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CEE Forum of Young Legal, Political & Social Theorists

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CALL FOR PAPERS

**10th CEE FORUM
Timișoara, 3-4 May 2018**

Constitutional Identity and Social Memories in Central and Eastern Europe

Almost every constitution in Central and Eastern Europe contains the general characteristics of the community that has given itself a constitutional act. These characteristics are most often based on a national or civic approach to the notion of community, the appeal to the belief in God or the remembrance of the fight for independence and the suffering caused by the 20th-century totalitarianism. However, a certain amount of time always passes between the act of establishing a constitution and its future uses. The community faces new challenges and gains new experiences. Therefore, the real subject of the constitution is always already changing. In this context, should the constitution be read traditionally as a narrative about what it is and where the constitutional order came from or should it be read in a more prospective manner, which would aspire to explain what kind of society the community guided by that particular constitution wants to become? Does CEE constitutions' language prefer one perspective to the other?

Another interesting point regarding the subject matter of constitutional identity is the constant dialogue between the national constitutional courts of the European Union Member States, on the one hand, and the European Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights, on the other hand. What are the most recent developments in this regard? Nowadays, the notions of constitutional identity and collective memory appear to be frequently resorted to in order to justify “illiberal” attitudes. How does EU respond to this phenomenon? From a comparative perspective, one may wonder what it is that CEE countries share in terms of constitutional identity? But what does separate them from each other? Is constitutional identity just an empty narrative or is it embedded into a given society, its political decisions and everyday life? If a constitution is culturally entrenched, does its interpretation in the course of (constitutional) adjudication allow for the use of foreign sources? From an empirical standpoint, to what extent are CEE countries employing foreign law in order to deal with questions of national constitutionalism?

What are to be considered strictly legal expressions of constitutional identity? Is it possible to find some deep structure of constitutional identity from a *longue durée* point of view? What is the relationship between the constitution and collective memories? In what ways does the storytelling of traumas from the communist past contribute to shaping our present-day constitutional consciousness? Those are the main questions that we would like to examine during the 10th Central and Eastern European Forum of Young Legal, Political and Social Theorists, to be held in Timișoara, Romania, in April 2018. We seek to encourage scholars from a wide range of disciplinary fields to reflect on the meaning of constitutional but also national identity.

In the specific context of the CEE region, scholars’ interrogations should take into consideration how social memories of actually existing socialism inform current debates in the realm of constitutionalism.

We invite contributions exploring the following questions from a theoretical perspective:

- the relationship between constitutional identity and specific political institutions;
- the political dimension of constitutional identity;
- the notion of the constitutional “people”;

- social mechanisms of selection of memories;
- legal regulations of collective memories;
- collective memories in constitutional adjudication;
- social frames of collective memories;
- conflicts between collective memories;
- constitution and religion in Central and Eastern Europe;
- the impact of World War II and the communist period on constitutional and national identities;
- the role of national identity in nationality laws (for instance, the cases of Latvia and Estonia, where Russian residents did not become automatically nationals of the new republics);
- trends in the role of national identity in CEE constitutional laws;
- the question of a regional, supranational CEE identity (as opposed to Western and Eastern Europe);
- the concept of national unity in the constitutional order;
- the contribution of non-judicial actors in shaping constitutional identity;
- the place of comparative constitutional law in the legal scholarship of CEE countries;
- constitutional transplants;
- the place of law and literature scholarship dealing with the question of social memory in the legal research of CEE countries;
- economic doctrines inscribed in the constitutional texts of CEE countries.

In addition to the above topics, there will also be a General Panel for theoretically focused papers on legal, social and political issues.

We invite legal, political and social theorists, philosophers, linguists, literary critics, historians or economists to contribute to this academic event.

Participants are more than welcome to embrace as wide a range of methodologies as possible.

Submissions:

Abstracts of 300-500 words should be submitted by **15 January 2018**.



We will inform about acceptance of papers by 20 February 2018.

Applications should be submitted at:

https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=10th-cee-forum_cism.

