

CALL FOR PAPERS

International scientific conference

The Onset of the New Order: Europe 1939–1940

17–19.09.2019, Warsaw

The 80th anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War gives us an opportunity to focus scholarly attention on this crucial moment in history. Between the German invasion of Poland on the 1st of September 1939 and the spring of 1940, when Hitler turned his attention towards the West, Europe first experienced the full implications of an occupation and a total war that would seek to destroy whole societies, nations, and peoples. It was in Poland that the Nazi New Order for Europe would first begin to be implemented, and where it would be most fully felt – a premonition of what was in store for the whole of Europe. Almost simultaneously, Poland would also experience invasion and occupation by the Soviet Union, beginning a similar process of state destruction, mass deportations and repression. This would soon be followed by Soviet occupation in much of Finland and of the Baltic states. This moment may then serve as a locus for many issues that arise both in our scholarship and in our common understanding of the war. Issues such as the nature of Totalitarianism and how it was understood by the governments and peoples of the allied nations in those moments leading up to and following the two invasions; or the effects of total war upon the civilian populations and upon the Jewish diaspora as a collective trauma, and how this has shaped our memories and our narratives of this period; or how our understanding of the modern world, with its rapid military, technological, political and social changes, full of threats and possibilities, was formed in this most violent of crucibles.

To fully explore this critical event, we would like to welcome papers from all disciplines, and while our primary focus is on this particular opening stage of the war we are certainly open to topics that place it in a wider chronological and/or geographic context. We are also very much interested in exploring not only the historical circumstances of September 1939, but how we craft our present day understanding of it through scholarship, culture, museums, education, and other means. Some possible topics for papers might therefore include – without of course being limited to – the following:

- Totalitarian and Democratic ideologies before and after 1939
- The nature of total war: economies, societies and cultures at war
- A comparison of Nazi and Stalinist totalitarianisms
- Individual memory and institutional discourse about the war
- Displacement, incarceration and the coming Holocaust
- International organizations and law before and after 1939
- Propaganda, information, and public understanding of the war
- Modern warfare and military (un)preparedness in 1939
- Historiography and interpretation of 1939 and of the war
- Carriers of war memory and narratives: war literature, cinema, art and culture
- Monuments, commemorations and public memorialization of 1939
- The destruction of cities, monuments, and cultural wealth – the landscape of war

Proposals should include an abstract of no more than 200 words and a brief bio of the author, along with the completed submission form, which can be downloaded at www.instytutpileckiego.pl. Proposals must be received by March 1 2019 in order to be considered, and acceptance will be announced by April 1. Registration is free of charge. The conference will be open to public. A limited number of travel grants up to 500 Euro will also be available (reasons for requesting grants must be included on the submission form). Accommodation and meals during the conference will be covered by the Pilecki Institute.