



Call for papers

26th Annual dfi Conference
in cooperation with the
Deutsches Historisches Institut Paris

**France and the presence of the past –
national dimension, universal validity?**

Ludwigsburg, 24th-26th June 2010

The past has always played a role in French politics, not just since Nicolas Sarkozy's election as president, a fact illustrated by examples such as the recognition of Turkish genocide in Armenia, France's colonial history or the compulsory reading of Guy Môquet's farewell letter in every classroom. Although differing greatly from one another, these and numerous other examples all have three dimensions in common: Firstly, history as an argument to be employed in current political debate. Secondly, history as a point of reference for a collective, fixed interpretation of the past, which thus acts as a catalyst for creating identity; and thirdly, history as the expression of a human rights philosophy that was formulated in France but aims for universal relevance. The third dimension in particular illustrates the way in which a historically motivated, human rights-based discourse is being used to redefine France's "role in the world".

Whereas the dfi annual conference in 2000 (Future and Memory) dealt with the politics and culture of memory in connection with the Algerian war of independence and the Vichy era, this year's conference will place greater emphasis on the connection to current politics. As in previous years, the conference will have an interdisciplinary approach and broad scope. Contributions offering an overview of current developments in France, as well as more detailed case studies from a social science perspective will be considered. The following list of topics is open to further suggestions:

- political treatment of the past, changes over the past 10 years
- legislating history
- the politics of memory of French presidents
- historiographical tendencies
- the role of history in the debate on national identity
- the role of memorials
- France and the colonial legacy
- The return of "Françafrique"?
- Foreign policy based on human rights?
- France's international strategy and contribution to global governance (NATO; the idea of an international environmental organisation etc.)
- Memory in Franco-German relations

Thanks for sending us your proposals until 15th April 2010 to:

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