

The Ninth Annual HM Conference will take place in Central London from 8-11 November 2012

Weighs Like a Nightmare

Historical Materialism Ninth Annual Conference

Has Marx been reanimated once again? From mainstream media to academia, this question hangs in the air. The old ghosts of revolution appear to be shaking off their shackles and getting agitated. What is this spirit? Who are the militants haunting this ramshackle capitalism? Are these new spectres – stalking the streets of Syria, Tunisia and Egypt, Athens, Spain and Wall Street and beyond – or direct descendants of socialist and communist ones? How does the past haunt the present? How might the present haunt the future?

As new conflicts and struggles emerge, the old questions refuse to go away: What type of organisation is needed to sharpen the conflicts, if any? Who are the agents of history and change? Is the scope of political action national or international? What is the political value of alliances and fronts? Does history cunningly work a progressive path through and around the contingencies of struggle? Are the same mistakes to be made, the same failures repeated?

The ninth HM annual conference focuses on the returns and the persistence of political forms and theoretical problems, on the uses and abuses of the history of Marxism in this turbulent present and on the ways and forms in which an inheritance of various Marxist traditions can help us to organise and to act in contemporary struggles.

We invite proposals for presentations or panels (with two or three suggested participants) on topics such as: the echoes of the past in the present; learning or not learning from the past; the reanimation of revolution; history as farce, history as tragedy; historiography and Marxism; cycles; circulation; anti-memory as a political stance; new histories of capital and the labour movement; Marxism and 'deep history'; theory as history; the role of archival sources in history and the place of theory; rhythms of historical development, combined, uneven or otherwise; concepts of pre-capitalism; the question of successive modes of production; historical or other materialisms; the return of radical politics in Eastern Europe and elsewhere; post-communism; the endless afterlives of 'Classical' Marxists and 'Western' Marxist theorists and others who refuse to go away; the reruns of crisis; the role of memory and the revisioning of history; forgotten figures suddenly blasted into contemporary relevance; perma-war; imperial ghosts and their legacies, racism's haunting returns; old and new world orders; old and new cultures; avant-gardes and rearguards; the re-reading of classic texts; the question of Marxism's relation to tradition; ideas of inheritance and 'selective tradition'; recovery; recuperation; periodisation; continuities and discontinuities; narratives of new and old beginnings (of history, of culture, of the Left, of Marxism).

HM will also consider proposals on themes and topics of interest to critical Marxist theory not directly linked to the call for papers (we particularly welcome contributions on non-Western Marxism, history and politics, and on empirical inquiries employing Marxist methods and on Marxism and gender). While Historical Materialism is happy to receive proposals for panels, the editorial board reserves the right to change the composition of panels or to reject individual papers from panel proposals.

Please submit a title and abstract of between 200 and 300 words (or a fully worked through panel proposal) by registering at <http://www.historicalmaterialism.org/conferences> BEFORE 26 April 2012

Deadline for registration of abstracts: 26 April 2012

<http://www.historicalmaterialism.org/conferences/annual9/submit>

Preference will be given to subscribers to the journal and participants are expected to be present during the whole of the event – no tailor-made timetabling for individuals will be possible, nor will cameo-appearances be tolerated.