



KULTURSYMPOSIUM WEIMAR 2016

THE SHARING GAME

1-3 JUNE 2016

Contents

- Press release KULTURSYMPOSIUM WEIMAR
- The Sharing Game: Curatorial statement
- Information about the programme app
- Map of Weimar: All venues
- Basic information

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PRESS RELEASE

THE KULTURSYMPOSIUM WEIMAR OPENS ON 1 JUNE



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Next Wednesday at 3 pm, the first KULTURSYMPOSIUM WEIMAR will open with a keynote address by the Czech economist Tomáš Sedláček on the theme of The Sharing Game. Following his talk, Sedláček will discuss the significance of sharing and exchange for society with the Israeli sociologist Eva Illouz, the anthropologist Hans Peter Hahn and the president of the Goethe-Institut Klaus-Dieter Lehmann. In the evening of the opening day, the American economist and bestselling author Jeremy Rifkin will expand on the theme with a key lecture about the importance of sharing in a third industrial revolution. Johannes Ebert, the secretary-general of the Goethe-Institut, will introduce Rifkin. Between 1 and 3 June 2016, the Goethe-Institut is gathering top-notch international guests from industry, the arts and politics in Germany for the first time to discuss global societal issues.

May 25th, 2016

In seventy events held over three days in Weimar, more than three hundred participants from the arts, business, academics and politics will discuss ideas and stimuli related to the theme of sharing and exchange. The discussions are supplemented by artistic interventions. Perspectives from different cultures were explored during a number of events prior to the symposium by Goethe-Institutes abroad.

In addition to lectures and panel discussions, participants can continue exploring the themes using participative events such as the cooperative World Café workshop method or fish bowls. Other varieties of the theme can also be experienced and surveyed in an exhibition as well as many performances, a smart phone game and the Long Night of Sharing and Exchange.

Participants who have confirmed their attendance include Jean-Pierre Bekolo, Christophe Boesch, Yochai Benkler, Rajeev Bhargava, Christina von Braun, Ute Frevert, Newell Harry, Ágnes Heller, Ivars Ijabs, Wang Liping, Neil MacGregor, Evgeny Morozov, Antonio Negri, Hermann Parzinger, Hartmut Rosa, Martin Schick, Trebor Scholz, Ben Vickers and Joseph Vogl.

The Kultursymposium Weimar

The KULTURSYMPOSIUM WEIMAR takes up social trends and sheds light on them in a cultural, economic and political context. It emphasizes the significance of culture as a societal link and bearer of shared values. The encounters between the approximately three hundred participants in Weimar will serve an exchange of perspectives between European and other cultures as well as artistic and academic access to the subject matter. The Goethe-Institut thereby underscores the great importance of the cultural city of Weimar. An advisory board has been set up for the Kultursymposium consisting of Aleida Assmann, Bolat Atabayev, Christina von Braun, Ágnes Heller, Neil MacGregor, Petros Markaris and Robert Wilson.

You can download the press kit for the KULTURSYMPOSIUM WEIMAR 2016 here: www.goethe.de/pressemappe

The KULTURSYMPOSIUM WEIMAR is open to anyone interested. There are still a few tickets available. You can purchase tickets and get more details about the programme at www.goethe.de/kultursymposium

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The KULTURSYMPOSIUM WEIMAR is a biannual series of events by the Goethe-Institut during which global social issues will be discussed by experts, intellectuals and artists from the network of the Goethe-Institut worldwide. The first KULTURSYMPOSIUM WEIMAR, entitled "The Sharing Game", is made possible with kind support from Merck, Siemens and Volkswagen. Media partners are 3Sat, brand eins, Deutschlandfunk and Le Monde diplomatique.



KULTURSYMPOSIUM WEIMAR 2016 THE SHARING GAME

CURATORIAL STATEMENT

Why do humans exchange or share? They can't help it. And they don't want to either: **being human is manifested in sharing and exchanging**. Not merely to trade goods for reciprocal benefits, but foremost to establish, maintain and intensify relationships with others. What becomes apparent in emergencies or among refugees applies to us all: exchanging and sharing are existential necessities and anthropological constants, communicative and social gestures intended to give life meaning. The manner in which it is done, in turn, is culturally and often religiously coded and highly varied. In the respective specific act of exchanging and sharing we recognize the essence of different cultural paradigms. The search for dialogical meaning is concealed behind the pursuit of profit and the material motives of sharing and exchange. Economic theories must therefore take the symbolic character of exchange processes into account. Economic acts are part of culture. They must be understood as a cultural phenomenon. This is a core thesis of the Kultursymposium that Tomáš Sedláček will present in his keynote opening address.

