Forever Young? Marx at 200 (Pittsburgh, 27-30 Sep 18)

Pittsburgh, PA, Sep 27–30, 2018
Deadline: Jan 18, 2018

April Eisman

Forever Young? Marx at 200 (German Studies Association)
Sponsored by the GDR and Socialisms Network for the 42nd Annual Conference of the German Studies Association

In 2018, Germany will celebrate the 200th anniversary of Karl Marx's birth with more than 120 events, including a major exhibition spread across two museums in Trier (Marx's birthplace): "Karl Marx 1818-1883 – Life, Work, Times" will reflect upon the cultural and societal context in which Marx wrote his books through 300 artworks and archival documents from the day. Other events include a new, permanent installation at the Karl Marx House, and a reading by Rolf Becker from the Communist Manifesto at the University of Bremen.

As these examples demonstrate, the interest in Marx remains strong today. While he did not think of himself as a "Marxist" and did not intend to develop a final socialist system, Marx did consider his theoretical reflections a contribution to the abolition of capitalism. Today, too, scholars, activists, political parties and NGOs all over the world build on Marxist ideas in their endeavor to create a changed, better, more reasonable and more humane society.

In order to celebrate Marx' 200th birthday, the GDR and Socialisms Network seeks papers that engage with:

- Marx's legacy in various historical periods – from his lifetime to the 20th century, including the Weimar, Third Reich, and the Cold War eras. How was he presented and interpreted by politicians, theorists, and artists alike? What roles did he serve in their work? Particularly encouraged are papers that engage with cultural representations of Marx, from theatrical and literary works to the visual arts, music, and film.

- Marx's significance today – ten years after the global financial crisis, and two years after the resurgence of populism from Brexit and Trump to the more-recent AfD. After the seeming end of history, Marxist theory has experienced a resurgence in the work of David Harvey, Terry Eagleton, and Slavoj Zizek, among others, gaining a relevance few could have predicted after the collapse of State Socialism in Germany and Europe nearly three decades ago. Particularly encouraged are papers that address the relevance of Marx for radical perspectives of emancipation and liberation in today's cultural and political contexts: What is the role of Marx and Marxism in a world characterized by globalization and neoliberalism? What insight can Marxism offer politics of migration

and in endeavors to counter racism? Can Marx be of significance for communities such as the LGBTQ community or for feminists? Are there Marxist-inspired ecological movements? What can Marx teach us in the digital age of increasing alienation and commodification?

Please submit a 200 to 250-word abstract and a short CV (no more than two pages) to April Eisman (eismana@iastate.edu) and Sonja Klocke (sklocke@wisc.edu) by Thursday, January 18, 2018. We expect to create a sequence of 2-4 panels.

The GDR and SOCIALISMS NETWORK is a vehicle for connecting the diversity of current scholarship on the GDR with a broader academic base that explores the impact and meanings of Socialism in all of its manifestations, from its beginnings in the 19th century to the present. Encouraging both speculative and empirical methodologies, the Network seeks to bring together scholars operating in all fields and time periods for a productive exchange that questions the world in which we live and the political machinations that created it.

Reference:
CFP: Forever Young? Marx at 200 (Pittsburgh, 27-30 Sep 18). In: ArtHist.net, Jan 13, 2018 (accessed Nov 22, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/17074>.