

**Myths of the Past in
Service of the Present.
Resurgent Conceptions
of National Origins in
Central, Eastern and
Southeastern Europe**



Leibniz Institute for
the History and Culture
of Eastern Europe

3–4 June 2024

GWZO Annual Conference

**Myths of the Past in
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Myths of the Past in Service of the Present. Resurgent Conceptions of National Origins in Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe

Since the 19th century, nation-building processes have been accompanied by imaginations of supposedly distinctive, deeply rooted and historically stable concepts of ethnicity. This applies not only, but especially, to Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe, with its rich history of national and territorial transformations. Concepts of ethnic, respectively national identity were grounded in sometimes exotic theories of origin and persistence that oscillated between academic scholarship and myth-making.

The GWZO annual conference 2024 explores the appropriations and modifications of myths of the past with particular reference to current revivals, while at the same time taking a historical perspective. It draws on the broad spectrum of disciplines represented at the GWZO – from history and archaeology to art and architectural history, ethnology and literature – to gain a multifaceted understanding based on interdisciplinary research.

1 Makedonija Square in Skopje with a monumental equestrian statue of a »Warrior on a Horse« (originally of Alexander the Great)

2 Attila gate at the Kurultáj festival in Hungary, an assembly of Eurasian steppe-nomadic culture (2015)

3 Dacian-themed mural on a Communist-era apartment block in Orăștie, exhibiting the idiosyncratic nationalist traits of Romanian Communism

4 Donatan and Cleo representing Poland with the song »My Słowianie« during the first dress rehearsal of the second semi final of the Eurovision Song Contest 2014

5 Statue of Svatopluk at Bratislava Castle, Slovakia, facing the typical architecture of the city district Petržalka



Monday, June 3, 2024

14.00 **Welcome**

Maren Röger, Director of the GWZO

14.15 **Introduction**

Arnold Bartetzky/Karin Reichenbach/Adamantios Skordos (GWZO): Concepts of National Origins in Scholarship, Politics and (Popular) Culture

14.30–16.00 **Panel 1**

Ancient National Origins and Archaeology

Chair: Karin Reichenbach (GWZO)

Matthias Hardt (GWZO): Bodenfunde und »frühe Völker«. Archäologische Beiträge zur Verfestigung frühgeschichtlicher Herkunftserzählungen im 20. Jahrhundert

Orsolya Heinrich-Tamáska (GWZO): Ablehnung oder Vereinnahmung? Über den Mythos der »Reiter-Krieger-Nomaden«

Monika Milosavljević (Belgrade): Concepts of Continuity and Ethnogenesis in Serbian Archaeology

16.00–16.30 *Coffee Break*

16.30–18.30 **Panel 2**

National Origins in Politics of History and Heritage

Chair: Achim Saupe (Potsdam)

Katrin Kremmler (Berlin) and Zsuzsanna Varga (Budapest): Affirming the Turanian Myth: Historical Reenactment and Illiberal Science Practices in Hungary

Frank Hadler (GWZO): Altes Reich in neuen Staaten: Großmähren als Mythos

Marcin Wołoszyn (GWZO): Kres Kresów? Die polnischen Ostgebiete zwischen Amnesie, Memory Boom und der harten Realität

Tobias Weger (München): Dacians, Romans and the Romanians' Quest for Continuities

18.30–19.00 *Coffee Break*

19.00 c.t. Abendvortrag mit anschließendem Empfang

Vorstellung und Moderation: Julia Herzberg,
Deputy Director of the GWZO

Monika Wingender (Gießen): Sprache und Nation in
Russlands Krieg gegen die Ukraine – Narrative, Mythen,
Propaganda

Tuesday, June 4, 2024

09.00–10.30 Panel 3

National Origins in Literature and Music

Chair: Stephan Krause (GWZO)

Alexander Mionskowski (GWZO/Budapest): Aušra 2.0.
Reflections on History and Identity in Lithuania after
1990 – Concepts and Criticism

Indira Hajnács (GWZO): Evocation of the ›Ancient‹:
Renegotiating History in Hungarian Popular Music

Karin Reichenbach (GWZO): Music, Myths and Metal.
Slavs and Pagans in Polish Popular Music