The KULTURSYMPOSIUM WEIMAR 2016 will investigate what social and cultural ideas and developments are behind various manifestations of exchanging and sharing. Does the increase in sharing and exchange testify to **social rethinking** or is it a passing **fad**? What economic and social consequences come about when access to products, services and ideas is more important than their ownership? What forms of exchange and sharing have developed in **other cultures**? What do sharing and exchange mean for the relations between cultures and countries, for international cultural dialogue?

Sharing and exchange are economic and anthropological phenomena, *phénomène social total* (Marcel Mauss), which run through every aspect of life in society. While exchanging is usually interpreted as a neutral phenomenon, the notion of sharing has always been associated with utopias and today in particular with tangible aspirations for **sustainable forms of economics**, a **fairer distribution of goods** and **new international networks**. The Sharing Economy is accompanied not only by positive expectations, but also by fears of the ruination of entire industries, of the dissolution of social standards or an increasing commercialization of our lives.

Practices of sharing and exchange are presently all the rage. Theoretical reflexions of these phenomena also fascinate not just stakeholders, but large parts of the public in many cultures. Apparently, practices of sharing play just as great a role in **impoverished, pre-modern countries** as in **prosperous, late modern societies** in which possession of things is no longer a primarily desirable



criterion of distinction. Collaboration, participation, cohesion and trust are values that are presently experiencing an unforeseen upsurge and possibly are at the forefront before and after a modern age aligned to growth, progress and consumption.

In parallel **programme strands** the Kultursymposium will explore various aspects of sharing and exchange. The central questions addressed will include: With what different meanings do we speak of “sharing” things? What cultural values are associated with the practice of sharing and exchange? What new networks are generated by collaborative forms of economics? What role does trust play in the Sharing Economy? Are food and car sharing, couch surfing, swap parties and such cultural, social or economic phenomena – or are they all of these things at once?

EXCHANGE AND SHARING: CULTURAL MEANINGS, ANTHROPOLOGY, HISTORY OF IDEAS

One of the thematic strands will grapple with cultural meanings of sharing and exchange, with its anthropology and the historical development of ideas. The narrowest meaning of “sharing” is that of division, as illustrated, for example, by the etymological relationship between the words “share” and “shear.” Even the notion of giving, frequently associated with sharing, is already an extended meaning that goes even further in the case of “shared spaces” or even “shared values.” There is nevertheless a reason why we frequently make use of the image of division. But a thing that is divided is no longer whole. Exchanging seems less complex; giving one thing in return for another. When we look more closely, however, the matter is far more complex for the stakeholders usually have cultural, ideological, religious or emotional motives, and magical, irrational thought has always dominated economic actions, for example the belief that the swapped item still contains part of the soul of its previous owner. At the least, ties are created between the exchangers.

THE EXCHANGE: BASIC FIGURE OF COMMUNICATION, SOCIETY AND RELIGION

A second thematic strand deals with these ties: exchanging as a basic figure of communication, society and religion. Since Aristoteles, or at least since the 18th century, exchange has been a universal figure on which almost everything is based: the economy, law, magic, religions, society, chemistry and physics, metabolism and traffic. Exchanging is the component of society; it is a total social phenomenon. All forms of human co-existence are based on exchanges. Until recently, all communication and media theories were also based on the principle of exchange. Even in non-human communities, among primates, for instance, we observe exchange practices. What, therefore, does exchanging mean



for culture and society? Does the marketplace create social welfare as such or does it require a cultural, ethical foundation in order to be able to function?

UTOPIA: THE SHARING ECONOMY

This question leads us to the third thematic strand, which deals with sharing as a utopia, for instance the Sharing Economy and the Commons. The idea of global public goods, common goods, commonly used property is hugely popular at the moment: Creative commons platforms from Latin America, collective savings communities in West Africa and New York or banks in Belgium and Scandinavia trading in common time, not money. While complaints are heard in the discourse in Germany about the undermining of legal standards and the monopolistic tendencies of the Sharing Economy, cooperative alternatives have become established in New Zealand and on the eastern seaboard of the United States. What social values and what motivations are behind the often-postulated sharing trend? What role do technological and media transformation play? To what extent can sharing mean gaining freedom?

