

Call for Papers
International Conference
Extreme Right Transnational: Towards a New Post-War History
October 9–10, 2025, University of Fribourg (Switzerland)

For a long time, historians showed limited interest in studying the history of the extreme right after 1945. In recent years, however, there has been a significant upsurge in the research on this topic. The rise of extreme-right movements and political parties has spurred numerous research projects, especially in Germany. These projects explore not only the aftermath of National Socialism, but also the emergence of a so-called New Right within the framework of democratic societies. Similar research initiatives have also gained momentum in countries such as France, Italy, Austria, the United Kingdom, and Switzerland, reflecting the growing influence of the extreme right across Europe. Despite these shared research interests, collaboration between German-speaking scholars and their European colleagues remains sporadic and limited to occasional projects.

Against this background, the international conference “The Extreme Right Transnational. Towards a New Post-War History” aims to provide a new impetus for fostering closer cooperation and exchange between researchers and projects in Europe and beyond. This conference will also introduce the mainly German-language research network “Contemporary History Working Group on the Extreme Right” (Zeithistorischer Arbeitskreis extreme Rechte – ZAER) to the European research community. Founded in 2019, the working group organises – among other activities – annual conferences on the post-war history of the extreme right and is therefore a partner of this conference.

The conference will examine the transnational dimensions and dynamics of the extreme right after 1945 by adopting an actor-centred perspective. It will explore cross-border networks and contacts, the circulation of media products, and the exchange of ideas and thoughts, aesthetics and lifestyles, mobilisation strategies and organisational forms. Notable historical examples include the 1951 Malmö Conference that was organised by the European Social Movement and sought to unite the extreme right at the European level, or the efforts of right-wing media such as Nation Europa to promote extreme-right visions of Europe. Moreover, ideological entrepreneurs, such as the U.S. neo-Nazi George Lincoln Rockwell, worked hard to revive transatlantic extreme-right exchanges. From the 1970s onwards, new projects and initiatives emerged, including the French Nouvelle Droite, which fostered intellectual networks through meetings organised by the Groupement de Recherche et d’Études pour la Civilisation Européenne (GRECE), by the right-wing ecological World Union for Protection of Life, which organised protests against nuclear power plants, and the very active transnational Holocaust-denial movement. During this period, extreme-right activists also travelled to South Africa, Spain and Portugal to demonstrate their support for authoritarian regimes.

The dynamics of transnational exchange developed further with the rise of extreme right-wing youth subcultures such as skinheads, autonomous nationalists, and certain music scenes. The advent of the internet in the 1990s brought a new level of global connectivity, exemplified by platforms such as Stormfront or Thule-Netz, which facilitated real-time networking and accelerated the spread of extreme-right ideologies. With the emergence of social media, this connectivity has only deepened, transforming how extreme-right actors organise and

communicate on a global scale. By analysing these transnational connections and exchanges, we not only gain deeper insights into the formation of the extreme right after 1945, but also seek to develop a new approach to post-war history – one that views the extreme right in Europe and North America not as an exception, but from the outset, as a significant actor.

This conference aims to bring together researchers working on the transnational aspects of the extreme right. While the primary focus is on the second half of the 20th century, contributions examining longer historical continuities are also welcome. We would like to invite historians and interdisciplinary researchers that engage with historical perspectives to submit presentation proposals that address one or more of the following thematic areas:

1. Transnational Protagonists

Who were the key figures driving the transnational networking of the extreme right? How did they establish themselves in their roles as organisers, mediators, or translators? What role did factors such as access to travel, foreign language skills, and financial resources play in enabling their activities? Did these protagonists confine themselves to the role of intellectuals and ideologues, or were they also involved in violent, criminal, or even terrorist activities?

2. Networks, Meetings, and Informal Connections

Which transnational connections, networks, and alliances were cultivated by extreme right-wing groups? How important were international meetings, conferences, and symposia in fostering these relationships? To what extent did informal working groups and personal friendships shape their cooperation? What common goals, ideals, or fears motivated cooperation? Conversely, what conflicts arose from ideological differences, cultural disparities, or personal rivalries?

3. Media and Communication Channels

What role did media such as magazines, pamphlets, books, and later the internet play in facilitating communication and fostering networks among the extreme right? How were ideologies selected, adapted, and hybridised through transnational exchanges? What impact did translation into other languages have on the dissemination and reinterpretation of their ideas? How did these transfers shape the visual style and design of the media?

4. Social Movements

What forms of action did extreme right-wing actors choose to combine their protest with right-wing ideology? Has violence been part of their repertoire of action? And if so, what function did it have for the movement? Why and how did extreme right-wing actors engage with other transnational social movements, such as the anti-nuclear, environmental, alternative, or peace movements? What strategies did they use to influence these movements, and how did other actors respond to their involvement?

5. Youth Cultures, Leisure Activities, and Music Scenes

How did leisure activities contribute to the transnational networking of extreme right-wing actors? Did shared hobbies and interests serve as a conduit for spreading extreme right-wing ideologies across cultural boundaries? How have youth cultures, leisure practices, and music scenes been reshaped by these transnational exchanges?

In addition to oral presentations, we also invite submissions for poster presentations. Posters should present research in a clear and engaging manner, highlighting key questions, findings, and methodologies. There will be a dedicated session for poster presentations, where each

poster will be introduced, followed by time for questions and discussions. The posters will be displayed throughout the conference, providing additional opportunities for informal exchange.

Abstracts (max. 3000 characters) and a short CV (max. 1 page) must be submitted by email to conference_transnational2025@unifr.ch by 1 March 2025. Please indicate in your submission if you would like to be considered for a poster presentation. The conference language will be English. Travel and accommodation costs will be covered as far as possible.

The conference is organised by the [Department of Contemporary History](#), University of Fribourg.

Conference organisers: Stefan Rindlisbacher and Damir Skenderovic

Conference coordination: Maximilian Mosbacher