

Habsburg Central Europe in Global History Summer School

Call for Papers

New Date: 23-25 October 2025, Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague / in person (not hybrid)
Villa Lanna

Further information: Steffen Höhne (Weimar-Jena) | Franz L. Fillafer (Vienna) | Johannes Feichtinger (Vienna) | Michael Wögerbauer (Prague)

Deadline for submissions: **Applications still welcome**
Notification: **ongoing**

Conference Languages: English and German
Audience: Doctoral and Postdoctoral researchers

Application: Abstract of your contribution/research project (250-300 words) and a brief CV (preferably as a PDF), please write to: summerschool@oeaw.ac.at Johannes.Feichtinger@oeaw.ac.at

We plan to cover participants' travel and accommodation costs.

Habsburg Central Europe in Global History, 17th–20th centuries

Global history has established itself as a particularly fertile field of scholarly enquiry from which Habsburg Central Europe still remains strangely absent. To redress this imbalance, our summer school seeks to rediscover Habsburg Central Europe as a switchboard for the circulation of ideas, practices and objects across the globe. It tries to do so by bringing together scholars from a variety of disciplines who work on the history of the region since the 17th century: Our event is geared to doctoral and postdoctoral researchers from the humanities (historians and literary scholars, historians of culture and the arts, of science and the humanities, anthropologists etc.) whose research resonates with the overall aim of our meeting described above. Our event will consist of two subsections: A mini-series of seminars hosted by our faculty in which a pre-circulated reader will be discussed and a subsequent set of workshops that will allow participants to present and discuss their research.

We invite papers by doctoral and post-doctoral researchers that contribute to one or several of the following thematic fields:

- the global history of Central European institutions (administrative bodies, learned societies, academies, universities, sacred institutions and religious orders, museums, theatres etc.)
- the social history of Central Europe's interactions with the world, including, but not restricted to the activities of go-betweens, brokers, and liaison agents
- the interplay of regional and global literatures (translations, travelling forms, medias and genres)
- the practises of erudition, science, scholarship and cultural production

Special attention will be given to Bohemia as an interface between the various regions of the Habsburg lands and as a clearing house between Central Europe and the globe.

In spotlighting the global entanglements of Habsburg Central Europe, our event pursues two broader agendas, the first is historiographical, the second methodological.

First, much of global history is still marked by a Franco- or Anglocentric bias: Its categories of imperial rule, national culture, sovereignty, and the production of scientific truth are derived from the study of Britain and France, as well as of their respective overseas possessions. Acting as a welcome incentive for further research, several excellent recent studies of Habsburg Central Europe show that these categories are not only inadequate for grasping the past of the region, but that the latter produced a set of alternative concepts, ideas and practises for engaging with the world whose trans-regional impact and ramifications are yet to be discovered. What does this rediscovery imply for a fresh understanding of modern history?

Second, the summer school will provide ample opportunity for reflecting on what a “global” perspective implies for the methods of the humanities: In what ways does this perspective force us to rethink our habitual units of enquiry (regions, empires, states, cultural systems, disciplines, genres and forms)? How can we avoid the pitfalls of connectivity talk, i.e. the appeal to allegedly self-propelled, benignly liquid “flows” and processes of effortless “circulation”? What conceptual lexicon and what explanatory devices do we find particularly helpful in researching and presenting our findings? What challenges and potential benefits does this global perspective entail for interdisciplinary work in the humanities?

Organizers: Steffen Höhne (Weimar-Jena), Franz L. Fillafer (Vienna), Johannes Feichtinger (Vienna), Michael Wögerbauer (Prague)

Faculty: Amy Colin (Pittsburgh), Marketa Křížová (Praha), Johannes Mattes (Vienna), Ulrich Schmid (Basel), Jonathan Singerton (Amsterdam), Jan Surman (Praha)

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