

Socialist Futures

25-26 May 2022 | Emeroteca (Badia Fiesolana)

Organizers: Catherine Lefèvre (MWF HEC), Marius Ostrowski (MWF RSC), Troy Vettese (MWF RSC), Morshed Mannan (MWF RSC), Giacomo Vagni (MWF SPS), Anna Dobrowolska (MWF HEC)

Abstract

If crises in recent years have again cast into doubt the compatibility of capitalism with democracy and environmental stability, what is the socialist alternative? Now, some thirty years after the demise of the Soviet Union, how do contemporary socialist theorists imagine a socialist future? What is socialist democracy? What mechanisms would guide socialist investment, production, and distribution? How would a socialist society overcome the environmental crisis? These are the questions that animate this workshop on the latest developments in socialist theory. Devising new frameworks demands an interdisciplinary approach to incorporate lessons from the historical experience of actually existing socialist societies with the insights available from contemporary ecology, economics, psychology, and computer science. This means recovering a usable past from a wide array of traditions, from planning in Kerala and Bangladesh, theoretical debates among Soviet cybernetics, the practical use of Chile's Cybersyn or French indicative planning, and the crisis of the Cuban 'Special Period'. This workshop is meant to encompass a broad Left from anarchism to state-socialism to Keynesian social democracy. Rather than dismissing utopian theorizing as mere recipes for the 'cook-shops of the future', we recognize that such intellectual work is a necessary part of radical politics.

Day I - Wednesday, 25 May 2022 | 9h -17:10h

9h–11h

Planning I

Rory O'Neill (KCL), 'Post-Capitalist Economic Planning for the Digital Age'
Discussant: Tim Platenkamp

Max Grünberg (Karlsruhe), 'Future Desire and Communal Planning'
Discussant: George Liidakis

Eglė Rindzevičiūtė (Kingston), 'Kondrat'ev's Thought about Economic Planning, Cycles, and Predictability'
Discussant: Jakob Heyer

11h–11h30

Break

11h30–12h50

Intellectual History

Helen Yaffe (Glasgow), 'Che as Minister: The Promotion of Science and Technology for Cuba's Socialist Development'
Discussant: Aaron Benanav

Jacob Blumenfeld (Oldenburg), 'The Failure of Socialization and the Birth of Social Research'
Discussant: Barış Ahmet Yörümez

12h50–14h **Lunch**

14h–15h20 **Planning II**

Jakob Heyer (Jena), 'Basic Problems of a Democratically Planned Economy'

Discussant: Helen Yaffe

Aaron Benanav (Humboldt), 'Socialist Investment, Dynamic Planning, and the Politics of Human Need'

Discussants: Jan Groos and Christoph Sorg

15h20–15h50 **Break**

15h50–17h10 **Zoom Session**

Nick Dyer-Witthford (Western), 'Biocommie Logics'

Discussant: Jacob Blumenfeld

Tim Plaatenkamp (Amsterdam), 'The Constitution of Socialism'

Discussant: Nick Dyer-Witthford

19h30 **Dinner**

Il Vegetariano (Via delle Ruote, 30 r, 50129 Firenze)

Day II - Thursday, 26 May 2022 | 9:30h-12:30h

9h30–10h50 **Planning III**

George Liodakis (Crete), 'Some Lessons for a Communist-Oriented Transformation'

Discussant: Morshed Mannan

Jan Groos (Kiel) and Christoph Sorg (Bochum), 'Creative Construction'

Discussant: Eglé Rindzevičiūtė

10h50–11h10 **Break**

11h10–12h30 **Politics**

Morshed Mannan (EUI), 'Socialism in Bangladesh's Constitutional Order'

Discussant: Rory O'Neill

Barış Ahmet Yörümez (Bratislava), 'De-Leveling Socialism'

Discussant: Max Grünberg

12h30 **Wrap-Up, Lunch, Good-Bye!**