



Call for Papers:

Impacts: Does Academic Exchange Matter?
*Cultural Diplomacy, Scholarly Internationalism, and American Studies
since World War II*

Does academic exchange matter? The celebration of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the Fulbright Program in Austria in 1950 provides an excellent opportunity for a broader discussion of this question. The aim of this conference is to highlight the ongoing research on the various topics related to academic exchange and its impact and to stimulate further reflection on the state of cultural diplomacy, scholarly internationalism, and their ultimate impacts on foreign relations.

As a program based on the conception of bilateral mobility and binational decision-making, the Fulbright Program has provided almost 300,000 students and scholars with opportunities to live and study abroad since its inception in 1946. It has played a significant role in the internationalization of academic practices as well as in the consolidation of cultural relations between the U.S. and Austria as well as many other participating countries.

Taking the Fulbright Program as a point of departure, this conference is designed to embrace a broader range of topics and issues. Thus, it will aim at covering several fields related to academic exchange and cultural diplomacy, such as the impact of cultural diplomacy on the relations between the U.S. and Austria (and other cooperating countries); the processes of the internationalization of academic practices and the role of American scholars and American Studies therein; the relationships between academia and politics during the Cold War and thereafter; and the tacit and explicit economic and political agendas and expectations related to cultural exchange.

The conference programming committee is seeking contributions that cover a wide range of topics related to the fields of academic exchange, cultural diplomacy, and the internationalization of the academy, and it solicits abstracts from scholars and graduate students working in the fields of cultural diplomacy; diplomatic history; American Studies; intellectual history; the history and political implications of methodological innovation in the social sciences and the humanities; and related topics associated with transatlantic academic and cultural relations, exchanges, and

mobility.

The programming committee wishes to solicit in particular papers that address one or more of the following thematic clusters:

- A. The history and the evolution of the concept of “cultural diplomacy”:** Cultural diplomacy as a widespread practice is in many respects a result of World War II and has its roots therein: the purpose of propaganda and psychological warfare was to transmit a series of images and arguments conceived to modify the assumptions and behavior of recipient audiences. After World War II, “re-education” and “public information” were high priority items on the U.S. political agenda in occupied Austria and Germany, in particular. The Fulbright Program (1946) and the U.S. Information and Educational Exchange Act (Smith-Mundt Act) of 1948 brought the U.S. government into exchange programs and cultural diplomacy in an unprecedented and big way, and the United States established the United States Information Agency (USIA) in 1953 explicitly to manage U.S. exchanges and information policy. Idealists and practitioners of cultural diplomacy praise cultural diplomacy as the nonpartisan “promotion of mutual understanding” just as its critics and detractors identify it as part of a “hegemonic project.” Cultural diplomacy can be an ambivalent concept, and in recent years, an increasing amount of historical research has thrown new light on those instruments, which have come to be associated with “soft power” diplomacy (Joseph Nye). How does cultural policy work?
- B. The impact of exchange on academic and political life:** The establishment of the Fulbright Program in 1946 was a milestone in the institutionalization of academic exchanges which, in the context of the Cold War, also were accompanied by explicit political expectations (at least on behalf of the policymakers) concerning the benefits and merits of an exposure to and the propagation of an “American way of life.” Despite the fact that “study abroad” or “academic mobility” have become increasingly widespread phenomena, the longitudinal impact of exchanges on academic and political life in those cultures that were to benefit from exchanges has not been empirically investigated to a great extent. How has institutionalized exchange affected career choices trajectories of scientists, scholars, and politicians? How has it contributed to the internationalization of academic culture and cultural practices? Has it met the expectations of policymakers in terms of anticipated “results”? This conference will provide a platform for the presentation of new empirical evidence as well as theoretical approaches.
- C. “Mobility” and the epistemic, political and cultural geography of the social sciences and humanities:** The history of exchanges also includes the internationalization of academic practices, and the impact of the export and import of methodologies as a result of academic mobility can be traced particularly well in the social sciences and the humanities: disciplines which constitute core domains of national identity. The extent to which long-term

visits of European scholars to the U.S. in the 1950s and 1960s impacted substantially on their careers after they returned to their home countries is well known. New methodologies and, in some cases, new disciplines also emerged as a result of internationalization: among the prominent examples is “American Studies.” How has exchange shaped the epistemic geography of disciplines, approaches, and practices? To what extent is the internationalization and globalization of social sciences and humanities actually their Americanization, and what semantics are behind such attributions? How does the social and cultural capital accumulated through the exchange function in local conditions? Is it possible to map out these impacts and practices?

- D. Transatlantic perceptions, images, and stereotypes:** Cultural exchange is supposed to dismantle stereotypes and to foster mutual understanding. American cultural diplomacy in particular also has relied on people-to-people exchanges as well as the idea of citizens as “cultural ambassadors.” This session wishes to discuss the extent to which transatlantic exchanges have impacted on the perpetration and alteration of stereotypical perceptions and images, and it wishes to investigate the extent to which the expectations placed cultural diplomacy ultimately are met and outcomes are measured in different national contexts. Where, when, and why has cultural diplomacy been successful, and why is it more successful in some cases than others?

Contingent upon submissions, conference panels will be designed around these clusters of issues and be conceived to facilitate interconnections among the topics addressed.

Advisory Committee

Prof. Oliver Rathkolb, Chair, Institute of Contemporary History, University of Vienna
Univ. Doz. Dr. Margit Reiter, Institute of Contemporary History, University of Vienna
Prof. Friedrich Stadler, (joint appointment for History and Philosophy of Science)

Institute of Contemporary History, Institute of Philosophy, University of
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Prof. Reinhold Wagnleitner, Institute of History, University of Salzburg

Mag. Barbara Weitgruber, MA, Austrian Ministry of Science and Research, Chair of
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Dr. Lonnie R. Johnson, Austrian-American Educational Commission (Fulbright
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Dr. Thomas König, Institute of Contemporary History, University of Vienna

Dr. Claudia Schwarz, Institute of American Studies, University of Innsbruck

Dr. Tereza Stöckelova, Institute of Sociology, Academy of Science, Czech Republic

This conference is being organized with the support of the Austrian-American Education Commission, Austrian Ministry of Science and Research, and the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy, Vienna, in collaboration with the Institute of Contemporary History, University of Vienna

Date: Thursday and Friday, November 18-19, 2010 under the auspices of International Education Week

Venue: Amerika Haus, Friedrich Schmidt Platz 2, 1010 Vienna

Format: Keynote (tba) and panels

Deadlines and Organizational Details:

Deadline for the submission of abstracts is **May 1, 2010**. Abstracts should include a short description of the proposed presentation (400 words), and a curriculum vitae including recent publications.

Conference languages: English and German

Abstracts should be sent to Dr. Thomas König at thomas.koenig@univie.ac.at. Individuals submitting abstracts will be informed about the status of their proposals by **June 1, 2010**.

Participants invited to present will be required to submit papers for distribution among panel participants and chairs by **October 1, 2010**. The length of the conference presentations will be dictated by the panel format and number of individuals on individual panels.

Participants will be expected to cover their own costs for travel and accommodations on-site. There will be a number of hosted meals and events.

For further information or details, please contact Thomas König at thomas.koenig@univie.ac.at

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