

10. Berliner Colloquium zur Zeitgeschichte

**Two Lefts—Two Rights: On the Connectivity
of Twentieth-Century Ideologies**

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Potsdam), Claudia Weber (Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung)

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Questionnaire

Session 1 Memory, Connectivity and Methodological Challenge

Introduction Claudia Weber

Chair Klaas Voss

* More than two decades after the »Historikerstreit« (German Historians' Controversy), German reunification, and the end of the Cold War—is it worthwhile to attempt a non-ideological re-examination of the great ideologies of the twentieth century?

* Do the biographies of political or other wayfarers between »Left« and »Right«—for instance of Arthur Koestler, Ernst Niekisch, Bodo Uhse, Richard Scheringer, Rudi Dutschke, and many others—lend themselves to a comparison of ideologies that doesn't fall into the revisionist trap?

Or are such attempts to relativize or demonize intrinsic to any comparison of dictatorships or ideologies?

* Are there alternatives? What are the historiographical tools that can go beyond comparative research into totalitarianism and beyond the postulate of a »causal nexus«?

* When places, encounters, wanderings and equiprimordiality come into play, what are the strengths and weaknesses of these much-discussed approaches, for example the history of entanglements, and individual or collective biographies?

Session 2 Places of Encounter

Introduction Martin Schaad

Chair Bettina Greiner

* Where and on what occasions did activists and ideologists of the Right and Left encounter each other?

- * Did these places have a specific importance in historical terms?
- * Did it make a difference if the encounters were in person or were journalistic or otherwise mediated debates?
- * Can we discern serious ideological attempts at mediation or were these conversations and journalistic debates primarily undertaken for tactical reasons?
- * How did the tone, form and content of discussions change in the short period of time when National Socialism and Stalinism were bound by treaty and committed to formal cooperation?
- * What role did the juxtaposition of Left and Right ideologies play in the biographical development of individual wayfarers between the two worlds? How could these be shoe-horned into the newly won convictions?
- * To what degree have shared historical situations (from Weimar through the Spanish Civil War to the Cold War) impacted the respective ideological positions and their interaction? What have the caesuras been in the history of the Left and Right positions? Were there turning points in the biographies of the ideological wayfarers?
- * Are there still places of encounter today in both a real and a figurative sense?

Session 3 Cults, Cultures, Milieus

Introduction Mischa Gabowitsch

Chair Bernd Greiner

- * In what cultural and life-world milieus were Left and Right ideologies, instincts and designs for life debated? How important were youth movements, sub-cultural groups, esoteric circles and ecological communes as collection tanks and places of encounter outside of the political center?
- * In which situations, for whom, and under what circumstances did identification with whatever movement—be it the Wandervogel, ecological or esoteric movements, or male-dominated societies—take priority in one's political self-identification? How did such self-identifications suddenly change?
- * Was the connection between sub-cultural milieus and Left and Right ideologies an instinctive or elective affinity, or a matter of predisposition?
- * What was the role played by cultural milieus in the hibernation that Left or Right ideas underwent in times of crisis, social ostracism, and a loss of political popularity?
- * What is the importance of such milieus as experimental fields for the practical implementation of Right or Left utopias or life designs?

- * Are there national particularities in the link between life reform and ideological hybridization?
- * What is the potential for the ideologization of such movements today?

Session 4 Situations, Themes, Ideas

Introduction Wolfgang Kraushaar

Chair Susan Neiman

- * Are there equiprimordial Left and Right positions on such themes as the nation, parliamentary democracy, economy, anti-Semitism, and violence? What is their historical origin? What does this equiprimordiality consist of?
- * Has equiprimordiality created historical continuities with respect to the differences and similarities of Left and Right positions vis-à-vis the aforementioned themes?
- * What is the present-day relevance of Left and Right positions regarding the nation, parliamentary democracy, economics, anti-Semitism and violence? Do they possess a potential for ideological mobilization beyond political and social fringe groups?

Suggested Reading

Rudi Dutschke, Breschnew, das DDR-»Manifest« und die »deutsche Frage«. In: *dasda avanti*. (1978),6; 14-15

Henning Eichberg, National ist revolutionär!. In: *dasda avanti*. (1978),11; 16-17

François Furet, *Das Ende der Illusion. Der Kommunismus im 20. Jahrhundert*. München: Pieper, 1996; 209-271

Kurt Hiller, Linke Leute von Rechts. In: *Weltbühne*. 2. August 1932; 153-158

»Ich will eine Spur ziehen. Mit aller Kraft und gegen jeden Widerstand.« Götz Kubitschek im Gespräch. In: *Das Gespräch*. 31. Oktober 2009
[<http://www.dasgespraech.de/?p=1673>]

Dieter Kunzelmann, Brief aus Amman. In: *Agit883*. (1969),42; 5

Karl O. Paetel, Umfrage: Sehen Sie gemeinsame politische Möglichkeiten zwischen den sich immer deutlicher herausbildenden antikapitalistischen revolutionären Kräften »ganz rechts« und den Gruppierungen des revolutionären Proletariats? In: Die sozialistische Nation. Blätter der deutschen Revolution. 1(1931); 1-3

Karl Radek, Leo Schlageter, der Wanderer ins Nichts. In: Die Rote Fahne. 23. Juni 1923

Sowjetstern und Hakenkreuz 1938 bis 1941. Dokumente zu den deutsch-sowjetischen Beziehungen. Hg. und eingel. von Kurt Pätzold und Günter Rosenfeld. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1990; Dokumente 139, 164, 179