Churches as Agents for Justice and against Populism

Public Theology in Global Intercontextual Dialogue

May 2\textsuperscript{nd} – May 4\textsuperscript{th}, 2018
Dietrich-Bonhoeffer-Haus, Berlin
Nationalist populist movements endorse exclusionary strategies that fragment societies and marginalize people. Churches should respond by strengthening respect and equal participation, and by widening the civil society discourse through exchange between different global contexts and social locations.

The conference has several aims: examining the mechanics of exclusionary populist movements, clarifying theological arguments against divisive politics, and – thereby – encouraging participatory processes that strengthen people’s agency in church and society.

The Evangelical Academy in Berlin, Bread for the World, the Church of Sweden, and The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) bring together theologians, church leaders and political scientists from different parts of the world to further initiatives for inclusion, justice and religious pluralism. The speakers and participants of the conference come from over 25 countries, and will introduce perspectives from church leadership, political science and theology.

We kindly invite you to join us at this conference!

PD Dr Eva Harasta
*Evangelical Academy in Berlin*

Rev. Dr Simone Sinn and Rev. Dr Chad Rimmer
*The Lutheran World Federation (LWF)*

Prof. Dr Dietrich Werner
*Bread for the World*

Rev. Almut Bretschneider-Felzmann
*Church of Sweden*
Program

Wednesday, May 2nd

13.00 Theological conference (first part)
   Lunch at the conference venue
14.00 Introduction: The aims of the conference
   PD Dr Eva Harasta
   Pröpstin Astrid Kleist, Hamburg,
   LWF Vice-President Central Western Europe
14.30 Global Perspectives for Public Theology and Advocacy
   three approaches:
   • Global Communion: The Lutheran World Federation
     Rev. Dr Simone Sinn, LWF Communion Office, Geneva
   • National church: Church of Sweden
     Rev. Almut Bretschneider-Felzmann
   • Civil society and global cooperation:
     Bread for the World
     Prof. Dr Dietrich Werner
     mutual introductions and theological dialogue
16.30 coffee break
16.30 Churches as Agents for Justice and against Populism
   Public evening panel at the
   Franzoesische Friedrichstadtkirche
17.30 admission for the general public
18.00 Words of Welcome
   PD Dr Eva Harasta, Evangelical Academy in Berlin

18.15 – 20:00 Public Evening Panel

Prof. Dr Heinrich Bedford-Strohm, Bishop of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria and Chairman
of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany
Dr Antje Jackelén, Archbishop of Uppsala and Primate
of the Church of Sweden, LWF Vice-President Nordic
Countries

The public evening panel will be held in German,
simultaneous translation into English will be provided.

20.30 dinner for the participants of the conference
   (at the conference venue)
Thursday, May 3rd

9.00  morning devotion

9.30  The Rise of Populism

Hungary (political science)
Religion and Populist Politics: Lessons from East Central Europe
Prof. Dr András Bozóki, Professor of Political Science, Central European University, Budapest

India (contextual, religious, and ecclesial)
Rev. Dr Simone Sinn, General Secretary, National Council of Churches in India

11.00  coffee break

11.30  Public Theology and Populism

Germany (theological ethics)
Resources and challenges from a theological perspective
Prof. Dr Torsten Meireis, Professor of Systematic Theology (Ethics and Hermeneutics), Humboldt University, Berlin

South Africa (theological ethics)
Prof. Dr Puleng LenkaBula, Professor of Ethics, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

13.00  Lunch

14.00  short paper session – part I
16 voices from global church contexts on...
  • populism and racism
  • populism and the media
  • populism and sexism
  • religious motives in populism

16.00  coffee break

16.30  short paper session – part II
9 voices from global church contexts on...
  • the theological hermeneutics of public discourse
  • the church and social justice
  • the political role(s) of the church

18.00  dinner

19.00 – Public Theology, Populism and Racism

20.30  Brazil (theology)
Prof. Dr Rudolf von Sinner, Professor of Systematic Theology, Ecumenism and Inter-religious Dialogue, Escola Superior de Teologia, São Leopoldo

USA (theology)
Constructive Theology: Womanist Perspective
Prof. Dr Linda Thomas, Professor of Theology and Anthropology, Lutheran School of Theology, Chicago
The conference is jointly organized by the Church of Sweden, The Lutheran World Federation, the Evangelical Academy in Berlin, and the Evangelische Akademie zu Berlin. The conference is chaired by Rev. Dr Simone Sinn and Rev. Dr Chad Rimmer. The Berlin Institute of Public Theology and the Evangelische Akademie zu Berlin are local academic partners of the conference.