THE DOCTRINE OF SHARING AND EXCHANGE

When sharing, we ask in another thematic strand on sharing and exchange, is a doctrine, acquired, hence not an anthropological constant, but an ontogenetic aspect of civilisation, how much (culturally specific) pressure is applied to attain the educational goal? Is this the origin of discontent within a culture? Because we would rather have, or are coerced to give? Because the noble demand to share all with our neighbours or even with strangers can never be truly honoured? Why has sharing – quite unlike exchanging – always had positive and never neutral associations? Is this really the case everywhere in the world or only within our cultural sphere and does this perhaps have something to do with the influence of Christianity or Islam on our culture, which demands that we be willing to share? In other words, is it less pronounced in other cultures? And what happens when sharing or closeness to others is forced on us? What attitude towards sharing do people have in post-socialist states in which they were forced to share ownership as well as their privacy with others for decades?

SHARING AND EXCHANGE IN NETWORKS OF CULTURAL EXCHANGE

Finally, our last thematic strand will examine the question of how we share and exchange in networks of cultural exchange. What is cultural exchange, what exactly are we exchanging? Does this exchange create trust or does it not rather make trust its prerequisite in order to take place? What can this exchange result in? Against the background of displacement, migration and rising economic disparities, we must more urgently ask, “What are we willing to share?” How does the principle of unrequited exchange, sharing with strangers, hospitality, fit into an age of accelerated migration? Are there cross-cultural goods that are



commonly shared? Values, cultural assets, a cultural world heritage, a shared heritage? And when forced digitalization exhibits the tendency to circumvent and supersede intermediaries (bank branches, bookshops, post offices, travel agencies and the recording industry), what effect does this have on mediator institutions, national cultural institutes such as the British Council or the Goethe-Institut?

Dr Andreas Ströhl, director KULTURSYMPOSIUM WEIMAR

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MOBILE APP

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APP KWSE 16 - DE
Or: www.goethe.de/kultursymposium/app



APP KWSE 16 - EN
Or: www.goethe.de/kultursymposium/app-en

KSWE16 - The App

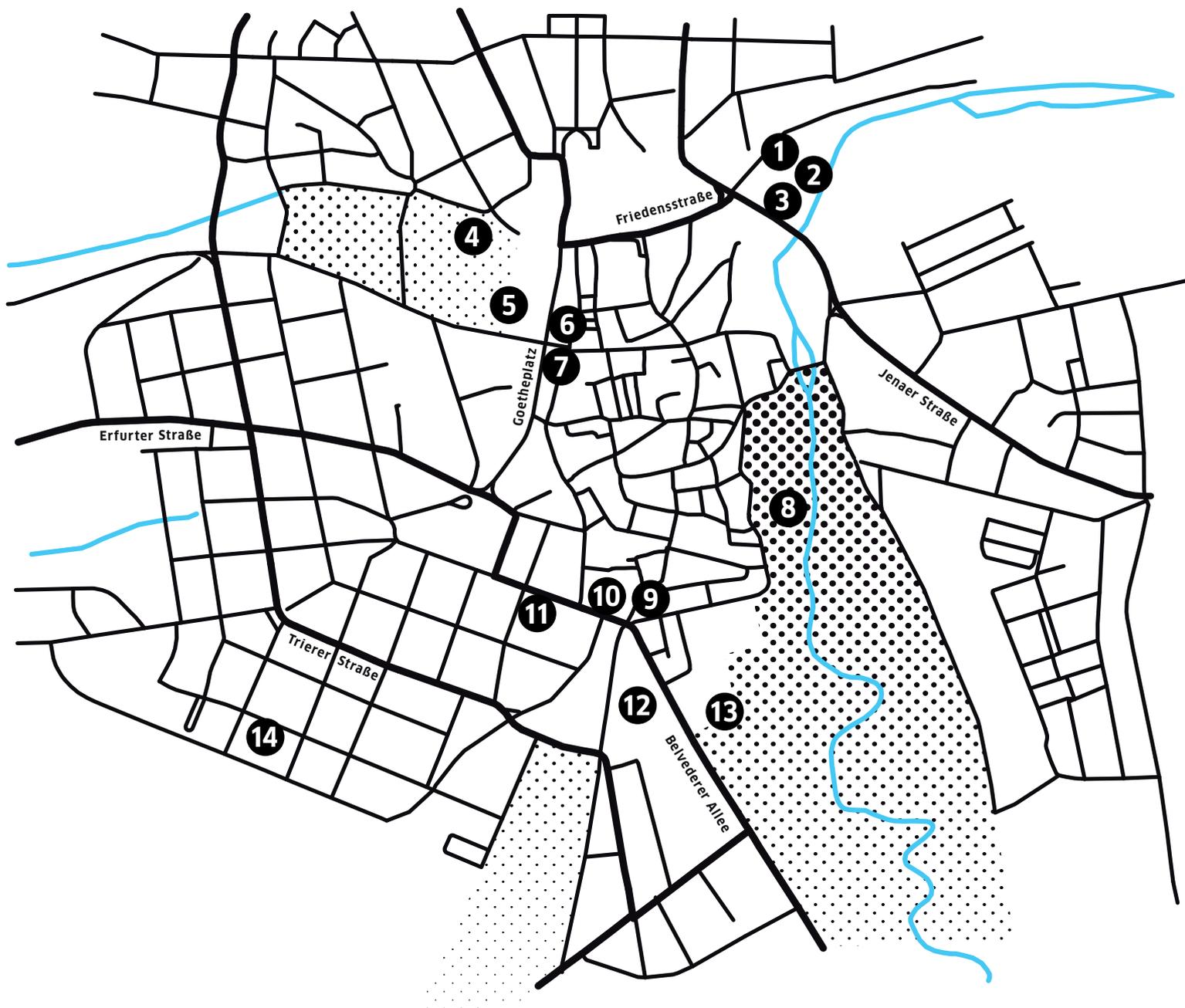
The app for the KULTURSYMPOSIUM WEIMAR 2016 offers a useful overview of the entire programme. Symposium participants can additionally put together their own personal programme by selecting Favourites.

