

WOLFGANG BEUTIN

Kurt Hiller's Early Expressionism

Literary Beginnings and the »New Club« (1909-1913)

Kurt Hiller (1885-1972) was the – nearly forgotten – cofounder and theoretician of early expressionism and the »Berliner Moderne«, which contributed to five currents of European modern art: naturalism, neo-romanticism (aestheticism, fin de siècle, decadence, symbolism, impressionism, art nouveau), expressionism (also early expressionism), proletarian revolutionary art and new sobriety. Kurt Hiller's volume is, to a large extent, comprised of previously hardly accessible glosses, essays, speeches, aphorisms, critiques and pamphlets. There exists neither a »complete works« nor a representative »selected works« of Hiller's. Hiller was arrested in 1933 and badly tormented in several concentration camps. In 1934, he was able to flee into exile, first to Prague then later to London. He returned to Germany in 1955 and lived in Hamburg until his death.

MEINHARD CREYDT

Intellectual and Social Work – Professional Activities as a Subject of Critical Reflection

Criticism of the substance of professional activities (in the health and educational systems, the sciences and in social work) is currently a very neglected focus of left-wing attention. It was different in West Germany of the 1970^s. This article recalls to mind the extent of the debate at the time, exposes some of the issues and authors, localizes work-related expectations within the capitalist contradictions and pursues the question of why criticism of the substance of professional activities has become so mute. Criticism of the professions pertaining to the whole of society lost significance in the 1980^s. How participants will be able to work in a diligent and efficient manner, conscious of the prerequisites and impact, is of primary concern to every socialist perspective.

GARNET HELEN BRÄUNIG

Constrained and Social Labor – A Contradiction In Itself?

Social work is commonly accepted as a human rights profession, even though it is characterized by its three-fold mandate – to its clients, its sponsors and to its professional standards. Can social work sufficiently fulfill all these demands or does it remain confined within the constraints imposed by society? Vis à vis the contradictions in the society, does it activate or neutralize the clients' protest potential? This essay handles the biggest problem confronting social work – the work in the context of constraints.

RICHARD SORG

Social Conditions and Social Policy in Germany

This text introduces the book »Social Policy and Social Conditions in Germany«, by Gerhard Bäcker, Gerhard Naegele, Reinhard Bispinck, Klaus

Hofemann and Jennifer Neubauer, that was republished in 2008, in a fundamentally revised and extended fourth edition. This standard reference work for social policy contains analyses and presentations to all aspects of social policy, from the social situation to social services in Germany. With its exceptional quality and high degree of practical value, its numerous informative summaries and data, this work could qualify as an infrastructure of knowledge for the entire social sector.

HEERKE HUMMEL

Commodity Value, Where Did It Go?

For a theoretical reconstruction of the laws of economic movement in contemporary capitalist society, the focus is on Karl Marx' theory of value and the development of the form of value. Today one has to speak of a new – the finance – form of value. The value of the commodity or product is no longer represented in its utility value of the common monetary commodity, gold, but rather in a finance certificate. Money, as value, has been dissolved into the general promise of supply of goods and services, its sociability has been completed. Inside the womb of the old, the new has developed, requiring simply an adaptation of its superstructure to the material economic basis.

STEFAN MÜLLER

Reflections on Dialectics

Arguments for a Revival of the Discussion

Dialectics has been discussed in philosophy for nearly 2,500 years and is still a very controversial topic. How can contradictory elements be considered together, how can they be brought into harmony with one another when they are contradictory? That is the main problem with any dialectical theory. Hegel's observations on dialectics are presented here along with the positions of his critics. Adorno demonstrates in his »Ideology-Critic« the simultaneity of »true« and »false« elements in ideology, as well as the tireless insistence that an objective truth exists.

JÜRGEN MEIER

Stalinism's Long Shadow

It is imperative to clear up the source from which Stalin's shadow is cast, if the current capitalist dismantlement of the social system is to be confronted with a broad front and if the various groups of wage workers are to be united around the objective of a socialist society. »Socialism in a single country« was the core from which Stalinism and its violent implementation developed. Under Stalin, Russia became a great industrial power. A well fortified Russian state monopolism developed. Socialism was never achieved in Russia. It remained a state monopolism, with all of its alienation and crimes.