Walter Benjamin in the East (Berlin, 7-9 Jul 22)

Leibniz-Zentrum für Literatur- und Kulturforschung Berlin (ZfL), Jul 7–09, 2022

Caroline Adler

Walter Benjamin in the East – Networks, Conflicts, and Reception

International Conference with keynotes by Sergei Romashko and Oxana Timofeeva, and a roundtable with contributions from Kateryna Mishchenko, Adam Lipszyc, and Christian Ferencz-Flatz.

In late and post-Socialist contexts in Eastern Europe, the works of Walter Benjamin—a historical materialist thinker who travelled to the young Soviet Union in the 1920s—have incited various theoretical transfers, artistic engagements, and political appropriations. Benjamin's 'afterlife' before and after the dissolution of the Eastern Bloc offers the possibility to map out manifold trajectories and networks of reception—ranging from research groups, artistic movements, and conferences, to translations, and publishing houses. Investigating their interactions allows us to decentralize the Eastern European space in going beyond a Moscow-based perspective on 'Benjamin in the East.' Conflicting receptions of Benjamin need to be studied in their specific geo-cultural, historical, and political contexts in order to show affinities and differences not only across languages and cultures. Tensions also occur in a variety of translational processes—transfers between theory, cultural practices, political activism, disciplinary fields, and vice versa.

The conference brings together scholars, translators, artists, activists, and editors from across Europe to collaboratively historicize these transfers across Walter Benjamin's works and their reception. In doing so, we will also reflect on real and imaginary constructions of the East/West divide. These are prevalent not only in European societies but can also be constitutive to specific Eastern/Western academic perspectives on Walter Benjamin as a disciplinary figure that crosses geo-cultural borders and boundaries.

Program

Thursday, 7 Jun 2022

13.30 Sophia Buck (Oxford/ZfL), Caroline Adler (HU Berlin): Introduction

14.00 BENJAMIN'S EAST
Pavel Arsenev (University of Geneva): Benjamin's Reception of the East (and then back again)
Iacopo Chiaravalli (University of Pisa): Benjamin on Soviet Art – A Neglected Interview in Its Proper Context

16.00 VISIT TO THE WALTER BENJAMIN ARCHIVE
Introduction by Ursula Marx (only for speakers)

19.00 KEYNOTE
Sergej A. Romashko (Moscow): Walter Benjamin / Moskau – Zwei Flächen eines Kristalls

Friday, 8 Jul 2022

10.00 RECEPTON UNTIL THE 1990s
Martin Küpper (CAU Kiel): Die Zertrümmerung der Aura als Moment der kommunistischen Revolution – Über Walter Benjamins Einfluss auf den ästhetischen Funktionalismus in der DDR
Konstantin Baehrens (University of Potsdam): Lukács liest Benjamin – Zwischen formaler Distanzierung und kritisch-realistischem Ernstnehmen
Gábor Gángó (University of Erfurt): Walter Benjamin and the Cultural Turn of the Budapest School

13.30
Anna Zsellér, Károly Tóth (Elte Budapest): Kritik und Resignation – Möglichkeiten und Missstände der Benjamin-Rezeption in Ungarn bis 1989
Anna Förster (ZfL): "A rather secretive affair" – Walter Benjamin in 1970s Czechoslovakia

15.30 ARTISTIC RESPONSES UNTIL THE 1990s
Isabel Jacobs (Queen Mary University of London): Unmaking Art – Walter Benjamin's Resurrection in Yugoslavia
Deirdre Madeleine Smith (University of Pittsburgh): The Influence of Benjamin on the New Art Practice of Socialist Yugoslavia

18.30 KEYNOTE
Oxana Timofeeva (St. Petersburg): Translating Benjamin from Theory to Practice – Russian Edition

Saturday, 9 Jul 2022

10.00 ARTISTIC RESPONSES SINCE THE 1990s
Bogdan Popa (Transilvania University of Brașov): From Historical Materialism to Cultural Studies – Walter Benjamin and his Late Revival in Romanian Film Theory
Anna Migliorini (University of Florence): Radu Jude's Movie(s) and Benjamin

13.00 RECEPTION SINCE THE 1990s
Markus Bauer (Berlin): Mimetische Lektüren Europas – Walter Benjamin und Rumänien
Adam Bžoch (Slovak Academy of Sciences): Spuren einer Apparition / auratische Netzwerke – Annäherungsversuche an Benjamin in der Slowakei um und nach der Jahrtausendwende

15.00 ROUNDTABLE | TRANSLATING (IN) THE EAST
Kateryna Mishchenko (Ukraine)
Adam Lipszyc (Poland)
Christian Ferencz-Flatz (Romania)

17.00 CONCLUDING REMARKS

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The conference will be held in English and German. The event is free of charge. Please register in

advance and specify the panels or sections that you want to attend under anmeldung@zfl-berlin.org.

Program and Info: https://www.zfl-berlin.org/veranstaltungen-detail/items/walter-benjamin-in-the-east-networks-conflicts-and-reception.html

Reference:

CONF: Walter Benjamin in the East (Berlin, 7-9 Jul 22). In: ArtHist.net, Jun 14, 2022 (accessed Nov 9, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/36941>.