

# THE EFFECTS OF WORLD WAR I ON THE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES IN EUROPE 1918-1925

International Workshop Rome

12 - 14 November 2018

Call for Papers

11 November 1918 saw the end of the First World War, known at the time as the 'Great War' (1914-1918) for its global scale, extreme destructivity and unseen casualty rates. On the one hand, wars evoke heroism and patriotism and bring people and groups to alter their mental boundaries and abilities. On the other hand, wars also elicit hatred, envy and violent behaviour, the settling of hidden accounts, the abandonment of ethical standards, and deep divisions and confrontations between families and societies. Since effects of the first world conflict were enormous and the shock waves were felt for years and generations to come, the question arises about the impact of the Great War on religion and the established churches.

The workshop *The Effects of World War I on the Christian Churches in Europe (1918-1925)* will adopt an international comparative approach to study the effects of the Great War on the institutionalized Christian religions (eg. Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox churches) in the immediate aftermath of the war. How did the churches perceive the war and the immediate post-war period? What was the impact on Christian theology and culture? How did the churches interact with the belligerent nation states and how did they cope with the changing (geo) political situation after the war? What were their ecclesiological, pastoral and liturgical challenges after the armistices? Did they adopt a defensive stance towards secularization, or did they intensified their dialogue with modernity? To what extent did they move towards a pastoral policy of social healing and offer a welcome to Christian pacifism and ecumenism?

The workshop wishes to stimulate innovative research on the interaction between religion and society in the difficult years between the end of the war and the mid-1920's. It explicitly adopts an interdenominational and international comparative perspective, stimulating a multifaceted and in-depth analysis, with due attention to methodological questions and combining the results of different fields of historical research: the history of churches and religions, cultural, intellectual, social and political history, etc. Although well-chosen case-studies focusing, for instance, on particular regional/national contexts, on specific denominations, organizations or individuals can surely offer valuable insights, the organizers especially aim for papers that deal with the issues concerned from a broad comparative perspective. They should contribute to a better understanding of the changing nature of religious culture across Europe. Although the workshop will deal in particular with the immediate post-war years (1918-mid 1920's), contributors are encouraged to adopt a broader chronological perspective of continuity and discontinuity in evaluating the results of their analysis for the period at hand.

The workshop will bring together senior academics as well as junior doctoral researchers in a scientific dialogue on the subject. Introductory keynote lectures from established researchers and thematic sessions will structure the multi-layered perspective as well as the comparative baseline.

## POSSIBLE THEMES

(to be finalized after the evaluation of the paper proposals)

- *The old and the new world*: Did Christian churches harbour a silent nostalgia for the old world of 'multi-ethnic and multi-religious empires, such as the Ottoman or Habsburg empires'? Did they see challenges and opportunities for religion and meaning in the new post-war world with new upcoming nation-states? What was their attitude, impact and role with regard to the new geopolitical constellation, nationalism and the new states, the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations, and the growing international culture of consultation?
- *The masses or the elites*: How did denominations deal with the post-war emergence of the masses, popular democracy and women's movements, as well as with new socio-economic (fascist and communist) ideologies? How were these evolutions related to the earlier events of the war? Did churches consider these changes as new opportunities or, was it the opposite, a question of offering resistance to an engulfing modernity by creating a counterculture of and with the old/new elites?
- *Affiliation and/or de-affiliation to the churches*: How was the post-war faith and religious culture influenced by the events of war? Did these processes reflect a changing view of God and humanity, and/or an eschatological vision and cultural pessimism? How representative are the conversion stories of the 1920s – for example, of intellectuals and artists - and how did the churches deal with them? The workshop will also examine changing religious imagination and practices, both private and public. Since previous workshops and conferences have already focused intensely on the impact of the Great War on religious material culture (architecture, art and iconography, ...) this topic will *not* be discussed.
- *Internal and/or external missionary work*: In the long nineteenth century the Christian churches – pre-eminently the Catholic and Protestant churches – were characterized by a worldwide missionary offensive. The question must be asked about the extent to which the Great War had an impact on the missionary enterprise (missiology, strategies, intensity, methodologies ...)? Was the emphasis henceforth spread more evenly between internal and external missionary work? What were the effects on the missionary institutes and/or associations? How did they deal with growing self-awareness in mission areas.
- *Distrust and/or mutual understanding and encouragement of ecumenism/dialogue*. To what extent the mutual relations between the Christian churches changed as result of the war? Did it engender greater openness, ecumenism or did bitter distrust prevail? How did it affect ethnic and religious tensions in for instance the Balkans and Eastern Europe?