The conference fee is 60 euros. We regret that we are not able to offer any scholarships to participants. Successful applicants shall be informed by e-mail about the necessary details regarding the payment.

Organizing committee

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Forum website

<http://www.cee-forum.org/index>

About the CEE Forum

The Central and Eastern European Forum of Young Legal, Political and Social Theorists (CEE Forum) is a loose platform, open for legal, political and social theorists who come from, currently study or work in Central and Eastern Europe or have a research interest in the region. Most of our participants are young researchers: doctoral students or post-docs but there is no specific age limit. The regional boundaries are understood widely as well, so our target group includes Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey and Ukraine. The CEE Forum was initiated by a group of young researchers working in those fields at the University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland. It was the aim of the initiators to change the currently dominant practice



of following the paths created mainly in other parts of the world and to try to establish a community able to provide a competitive environment for original investigations in the field of legal, political and social theory. They were dissatisfied with the fact that they were unaware of what colleagues from their neighbourhood were working on and wanted to stress the intention of establishing ties allowing exchanging ideas, leading to independent and original developments. The motivating ideas behind the Forum are twofold. Primarily, the annual conferences are academic events which provide the opportunity for junior legal scholars, political and social scientists to present their research. The first conference took place at the Silesian University in Katowice, Poland in May 2009. The following conferences were held at the Pázmány Péter Catholic University in Budapest, Hungary, in May 2010, at the University of Belgrade, Serbia, in March 2011, at the International School for Social and Business Studies in Celje, Slovenia, in March 2012, at the Alfried Krupp Wissenschaftskolleg/University of Greifswald in Greifswald, Germany, in May 2013, at the University of Zagreb, Croatia, in May 2014, at University of Sofia “St. Kliment Ohridski”, Faculty of Law, Bulgaria, in March 2015, at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Center for Social Sciences, Institute for Legal Studies, Budapest, in April 2016 and at the Centre for Legal Education and Social Theory, University of Wroclaw, Poland in April 2017. So far, some papers were more theoretical while others discussed topical legal, political and socio-economic issues in Central and Eastern Europe. A number of researchers put a special emphasis on the impact of theoretical insights in particular national or regional contexts; others addressed local problems in a comparative manner and in wider theoretical contexts. Since 2011, the Forum publishes a Yearbook with a selection of the best conference contributions of the previous year. So far, six volumes of our “Central and Eastern European Forum for Legal, Political, and Social Theory Yearbook” were published.

Secondly, the Forum contributes to establishing and maintaining ties and networks for future common projects. With an increased academic mobility within Europe, young researchers from Central and Eastern Europe follow different strategies. Some are working at universities in their home country, others study or seek jobs at academic institutions in Western Europe and beyond, still, others combine these strategies. These people often face difficulties in finding contacts to scholars with similar interests at other places of the world often even if they are working in the neighboring countries. The Forum shall contribute to establishing a genuine community of young legal, social and political theorists in Europe.



About the West University of Timișoara

The West University of Timișoara is one of the largest public institutions of higher education in Romania and it regularly hosts national and international conferences. In particular, the Faculty of Law – which celebrates this year its 25th anniversary – has an already established tradition in proposing high standard academic events.

In contrast to other law faculties in Romania, the Faculty of Law in Timișoara tries to offer, besides the classical professional training, a critically minded approach to law supposed to equip its graduates with the appropriate skills for future civic engagement and democratic reflection, as it is proved by the series of workshops promoting interdisciplinary thinking and socio-legal methods that the faculty has carried out over the years. The hosting of the CEE forum in Timișoara would thus come to enhance the Faculty's endeavours and, moreover, it would significantly contribute to the strengthening of the academic networks in the CEE region.



10th Anniversary CEE Forum:
"Constitutional Identity and Social Memories in
Central and Eastern Europe"

Host institution: Faculty of Law,
Timișoara, Romania

Conference date: 3-4 May 2018

Deadline for abstracts: 15 January 2018

Participation Fee: 60 euros

Submissions link:
https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=10th-cee-forum_cism

