



Centre for

**Global
Cooperation
Research**

After Modernity, into Complexity?

Possibilities for Critique in an Age of Global Cooperation

Workshop, 7-8 May 2014

Centre for Global Cooperation Research, Duisburg

Abstract

The question of spaces, possibilities and positions of critique has been picked up with renewed vigour today. The basis on which the current engagement takes place are fundamental and ongoing transformations in resistance, governing and critique. These include: a transformation of resistant politics from class struggle of socialist movements of the late 19th and early 20th century, to the culture wars of the New Left of the 1960s and 70s through to today's acephalous bubble-up politics of Occupy etc. Governing rationalities have undergone a transformation from the liberal rule over the public of legal subjects, to the neoliberal responsabilisation of the entrepreneurial subject through to today's resilience approaches of governing through the learning subject. Critique has shifted from structuralist thought of orthodox Marxism, to its poststructuralist challenge of ethical deconstruction through to today's nonstructuralist theorisations, such as actor-network theories, new materialism and 'life politics'. At the same time, Critical Theory in its Habermasian and more Marxist variants, is trying hard to rejuvenate critique under labels such as 'justification', 'the right to justification', 'forms of life' or 'staging totality'. In essence, the terrain of sociological and philosophical critique is as crowded as ever. Yet, its traction with political struggles seems to be weaker than ever before.

The aim of the workshop, building on the previous event on 'Culture, Life and Critique' (23 April 2013), is twofold: First, it seeks to engage further with the question how we can come to a better understanding of the present (and its challenges) through excavating the rationale of current critique and through scrutinising its emancipatory imaginary. If the Enlightenment as critique meant the subject's 'exit from' self-imposed immaturity, what is current critical thought 'exiting from' and what is its promise? Is it that complexity leaves us no other option than to immerse ourselves in necessary, i.e. global, cooperation, both hailed as a solution to our problems and conceptualised as grounded in what is biologically or normatively "given", instead of deliberately engage in emancipatory critique and struggle? Second, what may be the reasons for the lack of traction of contemporary social critique and how can this irrelevance be overcome? We wish to explore these questions with a particular view on the self-referentiality of critical thought. We invite participants to reflect critically upon the question whether the diversification of critical thought resonates with rather than challenges a world that is thought to be complex.

The workshop will be held in a small format. Kindly register at events@gcr21.uni.due.de until 2 May 2014.



Programme

7 May 2014

- 16:30-19:30 **Panel 1: 'Made in Criticalland'? Perspectives on Critique Beyond the Trademarks**
Chair: Frank Gadinger, Käte Hamburger Kolleg / Centre for Global Co-operation Research (KHK/GCR21)
Roundtable:
Pol Bargaés, KHK/GCR21
Kai Koddenbrock, KHK/GCR21
Jessica Schmidt, KHK/GCR21
Mario Schmidt, KHK/GCR21
- 19:30 BBQ

8 May 2014

- 9:15-9:30 Good Morning, Duisburg
- 9:30-11:00 **Panel 2: Complexity and Hope**
Chair: Pol Bargaés, KHK/GCR21
Discussant: Gideon Baker, Griffith University

Resilience and Complexity: The Not so Special Tool of a Somewhat Special Actor
Jonathan Joseph, Sheffield University

Critique: From Power to Resistance
David Chandler, University of Westminster
- 11:00-11:30 Coffee Break
- 11:00-12:00 **Panel 3: Finance and the City**
Chair: Kai Koddenbrock, KHK/GCR21
Discussant: Christian Scheper, Universität Duisburg-Essen

What is Critique (in Urban Studies)? Some Observations from a Historical Perspective
Nikolai Roskamm, Technische Universität Berlin

Unraveling the Complexity of Modern Finance: The Social Dimension of Risk Management and its Critique
Dimitris Sotiropoulos, The Open University Business School
- 13:00-14:30 Lunch Break
- 14:30-16:00 **Panel 3: Locality and Resistance**
Chair: Mario Schmidt, KHK/GCR21
Discussant: Frank Gadinger, KHK/GCR21



The Challenges of Analysing Contemporary Social Conflict: Reflections on Urban Resistance in Barcelona

Nadia Ferrer, University of Bradford

Collaborations Beyond a Neoliberal Logic: The Fight for James Price Point, Western Australia (2009-2013)

Carsten Wergin, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg

16:00-16:30 Coffee Break

16:30-18:00 **Panel 4: Foundations and Systems**

Chair: Jessica Schmidt, KHK/GCR21

Discussant: Elena Pulcini, KHK/GCR21

Critique of the System: Notes on the Normative Infrastructure of World Society

Benjamin Herborth, University of Groningen

Wrestling with the Cheating Gene: Towards a Post-Foundational Approach to Ideology Critique

Oliver Marchart, Kunstakademie Düsseldorf

About the Centre

Käte Hamburger Kolleg / Centre for Global Cooperation Research (KHK/GCR21) is an interdisciplinary research institute of the University of Duisburg-Essen. The Centre provides a framework for internationally renowned fellows from different disciplines and world regions to pursue research on the opportunities and challenges of global cooperation amidst political-cultural differences in the world society.

Käte Hamburger Kolleg / Centre for Global Cooperation Research was co-founded by the German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), the Institute for Development and Peace / Institut für Entwicklung und Frieden (INEF), and the Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities (KWI) in Essen.

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