# VENUE

## MONDAY 12 NOVEMBER

Academia Belgica – Via Omero

## TUESDAY 13 NOVEMBER

École Française de Rome – Piazza Navona

## WEDNESDAY 14 NOVEMBER (UNTIL 14 P.M.)

Österreichisches Historisches Institut in Rom - Viale Bruno Buozzi

## ORGANIZING INSTITUTES

Research network on Christianity, Culture and Society in Contemporary Europe (CCSCE) and KADOC-KU Leuven

In cooperation with:

Pontifical Committee of Historical Sciences (PCHS)

Academia Belgica, Rome (AB)

École Française de Rome (EFR)

Österreichisches Historisches Institut in Rom (OHIR)

Deutsches Historisches Institut in Rom (DHIR)

KADOC (°1976) is the Interfaculty Documentation and Research Centre for Religion, Culture and Society of KU Leuven – University of Leuven. The Centre not only fulfils pivotal functions fostering multidisciplinary research, but also carries out its own research programs, usually with a comparative, international slant. KADOC positions itself as an academic agora, bringing scholars and societal actors together in order to collaborate in joint (individual and collective) research initiatives. See [www.kadoc.kuleuven.be](http://www.kadoc.kuleuven.be)

The Research Network on Christianity, Culture and Society in Contemporary Europe (CCSCE) brings together individual researchers who strive to pursue innovative research on religious history in the 19th and 20th centuries. It aims at high-quality and multidisciplinary research on the interaction of religion, culture and society, with a strong focus on methodology and this within a broad comparative, inter-denominational and genuinely transnational perspective, across the whole of Europe.

See [www.ccsce.eu](http://www.ccsce.eu)

## ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Bernard Ardura (PCHS)

Martin Baumeister (CCSCE, DHIR)

Wouter Bracke (AB)

Kim Christiaens (KADOC-KU Leuven)

Jan De Maeyer (KADOC-KU Leuven)

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*Secretary:* Kristien Suenens (KADOC-KU Leuven)

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Giovanni Vian (CCSCE, Università Ca' Foscari Venezia)

*Secretary:* Kristien Suenens (KADOC-KU Leuven)

## PROPOSALS

The main conference and discussion language will be English, but papers in other languages are accepted as well. In that case, the organizers do ask for an English summary and an English or bilingual PowerPoint or other presentation.

Proposals should be submitted as PDF documents and should contain the following: a clear title of the proposed paper; a summary (max. 500 words), outlining the paper's goals, methodology and source materials; CV(s) of author(s), with contact information, position and institutional affiliation.

These abstracts should be attached and emailed to the workshop secretary ([kristien.suenens@kadoc.kuleuven.be](mailto:kristien.suenens@kadoc.kuleuven.be)) no later than **1 March 2018**. You should receive a confirmation of proposal receipt within 48 hours.

The proposals will be evaluated and selected by the Scientific Committee based on topic relevance, innovativeness and the degree to which the proposal answers the call. Notification of the evaluation will occur no later than 1 April 2018.

Full papers should be sent to the workshop organizers no later than **1 October 2018**.

Conference speakers will pay no registration fee. The organizers will arrange their accommodation and catering for a maximum of three nights (Sunday until Wednesday). We trust that invited speakers will be able to find funding at their home institution or at other national instances to cover their travel costs. The organizers can provide a few grants to cover them partly, especially for junior researchers. They need to explicitly apply when sending their paper abstract.

## TIMING

- Call for Papers: December 2017
- Deadline for proposal submission: 1 February 2018
- Proposal notification: 1 May 2018
- Deadline for Papers: 1 October 2018
- Workshop: 12-14 November 2018

## PUBLICATION

Following the workshop, papers selected by referees will be included in an international, peer-reviewed publication, planned in 2020.