

About the Conference

Liberal democracy is in crisis worldwide. Not only in comparatively young democracies but also in time-honored ones such as the US, the foundations of liberal, constitutional democracy are crumbling.

As early as the 19th century, Tocqueville presented a groundbreaking theory of democracy, examining both its bright and dark sides as a form of society and government in America and Europe. While current political theory – especially radical democratic theory – focuses on criticism of liberal democracy and its swan song, we aim to revive Tocqueville's theory of democracy and use it in four systematic panels to ask whether liberal democracy can be saved rather than abandoned.

Our goal is to build a bridge between an analysis of the current phenomena of the democratic crisis and the reconstruction of the central elements of Tocqueville's theory.

To attend the conference, please send an email to **ricarda.wuensch@ur.de** by May 15, 2025.

Organizers

Dr. Sarah Rebecca Strömel
Prof. Dr. Eva Helene Odzuck

Location

Haus der Begegnung
Hinter der Grieb 8
93047 Regensburg

Registration

[until 15/05/25]
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For more information, visit
→ go.ur.de/tocqueville



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
28/05 – 30/05/25

DEMOCRACY IN CRISIS

TOCQUEVILLE'S THEORY
OF DEMOCRACY AND
ITS RELEVANCE IN
THE AGE OF (GLOBAL)
DE-DEMOCRATIZATION



REGENSBURGER UNIVERSITÄTS
STIFTUNG
HANS VIELBERTH

Fritz Thyssen Stiftung
für Wissenschaftsförderung

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Universität Regensburg

INSTITUT FÜR POLITIKWISSENSCHAFT
Lehrstuhl für Politische Philosophie,
Theorie und Ideengeschichte

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Mit freundlicher Unterstützung der **Deininger-Stiftung**

WED 28 / 05 / 25

11.45-13.15	Informal Get-together/guided city tour
13.15-14.00	Lunch
14.00-14.15	Welcome Introduction & Greetings from the President of the Univ.
PANEL I Religion: The Elixir of Life for Democracies? Chair: Prof. Dr. Dr. Manfred Brocker	
14.15-15.15	Prof. Dr. Alan S. Kahan Université Paris-Saclay/Université de Versailles (FRA) Pantheism, Patriotism, and Populism: A Tocquevillian Perspective <u>Comment:</u> Dr. Skadi S. Krause TU Darmstadt
15.15-15.30	Break
15.30-16.30	Prof. Dr. Sophie van Bijsterveld Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen (NL) A Public Significance of Religion in Secularized and Pluralist Democracies? <u>Comment:</u> Prof. Dr. Harald Bluhm Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg
16.30-17.00	Coffee & Tea
17.00-18.00	Dr. Ahmet Cavuldak Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin Tocqueville, Islam and Democracy <u>Comment:</u> Prof. Dr. Tine Stein Georg-August-Universität Göttingen
18.00-18.15	Break
18.15-19.45	<u>KeyNote I:</u> Prof. Dr. Aurelian Crăiuțu Indiana University Bloomington (USA) Tocqueville and the Future of American Democracy <u>Moderation:</u> Prof. Dr. Eva Helene Odzuck
20.00	Dinner

THU 29 / 05 / 25

9.30-10.00	Coffee & Tea
PANEL II Democracy in America: North vs. South Chair: Dr. Dietrich Schotte	
10.00-11.00	Prof. Dr. José Antonio Aguilar Rivera Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económica (MEX) Tocqueville, Liberalism and the Left <u>Comment:</u> Prof. Dr. Norbert Campagna Université du Luxembourg (LUX)
11.15-12.15	Prof. Dr. Oliver Hidalgo Universität Passau Aristocratic or Agonistic Democracy? Tocqueville on Political Parties and the American Civil War <u>Comment:</u> Prof. Dr. Cristina Cassina University of Pisa (IT)
12.15-13.15	Lunch
PANEL III Is Individualism Destroying Democracy? Tocqueville 'Bowling Alone' in the Age of Digitization Chair: Prof. Dr. Eva Helene Odzuck	
13.15-14.15	Dr. Sarah Rebecca Strömel Universität Regensburg Tocqueville's Individualistic Democracy in the Age of Social Media: Lessons for Today <u>Comment:</u> Prof. Dr. Gisela Riescher Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg
14.15-14.30	Break
14.30-15.30	Prof. Dr. Thomas Osborne University of Bristol (UK) Tocqueville, Individualism, Illiberalism <u>Comment:</u> Dr. Dietrich Schotte Universität Regensburg
15.30-16.00	Coffee & Tea

16.00-17.00	Prof. Dr. Dana Villa University of Notre Dame (USA) The Failure of Associational Life and 'Self-Interest, Rightly Understood' <u>Comment:</u> Prof. Dr. Dag Einar Thorsen University of South-Eastern Norway (NOR)
17.00-17.15	Break
17.15-18.45	<u>Key Note II:</u> Prof. Dr. Joshua Mitchell Georgetown University Washington D.C. (USA) The Three Threats to Tocquevillian Democracy <u>Moderation:</u> Dr. Sarah Rebecca Strömel Universität Regensburg
19.00	Dinner
FRI 30 / 05 / 25	
9.00-9.30	Coffee & Tea
PANEL IV: The Crisis of Liberal Democracy: What Did Tocqueville Foresee, and What Did He Overlook? Chair: Dr. Sarah Rebecca Strömel	
9.30-10.30	Prof. Dr. Michael Drolet University of Oxford (UK) Populism and the Contemporary Crisis of Politics. Lessons from Tocqueville's "L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution" <u>Comment:</u> Prof. Dr. Dirk Jörke TU Darmstadt
10.30-10.45	Break
10.45-11.45	Prof. Dr. Ewa Atanassow Bard College Berlin Democracy's Dilemmas: Tocqueville Reconsidered <u>Comment:</u> Prof. Dr. Hans-Jörg Sigwart RWTH Aachen
11.45-12.00	Farewell Address
12.00-13.00	Lunch