

Symposium – Tuesday, 13 June 2017, In English

The post-1989 social order is crumbling. New forms of political discontent and expression are emerging, but also new military engagements, economic protectionism, a resurgence of nationalism, and a general mistrust of political representation and news media reflected in rampant talk of 'post-truth' and 'alternative facts'. It is all the more urgent to question the narratives about 1989 and its aftermath that are being used to determine contemporary history and shared political timelines. The end of the Cold War - interpreted by some as an 'end of history' - reshaped social and political life across the world and was routinely understood to coincide with democratization, globalization, the rise of neoliberal capitalism and global human rights regimes, but also the defeat of socialism and the dismantling of the welfare state. These processes and ideas have preoccupied the social sciences and humanities and dominated the conceptual apparatus theorists rely on to make sense of contemporary politics and societies. More than 25 years after this alleged historical rupture, after the triumph of liberal democracy, and the opening of the social sciences and humanities to transnational and transdisciplinary frames, a number of alternative (dis)continuities emerge: many of the changes associated with 1989 actually can be shown to have started much earlier, while the current crisis of finance capitalism on the one hand and the challenge of authoritarianism and protectionism on the other - not to mention impending ecological catastrophes - run counter to the triumphalist narrative that still serves as the basis of the determination of the current era.

PROGRAMME

16:00 – 17:45 PANEL I

What Happened to Social Theory in 1989? Epistemic Shifts and Continuities

Introduction by Marian Burchardt

No Alternative:

How the Third Way Became a Dead End

Boris Vormann

(John F. Kennedy Institute, FU Berlin)

Respondent Marian Burchardt

How Has History Lost Its Language?

On the Political Prospects of

New Vernaculars

Boris Buden (Bauhaus University Weimar)

Respondent Gal Kirn

Followed by a Q&A

17:45-18:15 COFFEE BREAK

18:00 – 19:45 PANEL II

Beyond Neoliberalism:

What Comes After the 'End of History'

Introduction by Gal Kirn

Of Eulogies and Rebirths: Urban Perspectives on the Longevity of Neoliberalism

Margit Mayer

(Center of Metropolitan Studies, TU Berlin)

Respondent Hannah Proctor

Followed by a Q&A

The symposium builds on the interventions collected in *Beyond Neoliberalism: Social Analysis after 1989*, ed. by Marian Burchardt and Gal Kirn (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), itself an outcome of a series of conferences organized and funded by the Irmgard Coninx Foundation.

An ICI Event in cooperation with the Irmgard Coninx Foundation

Organized by

Marian Burchardt (MPI for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity),

Gal Kirn (ICI Berlin),

and **Hannah Proctor** (ICI Berlin)

Theory and Politics Beyond Neoliberalism

