



International Wednesdays



Dr. Milica Popović, Austrian Academy of Sciences

Mobilizations of Academic Freedom in (European) Politics: European Values in France and Serbia

International Lecture Series

Wednesday, June 4th, 5 pm, Hörsaal 1
Sensengasse 3A, 1. OG

Academic freedom has been a priori considered as a backbone element of the liberal democracy. As such, it has in recent years become central to the European Higher Education Area policies, and at the forefront of discourses by the European political actors such as the European Commission and the European Parliament. In my talk, I want to challenge this notion and show inherent contradictions of contemporary policies, uncovering the appearance of nationalist approaches to higher education and research. Starting from the question of who defines academic freedom and for whom, I claim that academic freedom has become a political tool, aligning with geopolitical aims and nation-building discourses. Embedded in my research on comparative examples of national level developments in France and Serbia, and the European level, I try to show how in these increasingly regulated environments, despite their (il)liberal orientations, political elites continue to endanger the exercise of academic freedom.

Milica Popović is Senior Postdoctoral Researcher at the Institute of Culture Studies, at the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna, where she leads her project *The Silence of Saying No: (Un)Remembering Deserters from the Yugoslav Wars*. In 2021–2023, she was a postdoctoral fellow and project lead at the Global Observatory on Academic Freedom at Central European University in Vienna, receiving a DAAD Fundamental Academic Values Award for Early Career Scientists for this work.

This event is organized by the Department of Education and the Doctoral School in Education of University of Vienna. It will be followed by an open reception.