

Intellectuals and the First World War: a Central European Perspective

An International Conference and Research Workshop



Organiser: **Institute of History, Jagiellonian University**

Place and date: **Krakow, October 20–22, 2016**

Application deadline: **May 1, 2016**

Form of abstracts: **electronic file (doc, docx, rtf, pdf), 300 words max in English**

Applications to be sent to: **intellectuals.at.war@gmail.com**

Workshop fee: **150 PLN**

www: <https://intellectualsfww.wordpress.com/>

General information

Last year has seen numerous conferences, lectures, new books and other forms of publications or initiatives dedicated to the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War – the enormous military conflict that has been overshadowed by the Second World War in the historiography. It thus needs even more attention and research, especially as far as the Central European perspective is concerned. Military elements clearly dominated the aforementioned books and events, yet social and economical aspects of war have only recently been given more attention.

There is no doubt that the First World War affected all the inhabitants in Europe, either by warfare, occupation or the experiences of living behind the frontline and in neutral countries. The lives of many social groups and individuals changes dramatically. Peoples' fates after the war were determined by their wartime experiences.

As a continuation of our research led by a group of scholars at the Institute of History of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, we would like to invite scholars to take part in our

conference combined with a workshop dedicated to intellectuals during the First World War in a comparative perspective. During the conference and workshop “Intellectuals and the First World War” we would like to consider the role and meaning of the broadly-understood society of intellectuals, i.e. scholars, fine arts artists, journalists, well-educated individuals, freelance workers, officials etc.

The workshop is going to be accompanied by keynote lectures delivered by experienced scholars in the field, as well as a source-studies seminar in the Krakow Archives. As a part of our workshop we are planning to prepare tour to Limanowa–Łapanów (1914) and Gorlice–Tarnów (1915) battlefields in order visit the a number of war cemeteries erected by the Austrian authorities to commemorate fallen soldiers in Galicia, and to see some of the splendid examples of the war monuments designed by famous artists working for the Ministry of War (Hans Mayr, Dušan Jurkovič, Jan Szczepkowski, Gustav Ludwig, Gustav Rossmann, to name just a few).

Questions

The conference and research workshop “Intellectuals and I World War : a Central European Perspective” is planned as an academic and methodological exchange of views between historians and other scholars dealing with social history of the First World War in East-Central Europe. The main aim of our conference and workshop is an attempt to answer the question how the First World War affected intellectuals from certain clearly defined backgrounds (family, education, religion, gender, sexuality). Their wartime experiences were surely shaped by their whereabouts, everyday life matters, standard of living, and in the case of soldiers – the type of military service. We should also take a closer look at members of intelligentsia who fought in trenches, those who worked in propaganda or those who held civil service posts in the belligerent countries. It still seems to be an important question whether the cooperation of members of the intelligentsia and scholars with the war apparatus was conscious, voluntary, a form of social mission to the state or nation, or maybe an attempt by the governments and rulers to use the “naive clerks” instrumentally?

We would like to consider the intellectuals’ stance towards militarism and the outbreak of war: their reactions, thoughts, predictions, and how they interpreted war events for the society. That is why we would like also ask how the war was conceptualized by the intellectuals, how it was commented upon and how the post-war reality was conceived. This latter issue is undoubtedly connected with the national revivals in East-Central Europe.

In order to look more broadly, i.e. outside the strict chronological boundaries, we would like to ask how the First World War experiences impacted intellectuals and artists. How they were able to function in the “new” post-war reality? What did the relations among their societies and families life look like? We are interested particularly in research projects capturing the phenomenon of WWI in a broader cultural and chronological context, dealing with the war-connected aspects of social continuity and change, as well as comparing and contrasting the experience of groups and individuals across different regions of Europe.

Procedure

Abstracts, no longer than 300 words, including title, research questions, description of sources and methods and also short CV, contact details, name and institutional affiliation, should be sent to: **intellectuals.at.war@gmail.com**. The deadline for abstract submission is May 1st, 2016. The results of the enrollment will be announced by the end of May 2016.

Conference fee

The conference fee is 150 PLN (included: participation, conference materials, participation in the planned excursion, refreshments, lunches and dinners). The costs of travels to Kraków and accommodation are not covered by the organizers (however, we will be happy to assist you in looking for a hotel near the conference venue).

On behalf of the Organizing Committee:

Tomasz Pudłocki
Department of Cultural and Educational History
Jagiellonian University
(tomaszpudlocki@hoga.pl)

Kamil Ruszała
Department of Polish Modern History
Jagiellonian University
(ruszala.kamil@gmail.com)