

Press release

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Public workshop on minorities in Europe and Asia

Globalisation has greatly impacted on regional integration and our awareness of multiculturalism – yet nationalism has intensified at the same time. This phenomenon can be observed in Asia and increasingly in Europe. The workshop ‘Minorities in Comparative Perspective – Europe and Asia’, which will take place from 4 to 6 May in room 314a in Dr.-Hans-Kapfnger-Strasse 14b, will offer a comparative approach to minority issues. The workshop is open to the general public.

‘The rise of multiculturalism created an expectation that minorities, in the sense of ethnic identities, would disappear or turn into folklore, and ethnic alliances would be replaced by new forms of national identity and constitutional patriotism. Instead, since the 90s, nationalism centred on ethnicity has experienced a resurgence in Asia, the Balkan region and the post-Soviet states’, said Professor Rüdiger Korff, Chair for Southeast Asian Studies. ‘In this context, the term “minority” is closely related to ethnicity and religion; but it is often overlooked that every society has minorities that are defined by other factors, such as social status, capacity for action or gender. The resultant conflicts are not perceived as minority conflicts, however, but as struggles of class and status’. Both Europe and Asia, Korff argues, have found unconventional and creative ways of integrating minorities and defusing conflicts. The upcoming workshop led by Professor Korff will consider the repercussions of such conflicts.

The workshop will open on 4 May at 4 p.m. with a lecture by the Irish author and commentator Danny Morrison on the Irish hunger strike and prisoners’ protests during the early 1980s. Mr Morrison originates from Belfast and has published various factual reports and novels. He is an Irish Republican and was a member of the Provisional IRA since the early 1960s. He was imprisoned in 1972 in Long Kesh and became the spokesperson for IRA prisoner Bobby Sands MP, who died on 5 May 1981 during a hunger strike. Today, Morrison is the Secretary of the Bobby Sands Trust and the editor of two Republican newspapers in Belfast, Republican News and An Phoblacht.

The workshop will be held in English and will take place on:

4 May: 4 to 6 p.m.

5 May: 9 a.m. to 6.30 p.m.

6 May: 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

Admission is free; prior registration is not required.

Editors: Please address your enquiries to the Media Relations Section, phone: +49 851 509 1439.