

An Era of Value Change. The Seventies in Europe

Veranstalter: Christina von Hodenberg / FIAMMETTA BALESTRACCI, German Historical Institute, London; Martin Baumeister, German Historical Institute, Rome

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Western historians tend to view the Seventies as a time of significant change in Europe. The decade is widely perceived as the starting point of the present times and as period of discontinuity and significant cultural and social transformations believed to be brought upon by changing values across European societies in response to major political, social and economic crises. The purpose of the conference, 'An Era of Value Change. The Seventies in Europe' was to deepen and revise our understanding of this period by shifting the focus to the epoch itself and adopting a comparative approach. Historians gathered to assess and discuss particularly the roles of individuals, political subjects and other important drivers of change, such as the media and mass tourism, in the process of changing attitudes toward work, family, politics and sexuality throughout Europe.

Following a brief introduction and welcome address by the three co-organisers CHRISTINA VON HODENBERG (London), MARTIN BAUMEISTER (Rome) and FIAMMETTA BALESTRACCI (London) the conference began with three presentations that centred on the dwindling value of the future in the Long Seventies. The first panellists examined the way in which actors thought about the future and tried to make sense of views of the past. EMILY ROBINSON (Sussex) examined political temporalities and nostalgic sentiments in 1970s Britain. Robinson argued that it was the Seventies when Thatcherism and moral conservatism among others finally shifted contemporaries' understanding of 'progressive politics' from a term describing political optimism and innovation to something typically left-wing. TOBIAS BECKER (London) examined the emerging intellectual discourse of nostalgia in the

Seventies. By cross-checking the discourse with events taking place in the 1960s, Becker challenged not only contemporaries' views of the Seventies as an increasingly nostalgic decade, but also the notion of nostalgia itself. He argued that many nostalgic manifestations which contemporaries had identified were, in fact, already present in the 1960s, and that nostalgia was often used to discredit popular re-enactments and other forms of engagement with the past. EKATERINA EMELIANTSERVA KOLLER (Zurich) showed with her study of rural development and narratives about Soviet rural decline since the long 1970s that movements into and from rural areas in North-West Russia encouraged changing values and specific rural-urban lifestyles and practices.

The second panel explored themes of expert knowledge and reconceptualization. PASCAL GERMANN (Bern) examined how a transatlantic movement of social scientists began creating facts, statistics and data to help governments improve the quality of life in Western Europe and the US. Germann concluded that social scientists did not only reflect changing values during this period but also played a key role in fostering the rise of new value orientations. NORBERT GOETZ (Stockholm) provided insights into his research on the history of humanitarianism by comparing British, French and German aid campaigns in Biafra in the Seventies. Goetz challenged research stressing geopolitical turning points, such as 1945 and 1989, as drivers for shifting aid practices, and instead emphasised the role of societal factors to explain the mechanisms of humanitarian acts in the 1970s. According to Goetz, the Seventies witnessed the rise of 'expressive humanitarianism'—a shift from development discourse to emergency discourse in which the utilisation of the media, imagery and post-material values of self-expression played crucial roles. The presentation by MARTIN DEUERLEIN (Tübingen) historicized the transnational discourse of global entanglements and change in the United States and Western Europe in the 1970s by situating it in a longer perspective. By arguing that contemporaries' views of the changing role of the nation-state shifted significantly from the mid-1960s, Deuerlein

showed that later debates about globalisation in the 1990s were not new and emphasised how a historical perspective might foster a better understanding of present politics.

The third panel explored the rise of new politics and democratisation in the Seventies. In his presentation on the Dutch political climate in the 1970s, JOHAN VAN MERRIENBOMER (Nijmegen) argued that the Netherlands witnessed a materialistic turn to the right and the birth of 'Average Joe' ('Jan Modaal' in Dutch) as the result of massive public expenditure and increasingly burdensome social security contributions in the second half of the decade. The presentation by CORRADO TORNIMBENI (Bologna) explored the relationship between the Italian solidarity network and the independence movement in Mozambique. Tornimbeni argued that Italian activists played a major part in helping Mozambique's anti-colonial fight for independence.

