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# Winter School

## Identities in Europe in Times of Rising Populism

Innsbruck, 16 – 20 February 2026

Blended Intensive Programme | Universities of Innsbruck, Opava, Wrocław & Duisburg-Essen  
University of Innsbruck, Innrain 52, 6020 Innsbruck  
Main Building, Room *University of New Orleans (UNO)* – First Floor

### Programme

#### Monday, 16 February 2026

09.00 **Welcome** Lukas Madersbacher (Vice Dean of Studies)  
**Opening** Uta Degner & Ellinor Forster

**Panel I: Discourses in Digital Spaces: Populism, Crisis, and Disinformation**  
*Chair: Tim Peiffer & Mateusz Gąssowski*

09.30 **KEYNOTE lecture** – Derya Gür-Şeker: Analysing Discourses in Digital Spaces

10.15 Lena Rebhan: Dynamics of knowledge communication about terrorism in Germany – A linguistic discourse analysis based on the online encyclopedia Wikipedia

10.45 Jil Sophie Klüvers: The strategic use of compound-words with the head-noun 'crisis' in the context of the migration discourse in German right-wing political speeches in the 'PolRrA-Korpus'

Coffee break

*Chair: Barbara Bubíková & Dominik Axmann*

11.45 Anna Kramerová & Martina Lesáková: From Operation Neptun to AI: The Changing Forms of Disinformation

12.15 Emily Vukovic: The Female Body in Right-Wing Populist Discourse: Anti-Feminism, Misogyny, and Abortion

Lunch break

15.00 **Old town of Innsbruck & Court Church** (Hofkirche): Cenotaph of Emperor Maximilian I, Andreas Hofer's tomb

#### Tuesday, 17 February 2026

**Panel 2: Contested Histories: Memory and Populist Narratives Across Europe**  
*Chair: Lena Rebhan & Annie Freytag*

09.00 **KEYNOTE lecture** – Paweł Jaworski: Polish disputes over historical memory. Last two decades

09.45 Bohdan Brzobohatý: Belarus – behind the Iron Curtain

10.15 Damian Drzazga: The November Uprising in the Narratives of Polish Politicians after the Russian Federation's Aggression against Ukraine, 2022–2025

Coffee break

#### Chair: Jil Sophie Klüvers & Anna Kramerová

11.15 Ana Matošević: Populism Across Political Systems: Front-Page Narratives in Yugoslav Slobodna priloga and Contemporary Slovenian Digital Media (Nova24TV)

11.45 Xandra Knappe: The Significance of Empty Signifiers in the Digital Discourse of Populist Radical Right European Parliament Members

Lunch break

14.00 **Trip to the Hafelekar**: Landscape as a function of identity

20.00 **Movie night at the Cinematograph**  
*Ruth Beckermann: Waldheim's Waltz, Austria 2018.*

#### Wednesday, 18 February 2026

Bozen/Bolzano, Victory Monument, fascist architecture

**Meeting points:**

8.45 Corner Südbahnstraße/Heiligegeiststraße

9.00 Youth Hostel Reichenauer Straße 147

#### Thursday, 19 February 2026

**Panel 3: Constructing Identity: Historical Legacies and Populist Strategies**  
*Chair: Emily Vukovic & Damian Drzazga*

09.00 **KEYNOTE lecture** – Hana Komárková: Medieval Myths and Modern Politics: Palacký's Role in Shaping Czech Identity

09.45 Mateusz Gąssowski: The monument to Bolesław Chrobry, the first king of Poland, in Wrocław as an example of using distant history to build a narrative of identity today

10.15 Michaela Pecinová: From Enemy to Neighbour: The Image of Germans in Czech "Collective Memory" after 1945

Coffee break

*Chair: Xandra Knappe & Ana Matošević*

11.15 Marina Wahab: Populist Communication Strategies on Social Media: Platform-Based Campaigning Examined through the Case of the AfD in Germany

#### 11.45 Philippe Thommes: Identity Politics in Luxembourg and Austria. Populist Constructions of Nation, Language, and History in the ADR and FPÖ

12.15 Katharina Mair: Between Tradition and Populism: Continuities and Discontinuities in the Minority Discourse of the "Süd Tiroler Freiheit"

Lunch break

15.00 **Bergisel: Andreas Hofer & Tirol Panorama**

#### Friday, 20 February 2026

**Panel 4: Culture and Representation: Literature, Media, and National Identity**  
*Chair: Marina Wahab & Martina Lesáková*

09.00 **KEYNOTE lecture** – Uta Degner: Literature against Populism. Some thoughts about an Austrian Tradition

09.45 Annie Freytag: Identity, Populism, and Nationalism in Stefan Zweig's *The World of Yesterday*

10.15 Tim Peiffer: Leni Riefenstahl: Between Aesthetic Ambition, Populism, and Propaganda

Coffee break

*Chair: Michaela Pecinová & Katharina Mair*

11.15 Barbara Bubíková: Jára Cimrman – almost the greatest Czech

11.45 Dominik Axmann: Defining national identity in forms of representation in the example of Austria at the Eurovision Song Contest

12.15 Concluding remarks

Flashlight by the students

*Chair: Bohdan Brzobohatý & Philippe Thommes*

**Farewell Dinner**