

## WFWP Vienna, Austria - International Women's Day: History of European Women

Martin and Elizabeth Kiedler  
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To start off, the mayor Markus Landauer addressed the audience. He expressed his happiness that such a meeting takes place in his village and the important role of women for a positive development in society.

Renate Amesbauer, President of WFWP in Austria, introduced Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon (Mother Moon) and WFWP with their numerous activities at the local and international level.



The main program was the lecture from Peace Ambassador Mag. Dr. Ernst Mihalkovits: **"The History of European Women from Early Christianity to the Present"**.

Mag. Dr. Mihalkovits is an Historian. When Mother Moon was in Austria for the Peace Starts With Me rally in the Wiener Stadthalle April 29, 2018 he and his wife attended the event. Afterwards he felt

inspired to investigate the situation of women in history. The results of his scientific work were published in a Catholic magazine for Culture and Education. Then he also started to give lectures on this topic.

On this evening Mag. Dr. Mihalkovits pointed out that Jesus treated men and women with equal respect. But after his death the Roman Catholic church made fatal mistakes. He quoted the church fathers and famous theologians. Inspired by Greek philosophers, they started to accuse women for all evil, for all temptations and claimed that women were inferior to men. The peak of this was to condemn women as witches and their brutal torture and execution. Pope Innocent VIII played an inglorious role in this.



Only in the last centuries - after many sacrifices - the situation changed. More and more women could gain leading positions in all areas of life. E.g. Bertha von Suttner, the first Nobel Peace Prize winner, who worked tirelessly for peace before WW I, but was not heard by the society of her time.

After WW I, in November 1919 the women in Austria gained the right to vote, and more women were able to partake in the political life in Austria, like Hildegard Burjan, the founder of Caritas Soziales, a female order for nurses. She was the first woman who was able to join the League of Nations in Geneva, and Olga Rudel-Zeynek, who became the first female president of the Austrian Federal Council.

Another remarkable woman was Käthe Leichter. She founded the first womens' study centre worldwide. As she was Jewish, she was murdered by the Nazis during WW II.

After WW II it was still a long way for women to establish themselves in public positions like in politics or in big enterprises.

We were all somehow shocked by the content of this lecture, and we realized that it took a lot of courage to give this lecture in a small village to the local guests who mostly are Catholics. Their response was very moving. They appreciated the whole program.

We really came to respect Dr. Mihalkovits very much.

After a session of questions and answers a world peace blessing was performed in which everybody participated.

After living many years in our hometown this was a real break through for which we thank our Heavenly Parent and all those who supported us.

Written by Martin and Elizabeth Kiedler  
WFWP Austria