PATRICIA HERTEL (Basel) emphasised the relationship between mass tourism, social behaviour and value change with the examples of West Germany, Portugal and Spain. According to Hertel, individual behaviour and changing values towards consumerism, pleasure and equality of life became political. Mass tourism provided therefore 'new forms of politics and simultaneous processes of politicisation.' The rise of new social movements and a global Europe lay at the heart of the fourth panel. INBAL OFER (Tel Aviv) examined Spain's transition to democracy through the lens of urban activism. Ofer argued that the Spanish Citizens' Movement played a crucial role in this process by building relationships with professionals and widening access to professional and administrative knowledge. ISABEL RICHTER (Berkeley) emphasised in her presentation on youth cultures and new religiosities in the long 1970s the 'entangled history' behind the growing popularity of meditation in Western popular culture. She argued that Indian gurus, transcultural imports and increasing numbers of travellers to India all played a role in changing religious landscapes in West Germany. For Richter, the 1970s marked a clear era of value change, as 'booming new spiritual practices' offered West Germans, espe-

cially teenagers and young adults, 'new forms of self-exploration beyond Western self and beyond classical therapeutical approaches.'

The fifth panel examined the themes of labour and leisure time in the Seventies. BERNHARD DIETZ (Mainz) explored the questions of how West German business leaders reacted to the anti-capitalist climate following 1968 and whether it encouraged the development of a new concept of leadership. Dietz concluded that the media's and students' mounting anti-capitalist criticism, political reform pressures, as well as generational conflicts within the business world all forced West German managers to develop flatter hierarchies and adopt a new concept of leadership that centred on self-actualisation and co-operation. FLORIAN SCHUI's presentation (St. Gallen) centred on the relationship between work and leisure time. According to Schui, the 1970s marked the starting point of a trend towards a rising inequality of leisure in advanced European countries and the United States. The main drivers of this change were, according to Schui, an increasing inequality of income and a combination of economic, institutional and cultural factors such as stagnating wages, inflation, increasing female labour, individuals' decisions to work longer hours for additional income. CHRISTOPHER NEUMAIER (Hamburg / Potsdam) compared the difficulties that East and West German women faced in reconciling work with family-life in the 1970s. Neumaier found that most women in both states considered their roles as mothers their main purpose in life, and argued that part-time work provided a way for them to make family and work compatible which in turn strengthened traditional gender roles and family values.

The sixth panel was dedicated to changing values and ideas of family. By adopting a grassroots perspective, LISA DITTRICH (Munich) was able to show changes in East German marriage culture which, she argued, formed already in the late 1950s. According to Dittrich, the 1970s witnessed a trend toward individualisation and 'self-realization in the other, in love and in sexuality' on the individual level, and the state's and public's support of partnership as new marriage model

to provide ways of self-realization. ISABEL HEINEMANN (Münster) compared divorce reform debates in West Germany and the United States in the 1970s. Heinemann argued that attitudes towards divorce reform in both countries did not change homogeneously and linearly but, influenced by their respective national and regional differences, were subject to conflicting processes of negotiation. Moreover, Heinemann's research revealed the gendered nature of these debates, as feminists' efforts to expand women's rights conflicted with many men's wishes to maintain their particular rights in divorce proceedings. Finally, Heinemann stressed that the respective divorce reforms largely ignored the rights and needs of working and non-white women. BARBARA KLICH-KLUCZEWSKA (Kraków) examined growing tensions between the Polish dictatorship's social and gender order policies and the expert discourse around decreasing birth rates, birth control and ideas of family structures. She argued that while the 'experts' turn brought about a dramatic change in ideas about divorce, counselling, single motherhood and domestic violence, they did not weaken the model of the 'Polish modern family' which ultimately contributed to ineffective social policies in the following decade.

