

Call for Papers

International Seminar

The authoritarian space in post-war Europe. The contested construction of democracy (1945 – 1960)

Maastricht, 29 November to 1 December 2023.

The event is organised by the Research Project HAR2020-112-800-GB-C21 (POSCOM)-Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation, the Department of History of the University of Zaragoza and the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of the Maastricht University.

Organisers:

Miguel Ángel Ruiz Carnicer, University of Zaragoza, Spain.

Pablo del Hierro, University of Maastricht, The Neetherlands.

Carlos Domper Lasús, University of Zaragoza, Spain

Deadline for proposals:

31 June 2023

Event Rationale:

It has often been taken for granted that liberal democracy was established in the western part of the European continent immediately after May 1945. In such a framework of interpretation, the Iberian dictatorships have been seen as an almost exotic relic of a bygone past. However, over the last few years, several studies have shown that neither liberal democracy was so quickly established, nor did the possibility of ordering European society and politics in a conservative or even post-fascist way immediately disappear from European political elites. Indeed, as a result of this research, it has become clear that to better understand the process of democracy-building in the Old Continent in the decade following the fall of the Reich, it is crucial to consider the legacies of fascism in post-war Europe. Our research group POSTDEMA (Postwar, Democracy and Authoritarianism, integrated now in the POSCOM project), based in Zaragoza (Spain) but with members in universities all over Europe, aims to contribute to all these debates by studying the Franco regime, a dictatorship whose development after 1945 has remained outside the main narratives of Cold War European history for the reasons mentioned above.

This international seminar aims to deepen our research group's central working hypothesis. That is, the existence of a transnational European space of authoritarian character through which the Franco regime was related to the process of European reconstruction and the central debates articulated around it, mainly the discussion on democracy. In this sense, we are not using the word "authoritarian" in the sense that it has been developed by political science since the sixties. Rather, we use it as a simple adjective that allows us to refer flexibly and broadly to the political and ideological space encompassing the most radical sectors of the conservative

and Christian-democratic spectrum and those who sought to reconstruct fascist ideology. In other words, those who, after May 1945, sought to develop an alternative model against the new democratic flair or, almost, a highly controlled and limited political democratic play in Western Europe.

Therefore, this seminar is designed to address two fundamental objectives. Firstly, it aims to disseminate the results of recent research undertaken by group members on these issues. Secondly, it seeks to deepen our knowledge of this authoritarian European space, both in terms of its organisations, its protagonists, the interactions between them, their approaches to the regimes of government that were to emerge from the ashes of the war and, of course, the interconnections with the space of the Franco dictatorship. Consequently, the seminar seeks to bring together European researchers working on these issues to promote synergies and cross-fertilization.

The seminar will preferably be in English and structured around three discussion tables. Members of the research group will have 30 minutes to present their findings, and the rest of the participants will have 20 minutes.

We invite contributions from all over the world exploring topics such as:

- Fascism after fascism: individuals, organisations, networks, projects.
- Conservatism in post-war Europe: individuals, organisations, networks, projects.
- European conservatism and neo-(post) fascism and their relations with the dictatorships of the Iberian Peninsula.
- Concepts of democracy in European conservatism and post/neofascism.
- Authoritarian legacies in post-war Europe.
- Fascists in the new post-war administrations.

Scholars interested in attending or contributing to the conference should mail an abstract, a short bio and contact information to cdomper@unizar.es **no later than 31 June 2023**. The contributions will be delivered preferably in English.

The conference fee is €90 and includes meals (coffee breaks and lunch).

A selected number of conference participants will be invited to submit revised versions of their papers for publication in an edited volume.



Departamento de
Historia

Universidad Zaragoza