The conference has several aims: examining the mechanics of processes that strengthen people's agency in church and society. We kindly invite you to join us at this conference to discuss and examine the mechanics of national church: Church of Sweden, LWF Vice-President Nordic Dr Antje Jackelén, Archbishop of Uppsala and Primate of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany, Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria and Chairman Prof. Dr Heinrich Bedford-Strohm, LWF Communion Office, Geneva, Rev. Dr Simone Sinn, Professor of Systematic Theology, Ecumenism and Inter-religious Dialogue, Prof. Dr Rudolf von Sinner, Professor of Systematic Theology, California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks, Prof. Dr Linda Thomas, Professor of Theology and Constructive Theology: Womanist Perspective, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, Prof. Dr Puleng LenkaBula, Professor of Ethics, South Africa (theological ethics), Prof. Dr Kirsi I. Stjerna, Professor of Lutheran History and Theology, California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks, USA (reformation theology), Prof. Dr Esther McIntosh, Professor of Lutheran History and Religious Studies, York St John’s University, York, UK (theological ethics), and PD Dr Eva Harasta, Evangelical Academy in Berlin.

We kindly invite you to join us at this conference! The conference has several aims: examining the mechanics of processes that strengthen people's agency in church and society. Churches should respond against divisive politics, and – thereby – encouraging participatory exclusionary populist movements, clarifying theological arguments in contexts and social locations. Fragment societies and marginalize people. Nationalist populist movements endorse exclusionary strategies that fragment societies and marginalize people. Churches should respond against divisive politics, and – thereby – encouraging participatory exclusionary populist movements, clarifying theological arguments in contexts and social locations. Fragment societies and marginalize people.

Friday, May 4th

9.00 morning devotion
9.30 Public Theology, Populism and Sexism
UK (theological ethics)
Prof. Dr Esther McIntosh, Subject Director for Theology and Religious Studies, York St John’s University, York
USA (reformation theology)
Prof. Dr Kirsi I. Stjerna, Professor of Lutheran History and Theology, California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks
11.00 coffee break
11.30 Churches as Agents for Justice and against Division
Hungary
Bishop Dr Tamás Fabiny, The Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Hungary, Budapest
Rwanda
Président Dr Pascal Bataringaya, Eglise Presbytérienne au Rwanda, Kigali
13.00 Lunch
14.00 – The responsibility of the church(es) in the face of populism – locally, nationally and globally
15.30 concluding panel
16.00 end of conference

(Slight changes to the program may occur.)
Churches as Agents for Justice and against Populism

conference steering committee
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Rev. Prof. Dr Dietrich Werner
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Church of Sweden

conference organisation
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conference venue and accommodation
Hotel Dietrich Bonhoeffer Haus
Ziegelstrasse 30
10117 Berlin
www.hotel-dietrich-bonhoeffer.de
phone +49 30 284 67 – 0

Registration

Participation only by invitation.

registration deadline
March 21, 2018

Please send the complete registration form to huschke@eaberlin.de until March 21, 2018. We will confirm participation depending on the availability of free spots. Please note that it is expected of participants to be present for the entire conference. We cannot register participants for part-time participation.

Accommodation

Participants need to organize their accommodation themselves. A number of rooms have been pre-reserved at the conference venue (Hotel Dietrich Bonhoeffer Haus). The hotel will hold these rooms until March 21, 2018. When contacting the hotel, mention the reference “Protestant Academy Berlin” to release a pre-reserved room.

Conference Fee

There is no conference fee for participants. The meals and coffee breaks that are mentioned in the above program will be provided for participants without extra charge.

Public Transport

S-Bahn / U-Bahn

Please take the S-Bahn to S-Bahnhof Friedrichstrasse. The conference venue is within walking distance from the station.

From Tegel Airport

Take the bus TXL and get out at Hauptbahnhof (main station); the bus trip takes about 20 – 25 minutes, depending on traffic. From there, take S-Bahn 5, 7 or 9 in Eastern direction and get out at the next stop: Friedrichstrasse. (“Friedrichstrasse” is written below the general direction on the overhead sign announcing the correct S-Bahn trains at Hauptbahnhof.) From Friedrichstrasse station, it is a short walk of ca. 5 minutes to the hotel (see map on this page).

From DB main station (“Hauptbahnhof”)

Take S-Bahn 5, 7 or 9 to Friedrichstrasse. From there it is a short walk of ca. 5 minutes (see map above).

From Schönefeld Airport

Take regional train RE7 (direction: Dessau) and get out at Friedrichstrasse station (the train trip takes about 25 minutes). From Friedrichstrasse station it is a short walk of ca. 5 minutes to the hotel (see map on this page). Alternatively, take the bus SXF 1 from Schönefeld Airport and get out at Südkreuz. At Südkreuz change to S-Bahn 2 (direction: Buch) to Friedrichstrasse.

Cover photo: Faith leaders deliver the COP23 Interfaith Climate Statement “Walk on Earth Gently” on foot and by bicycle, November 2017. Picture credit: Sean Hawkey (WCC).

The terms and conditions (AGB) of the Evangelical Academy in Berlin apply to this event as well as the code of conduct for LWF events. The AGB can be viewed here (German): www.eaberlin.de/service/agb. The code of conduct for LWF events can be viewed here (English): www.lutheranworld.org/content/resource-code-conduct-lwf-events. The Evangelical Academy in Berlin is a member of the network organisation “Protestant Academies in Germany” (Berlin).

We print our flyers carbon neutrally with vegetable oil based inks on recycled paper.
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