The final panel discussed changing attitudes towards gender and sexuality. JAN-HENRIK FRIEDRICH (Hildesheim) showed how changing moral values such as sexual self-determination shaped the West German discourse on paedophilia in the early Seventies, but he also stressed the role of power relations and the 'empirical turn' in the social sciences in facilitating pro-paedophile arguments in contemporary debates. ROSEANNA WEBSTER (Cambridge) examined the formation of reproductive rights activism in Spanish barrios in the 1970s. She argued that the rise of a local movement was triggered by the interactions between various groups who held different ideas about sex and body issues. ALINE MALDEN (Saarbrücken) compared juvenile sexuality, gender roles and their embodiment in German, French and British teenage magazines in the 1960s and 70s. Stressing youth magazines' ambivalent and paradoxical sex education coverage,

MALDEN argued that these magazines became 'European agents of standardisation and normalisation,' as they tried to mediate between conservative and progressive norms and values. KRISTOFF KERL (Cologne) provided insights into his research on countercultural politics of ecstasy in West Germany by showing how counterculturists understood ecstasy as a tool for self-transformation and societal change.

In his key note address, JAMES MARK (Exeter) drew attention to the still much-neglected relevance of the 1970s in Eastern European history. By examining how political elites thought about the positioning of their respective anti-capitalist countries in the world, Mark sought to re-establish the decade and situate 1970s Eastern Europe in the broader global context. Contrary to the common understanding that 1989 marked the 'entry point into the truly global,' Mark argued that Eastern Europe became globally engaged long before. According to Mark, global pressures, such as issues of economic independence and crises of national sovereignty in the 1970s, forced Eastern European countries to rethink management concepts, Westernisation, ideas of rights and Europe, and the individualisation of socialist societies.

The conference ended with a roundtable discussion in which the discussants Fiammetta Balestracci, Gerd-Rainer Horn (Paris), Martin Baumeister and Claudia Kraft discussed their observations and concluding remarks. The aim of the conference was to zoom in on the Seventies from a comparative perspective in order to understand whether, and if so to what extent, this decade presented an era of value of change.

First, many of the panellists' findings alluded to the problem of periodisation. Baumeister stressed therefore the difficulty of treating the 1970s in a vacuum and pointed to the three ways to periodise the decade: as a period on its own, as a continuation of the long 1960s, and as the beginning of the present times.

Second, almost all presentations understood the 1970s as a period of value change both from above and below. The 1970s marked the start of a time when experts and contemporaries first began to conceptualise

shifts as value change and actively developed and discussed concepts of value. At the same time, the decade also witnessed the emergence of new subjectivities and a 'new form of self-expressiveness,' as individual actors became 'experts of themselves' (Kraft).

Third, the conference highlighted the role of feminism and gender norms as crucial political drivers and fields of negotiation in this decade. Fourth, many papers showed that the 1970s were also a period of transnational encounters and one in which the global had a significant impact on the national, political, economic, social, cultural, local, regional and individual level.

Fourth, many panellists portrayed the period as one that was marked by tension of contradictory developments, progressive movements and the backlash of conservative actions. According to Horn, the forces in the 70s were a result of 'the energies liberated in the 1960s (which) came to full fruition in the 1970s.' However, whether value change was truly unique to the 1970s remained, in Horn's eyes, dubious. To him, every decade underwent value changes, just in different aspects. Balestracci, concluding, suggested to 'interpret this turn as a general period of criticism on western rationalism and on the effects of the affluent society.' According to Balestracci, 'society was seeking a new truth following individual experimentation.' She therefore understood value change in the 70s as an era marked by 'post-rationalist values and the individualization of behaviour.'

