

CALL FOR PAPERS

CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL PROCESSES AND THE RENEWAL OF CRITICAL THEORY.

MAY 20-21, 2019, HAMBURGER INSTITUT FÜR SOZIALFORSCHUNG

Since its inception with Marx, the manifold traditions of critical theory have put social dynamics and political and economic processes on top of their research agendas. More recently, however, and for reasons not clear yet, philosophical and aesthetic questions have begun to dominate the discourse of critical theory with the consequence that sociological questions of large-scale social change have been pushed into the background. This is certainly a problematic tendency because without proper knowledge of the development of political and economic power normative reasoning is in danger of becoming a rather sterile undertaking. In other words, sociology is still crucial for the development of robust forms of critical theory.

This call aims to bring sociology once again to the core of social theorizing. It is aimed at young scholars who are in the course of writing their PhD or Habilitation, or who have just finished it. The call is an invitation to present a paper at the Conference Contemporary Political Processes and the Renewal of Critical Theory, to be held on May 20-21 2019, in the Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung (HIS). We are going to select up to 3 candidates, who will have their expenses fully paid for in the form of a travel grant. Further collaboration with the project could follow too.

The papers should be related to the institutions and the imaginaries of contemporary political modernity. We are particularly interested in the relation of imaginaries and institutions to current political processes. They should somehow dialogue with the idea of immanent critique, although the idea of critical theory espoused here is what could be called “ecumenical”, that is, it can be approached from different traditions and angles. The question of how the political imaginary of modernity and the institutions that shape the political system and the state more generally, is what interests us, although the relation of political modernity and economic modernity, i.e., capitalism is of great importance too. This should allow for a “diagnosis of the times” in very broad terms, although each paper has its own scope and therefore in this regard must specify its assessment of the present. On the other hand, it is interesting if the papers can position themselves in relation to the history of political modernity within classical Frankfortian critical theory (which may include a systematic discussion how it developed from Horkheimer and Pollock up to Habermas and Honneth).

The call falls within the scope of the Anneliese Maier Forschungspreis (2018-2023) from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (https://www.fu-berlin.de/sites/brazil/ueberuns/news/201801_AMP.html), awarded to José Maurício Domingues, who organizes the conference together with Sérgio Costa (Frei Universität Berlin) and Wolfgang Knöbl (HIS). A publication resulting from the conference is planned to take place. Speakers in the conference include Schirim Amir-Moazami, Hauke Brunckhorst, Sérgio Costa, Paula Diehl, José Maurício Domingues, S. D. Chrostowska, Andreas Kalyvas and Wolfgang Knöbl.

Extended abstracts of the papers to be presented should be sent by email to jmdomingues@iesp.uerj.br until March 13, 2019. The conference will be held in English and the full first draft of the papers should be sent to us two weeks before the conference.