The web app works offline and can be saved on the home screen as an app icon.

Note: The app is not available in private mode in your browser. Private mode must be switched off in your browser's user settings.

SPIELSTÄTTEN IN WEIMAR

KULTUR SYM
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IMA — R 2016



1 E-Werk
Am Kirschberg 4

2 Tipis
Am Kirschberg 4

3 Lichthaus Kino
Am Kirschberg 4

4 Galerie Eigenheim
Gärtnerhaus im Weimarahallenpark

5 Neue Weimarahalle
Unesco-Platz 1

6 Kunsthalle Harry Graf Kessler
Goetheplatz 9B

7 Kasseturm
Goetheplatz 10

8 Reithaus
Park an der Ilm

9 Goethe-Nationalmuseum
Frauenplan 1

10 Bauhaus-Universität Audimax
Steubenstraße 6-8

11 Notenbank
Steubenstraße 15

12 Bauhaus-Universität Oberlichtsaal
Geschwister-Scholl-Straße 8

13 Parkhöhle
Park an der Ilm

14 Villa Dürckheim
Cranachstraße 47



KULTURSYMPOSIUM WEIMAR 2016 THE SHARING GAME

BASIC INFORMATION

KULTURSYMPOSIUM WEIMAR

The KULTURSYMPOSIUM WEIMAR is a biannual series of events by the Goethe-Institut during which global social issues will be discussed by experts, intellectuals and artists from the network of the Goethe-Instituts worldwide. The first KULTURSYMPOSIUM WEIMAR is entitled "The Sharing Game" and is made possible with kind support from Merck, Siemens and Volkswagen. The media partners are 3sat, brand eins and Le Monde diplomatique.

Dates

1 - 3 June 2016 (Wednesday to Friday)

Participants

More than 300 participants from 45 countries

Events

About 75 events, 14 venues (E-Werk, Lichthaus Kino, Tipis im Festivalzentrum, Neue Weimarhalle, Galerie Eigenheim, Kasseturm, Kunsthalle Graf Kessler, Reithaus, Goethe-Nationalmuseum, Notenbank, Bauhaus-Universität Audimax, Bauhaus-Universität Oberlichtsaal, Parkhöhle, Villa Dürckheim)

KULTURSYMPOSIUM WEIMAR project team

Dr Andreas Ströhl (director), Dr Nikolai Blaumer, Elisabeth Tobisch, Eva Lämmerhirt, Marie Golenia

Festival centre

E-Werk and Lichthaus Kino, Am Kirschberg 4, 99423 Weimar
The festival centre is open daily from 9:00 am until 23:00 pm.

Press support at the festival centre

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More information

www.goethe.de/kultursymposium

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