Conference Overview:

Panel I: The Dwindling Value of the Future in the Long Seventies

Chair: Ulf Brunnbauer (Regensburg)

Emily Robinson (Sussex): Nostalgia for the Progressive Future: Political Temporalities in 1970s Britain

Tobias Becker (London): Past Forward: The Value of Yesterday

Ekaterina Emeliantseva Koller (Zurich): Changes, Discourse, Practices in the Long Seventies: „Decline“ Narratives and Rural Development in the Late Soviet Union

Panel II: Expert Knowledge and the World's

Reconceptualization

Chair: Claudia Kraft (Vienna)

Pascal Germann (Bern): Toward the Quality of Life: The Social Indicators Movement and New Value Orientations in the 1970s

Norbert Goetz (Stockholm): Toward Expressive Humanitarianism: Biafra and the Emergencies of the 1970s

Martin Deuerlein (Tübingen): The Changing Value of the Nation State: Social Sciences and Global Interdependence in the 1970s

Panel III: New Politics and Democratization

Chair: Gerd-Rainer Horn (Paris)

Johan van Merriënboer (Nijmegen): The Birth of Average Joe in the Progressive 1970s and its Impact on Dutch Politics and Culture

Corrado Tornimbeni (Bologna): Re-Shaping the Cold War Divide at Grassroots Level: The Italian Political System and the Solidarity Network for the Anti-Colonial Struggle in Mozambique (1962–1975)

Patricia Hertel (Basel): Holidays in a Dictatorship: Discussing Values in European Tourism to Spain, Portugal and Greece during the 1960s and 1970s

Panel IV: New Social Movements and Global Europe

Chair: Detlef Siegfried (Copenhagen)

Inbal Ofer (Tel Aviv): „Autogestión“ and the Spanish Citizen's Movement: An Initiative for a Different Kind of Democracy

Isabel Richter (Berkeley): Enlightenment as Indian Export Hit? Youth Cultures and New Religiosities in the Long Seventies

Panel V: Rethinking Work

Chair: Christina von Hodenberg (London)

Bernhard Dietz (Mainz): The Rise of the Self-Actualisation Man: Value Change in West Germany's Capitalist Culture in the Age of Protest

Florian Schui (St. Gallen): Working Hard for the Money: Work and Leisure in the 1970s

Christopher Neumaier (Potsdam): Women's Choices Between Family and Work in East and West Germany, 1960s to 1980s

Panel VI: Changing Families

Chair: Christopher Neumaier (Potsdam)

Lisa Dittrich (Munich): Historicizing Partnership and Individualization: A Grassroots Perspective on Value Change in Marriage in the GDR

Isabel Heinemann (Münster): Desperate Housewives, Determined Feminists, Triumphant Men? Divorce Reform and Transnational Value Change in Europe during the 1970s

Barbara Klich-Kluczevska (Krakow): The Experts' Turn: The Sociopolitical Crisis and the Polish Family of the Seventies

Keynote Address

Chair: Martin Baumeister (Rome)

James Mark (Exeter): Lost between 1968 and 1989? Re-establishing the 1970s in Histories of Eastern Europe

Panel VII: Sexual Revolution?

Chair: Fiammetta Balestracci (London)

Jan-Henrik Friedrichs (Hildesheim): Sexual Liberation for Paedophiles? Child Sexuality, Paedophilia and Social Science in West Germany, 1967-1985

Roseanna Webster (Cambridge): The Politics of Sexuality and Reproduction in Anti-Francoist Activism

Aline Maldener (Saarbrücken): Juvenile Sexuality, Gender Roles and the Embodiment in European Youth Magazines of the 1960s & 1970s

Kristoff Kerl (Cologne): Ecstatic Bodies and Social Change: Sexuality and Psychedelic Drugs in West Germany during the 1970s

Concluding Roundtable

Chair: Martin Baumeister (Rome)

Discussants: Fiammetta Balestracci (London) / Gerd-Rainer Horn (Paris) / Claudia Kraft (Vienna)

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