10.30–11.00 *Coffee break*



11.00–13.00 Panel 4

National Origins in Visual Arts and Architecture

Chair: Susanne Jaeger (GWZO)

Robert Born (Berlin): Pagan and Christian Origins of Nations in the Visual Arts. Conjunctions and Competitions of Founding Myths in East-Central Europe

Beate Piela (Berlin): Polish Art in the Context of Transformation. National Identity between 1989 and the So-called »Good Change«

Arnold Bartetzky (GWZO): The Search for National Origins in Architectural Styles

Kaja Schelker (GWZO): From Myth to Money – Zakopane's Complex Relations to its Imagined Past

13.00–14.00 Lunch Break

14.00–15.30 Panel 5

Religious Concepts of Origins and Exotic Myths

Chair: Stefan Rohdewald (Leipzig)

Adamantios Skordos (GWZO): The Greek People between »Brotherlessness« and »Orthodox Brotherhood«

Tanja Zimmermann (Leipzig): The Bogomil Myth – Its History and Attempts at Revival

Bálint Kovács (GWZO/Budapest): Die armenische Herkunft der Magyaren. Exotische Abstammungstheorien im wissenschaftlichen Diskurs des 19. Jahrhunderts

Lyubomir Pozharliev (Leipzig): The Erotic Beginnings of the Bulgarian People

15.30–16.00 Coffee break

16.00–18.30 Panel 6

Concepts of National Origins Fuelling Conflict and War

Chair: Maren Röger (GWZO)

Andrej Doronin (Bonn): »Woher kam das russische Land?« Die sogenannte Alte Rus' in nationalen, regionalen und imperialen Narrativen

Alisa Lukashenko (Salzburg): Der Moskauer Staat des Mittelalters, die Außenpolitik der Russischen Föderation und der Erinnerungskonflikt zwischen der Ukraine und Russland

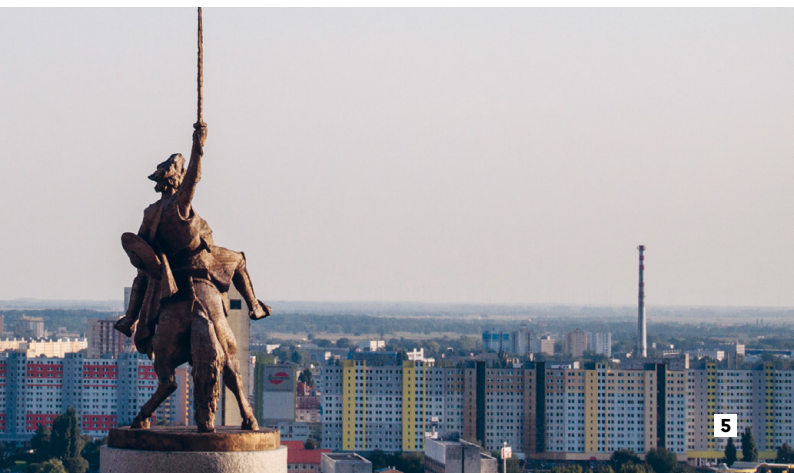
Nataliia Sinkevych (GWZO): Putin's »Russian World«: History of concepts and ideas

Tetiana Portnova (Potsdam/Dnipro): To Whom Rus' Belongs: Ukrainian-Russian Historical Debates in 19–21st Centuries

18.00 Conclusion

19.00 Arnold Bartetzky (GWZO):

Guided Tour to Leipzig's Place of Origin – the Matthäikirchhof. Insights into a Current Debate



The Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe (GWZO) carries out comparative historical and cultural research on the region between the Baltic, Black, and Adriatic seas, from the Early Middle Ages to the present.

Around 50 researchers work at GWZO, having a background in the humanities. The Institute's activities are supported by a dense network of cooperative partnerships with Eastern and Central European as well as international research organizations.

www.leibniz-gwzo.de

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Venue

GWZO, Specks Hof (Entrance A), 4th floor
Reichsstraße 4-6, 04109 Leipzig

For online participation please register via:
<https://kurzelinks.de/szo1>

Concept and Coordination

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Event Management

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