Carl-Schmitt-Gesellschaft e.V.

11th Annual Carl Schmitt Lecture

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Carl Schmitt's Critique of Political Compromise – Political Thought and Populist Affinities

Oktober 15, 2026, 6 pm (followed by a reception)

Charité-Campus, Tieranatomisches Theater, Zugang: Philippstraße 13, 10115 Berlin

Political compromise is widely regarded as indispensable to governing pluralistic societies, yet just as often criticized as unprincipled, opaque, or incompatible with genuine political choice. This talk revisits that tension through a largely neglected dimension of Carl Schmitt's political thought: his sustained critique of compromise. It shows, first, that this critique is not peripheral but recurs from Schmitt's Weimar-era writings through his work under the Third Reich; second, it reconstructs five distinct but interconnected objections, all ultimately grounded in Schmitt's ideal of political unity; and third, it argues that these objections display important affinities with authoritarian populism and its own hostility toward compromise.

Sandrine Baume is one of the leading scholars of Weimar constitutional thought and of the democratic theory of Hans Kelsen. Among her most recent publications are *Hans Kelsen on Constitutional Democracy: Genesis, Theory, Legacies* (2026, co-edited with David Ragazzoni) and *Hans Kelsen and the Case for Democracy* (2012). She is also the author of *Carl Schmitt, penseur de l'État. Genèse d'une doctrine* (2008).