



Civil Wars Study Group

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

(UNIVERSITY OF MACEDONIA, SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2024)

50 YEARS AFTER THE TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY IN GREECE: THE 1940s AFTER THE FALL OF THE JUNTA. IDENTITIES, STAKES, STRATEGIES

The 1940s was a turning point in Greek history. It divided society, created strong political identities, and provided the material for the construction of rival narratives. Before the Civil War was even over, the decade was a field of competition to secure a past useful for the present and the future, and a series of events were highlighted or silenced to create narratives of the victors and the defeated. The past was 'corrected' or 'constructed' from scratch to support the process of constructing post-war political identities.

The rift opened in Greek society by the 1940s began to be bridged after another historical breakthrough, that of 1974. A precondition for the Transition to Democracy after the fall of the Junta was overcoming the divisive past. The crucial events of the 1940s came to the fore again, this time as a component of the 'national reconciliation' narrative. Overcoming the divisive past was not of course automatic but instead a complex and long process that involved, among other things, significant institutional changes, the invention of a new narrative to replace that of "nationalistic righteousness" (ethikofrosyni), the redress of the trauma related to the

Civil War, the creation of new symbols and myths. The legitimization of the KKE, the law for the recognition of the National Resistance, the law that would repeal the consequences of the Civil War, and the incineration of the files that the State Security Service kept on all dissident citizens in 1989, were attempts to restore and stabilize Democracy.

However, interpretations and narratives may have changed in the public sphere, but the division has not been forgotten. As the historical and political context changed, so did the approach to the past and its interpretations. Moreover, the narrative of 'national reconciliation' of the first decades after 1974 also proved to be ephemeral, as it has been challenged in recent decades, causing new controversies within and outside the academic community.

Fifty years after the fall of the Junta, it is both interesting and important for historical research to discuss the role that the persistent past of the 1940s played from 1974 to the present day.

In this context, the Civil War Study Group and the Department of Balkan, Slavonic, and Oriental Studies of the University of Macedonia are taking the initiative to organize an International Conference in 27-29 September 2024 in Thessaloniki.

Recommended Topics:

1. The recognition of the National Resistance
2. The return of political refugees
3. The incineration of the State Security Service files
4. Historical debates on the 1940s in Greece. The "Greek Historikerstreit"
5. The 1940s in Public History
6. The 1940s in art (literature, cinema, theatre, singing)
7. The memory of the 1940s and the Transition to Democracy
8. The memory of the Holocaust in the Transition period
9. The 1940s in political discourse
10. Transition to Democracy and traumatic past. Comparative approaches

Those interested are invited to send an abstract of 300 words and a short CV of about 100 words to the following addresses by 15 March 2024. The organizers will cover part of the travel and accommodation expenses of the delegates, depending on their financial capabilities.

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Organized by:

Department of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies, University of Macedonia (Greece)

Civil Wars Study Group

Hellenic Studies Program, The Whitney and Betty MacMillan Center for International & Area Studies at Yale (USA)

Institute of Greek and Latin Studies, Faculty of Arts, Charles University Prague (Czech Republic)

"Peripato" Research Center for Social Dynamics, Department of Sociology, Eotvos Lorand University, Budapest (Hungary)

Stadt-Und Stiftsarchiv Aschaffenburg-Municipal Archives (Germany).

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