

## Excursion "A Carnival of Revolutions"

From February 18 to March 1, the students and the instructor of the seminar "A Carnival of Revolutions: Central Europe 1989" went together on an over two-thousand kilometer tour of the major sites of 1989. The trip was partially funded by the Economic and Cultural Studies Departments at the Viadrina, as well as the Center for Interdisciplinary Polish Studies. Traveling from Frankfurt Oder, the first stop was Collegium Polonicum, where Krzysztof Wojciechowski and Dagmara Jajeśniak-Quast spoke to students about their memories and impressions of 1989. That was followed by a tour of the German-Polish border by Karl-Konrad Tschäpe. Traveling in a small bus, students then went to Wrocław, where the Orange Alternative drove authorities mad in 1989. Next on the route was Bratislava, where individuals protested the disastrous consequences of a mega-project along the Danube in 1989. Ironically, the dam (which was completed in the early 1990s) later became a point of nationalist pride in Slovakia. In Budapest, students were hosted by the Open Society Archive and István Rév. Rév spoke about the role of the archive, as well as its continued importance in the twenty-first century. Next, József Litkei did a site-seeing tour of the major locations of 1989. He also took the group to the Terror House, a controversial museum on the communist and fascist dictatorships. Pál Germuska led the group through the Military History Museum as well as the State Park. In Sopron and St. Margarethen, students had the unique opportunity to discuss with individuals who helped East Germans flee the East bloc in 1989—most notably Alexander Wind and László Nagy. In Prague, the staff of the William J. Fulbright Foundation hosted students and offered reflections on their own stories in Prague and Teplice. Zdeněk Nebřenský offered students a fascinating tour of the monuments and locations commemorating the revolution in Czechoslovakia. Finally, the group returned to Germany, visiting first Bautzen, where Ludwig Elle and Bernhard Ziesch related how the transition to democracy effected the fate of Sorbs living in the region. On the next morning, students visited first the Stasi prison in Bautzen, and then went to Eisenhüttenstadt to view the museum on everyday life in the GDR. Finally, it was off to Berlin and Potsdam, where the group spoke with dissident Peter Grimm, and also visited the Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes as well as the Stasi prison at Hohenschönhausen. Karl-Konrad Tschäpe concluded the trip with a tour of major locations of 1989 in Potsdam. An unforgettable tour, the instructor and the students had the unique opportunity to witness history in ways unimaginable in the classroom.





