of its role as Europe's leader or more by self-interest? Has the growth of economic power been accompanied by the growth of cultural leadership? For years, the mantra in German elite circles was "a European Germany", but now voices inside and outside the country are raising the prospect of an increasingly German Europe, which carries both positive and negative consequences for Germany and its European partners. How can we best analyze and understand Germany in its present regional context?

4) Germany in the World/The World in Germany: Politics, Economics and Cultures

In 1990 Germany stepped onto the global stage as a sovereign and unified nation. And in the 25 years since, global forces have given Germany a new role in Europe and the world and have transformed German society, politics, economy, and culture. Germany is a deeply committed and constructive partner in Europe, in international organizations and in diplomacy. It offers the world a model of democracy, energy efficiency, economic strength, reconciliation, new advances in science and technology, and more. At the same time, the world has flooded into Germany as its global role has expanded, bringing with it profound changes in German society and culture. This panel welcomes contributions on Germany's global impact, and the impact that globalization has had on German society, politics, and culture. Our key questions is: Can Germany's economy, politics and society serve as a model to be emulated and what are the prospects regarding its sustainability?

5) Old and New Cleavages

In the post-Cold-War world, society, politics, economy and cultures have changed rapidly and radically. Familiar categories such as nation, class, religion and ideology along with the ensuing familiar cleavages have dissolved and shifted. In addition, new areas of conflict emerged in the wake of the technological and communicative revolutions of the late 20th century: education, life style, aging, food production and consumption, health, environment and sustainability issues have created a multitude of new cleavages within societies as well as between individual states. We invite papers to address both, the continuation and/or transformation of older cleavages and the (concurrent) emergence of new challenges, both within and outside Germany, in a multipolar world.

6) Inter-Cultural Exchange

Writers, scientists, experts: Since the 19th Century, if not earlier, the German-speaking region has been deemed a laboratory for investigating inter-cultural processes of exchange, be they the circulation of people or of cultural “products” (e.g., political science, social policy, Marxism, Ordoliberalism). This circulation in return feeds back into these cultural products and the people that circulate them and creates an effect on them. What are the traces that these spaces of reception leave behind on the products and intermediaries that pass through them? In what way are the streams of translation emanating from the German-speaking areas organized: What is translated and where? How do these geographical, editorial, artistic, scientific and academic spaces and the products and people stemming from the German-speaking world interact with the rest of the world and its influences from outside these spaces?

7) German Deutschland? Reflections on Inner Changes

Already before the current massive influx of refugees, Germany had the third-highest number of migrants worldwide amounting to about 12 percent of the German population. German society is witnessing one of its most significant changes. The session will be dedicated to examining these developments: Will Germany transform from a national state to an immigrants’ state? Will German identity change? How do these demographic trends affect German society, politics, and culture?

8) German identity: Outside designs and self-construction

It is hard to come by a nation that has been perceived in as many different ways and has been dubbed as many different things as Germany. Germany is, as is well known, the “land of poets and thinkers”, of musicians, scientists, engineers etc. Lesser known are these denominations given to Germans by Germans and others: *protesters* (Dostojewski), *warriors* (W. Sombart), *subjects* (H. Mann), *belated ones* (H. Plessner), *unworldly idealists* (Th. Mann), *executioners* (K. Kraus), *culprits* (D. Goldhagen), *hesitators* (German Angst) and *proud ones* (German Assertiveness) etc. Contained in all these kinds of constructions of German-ness from within and without is a slice of historical reality or a corner of the German psyche.

The ever-present question “What is German?” has meanwhile reached a new topicality. For in present-day Germany there seem to be two opposing tendencies: One is an increasingly vague understanding of what it means to be “German” resulting on the one hand from the continued conflation with the EU and on the other from the growing visibility of new cultural influences in everyday Germany. On top of this, the outcomes of the ’68 movement marking a breach with tradition can still and lastingly be felt. The opposing tendency is the intensified return to “German-ness”, or *Deutschtum*, that at the same time allows for something like the miracle of reborn unselfconsciousness: With regard to national inheritance it is now once again possible to talk about being German with pride and joy (cf., for example, the best seller *Die deutsche Seele* by Thea Dorn and Richard Wagner as well as the announced 1000-page project by Dieter Borchmeyer: *Was ist deutsch? Wandlungen einer Identitätssuche*). The panel aims to approach the question of what it means to be “German”, best tackled by taking an interdisciplinary approach mindful of the historical context, from a contemporary point of view.

9) **“Made in Germany”: Germany as Model**

The shift in meaning of the label “Made in Germany” is well known: Originally mandated by the British government in 1887 as a designation of origin aiming to make it easier to identify imported wares from Germany, which were then regarded as cheap and of low quality, the label soon became a highly regarded hallmark. This raises the question of what led to the advances made by German manufacturing in the last decade of the 19th century. At the same time the wish may arise to create an inventory of the achievements and idiosyncrasies of Germans in the fields of cultural production, social sciences and humanities. Here, it is not only worth examining whether the idea of autonomy is a genuinely German one, or as the Kantian Wagner puts it: “Being German means doing something for its own sake.” It is also worth investigating what happened to the spirit of this idea. Can for example Historicism, “pure” philosophy, “pure” sociology, legal doctrine, the “dual system” (dual system), and the Bildungsroman be regarded as “made in Germany”? What else is there in the realms of historical studies, social sciences, law, pedagogy, politics and literary studies as well as art, literature and philosophy that may be regarded as “made in Germany”? Which external influences can be detected? Whatever the answers to these questions may be, the search for “German models”, their underlying influences and their influences on other models, remains a central aspect of interdisciplinary German Studies.

10) **Democracy, Protest and Populism**

The triangular relationship between democracy, protest and populism is not static but hybrid, highly susceptible to historical change. Democracy by virtue of its existence inspires and thrives from various forms of protest articulation and protest movements. However, protest can not only contest a democracy constructively but threaten its foundations if protesters challenge the common grounds of political organization. Populism, as a peculiar, rhetorically armed and ideologically charged instrument of democratic protest, relies on the notion of a “popular voice”, and therefore, more than most other forms of political protest, it directly questions the legitimacy of (representative) democracies. How do democracy, protest and populism develop and interact on the regional, national and European level?

11) **Multipolar, mobile and connected: Belonging in a rapidly changing world**

This panel aims to tackle the challenges of an increasingly mobile and in many ways increasingly inter-connected world. In today’s digital global societies everything can be experienced from everywhere through various forms of media, at least in a mediated way, and nothing seems far away or occlusive. Thus, imaginary affiliations are created. At the same time, real and practical forms of mobility are changing our societies, for example in the case of migratory flows. The mobile world - as well as the (imaginarily) linked world - create new forms of affiliation, creating new opportunities but also new borders that are conveyed through various forms of media or co-constructed by them; many are solely possible because of these forms of media. The panel will deal with mechanisms that create affiliation. Contributions from the sociology of migration and transnational studies as well as media studies especially with regard to globalization and localization processes as well as mediated forms of belonging, borders and otherings are welcome.

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