

Summary

The book focuses on Critical theory in the Czech language environment. The authors deal with Critical theory especially over the past nearly quarter of a century since the revolutionary events of 1989. Each of them presents his or her area of specialization within Critical theory by centring on a specific thematic area. The authors of most chapters combine their interpretation with contemporary paradigms of social recognition and global interactions.

This is closely related to the content of the individual chapters of the book which dwell on problematic transnational and global changes that have become a major challenge and are the root of much discussion in Critical theory, touching on numerous thematic areas: not only on the concept of global injustice, political ecology, intercultural and transcultural dialogue, post-colonialism and feminism but also on the concepts of historical development, community, civil society, democracy, constitutionalism and media studies. There are also interesting chapters on subjects examined especially by authors of earlier Critical theory: instrumental reason, the relationship between science and utopia, and the surrealist thought.

The book is inter- and trans-disciplinary in the way it tackles the main thematic areas of contemporary Critical theory in the Czech context and shows how they are mutually and comprehensively interconnected. Each chapter is divided into three subchapters. The first subchapter interprets the Czech reception of foreign Critical theory, including relevant translations of

works into Czech. The second subchapter presents the original analyses of Czech authors which may cover new ideas or develop ideas worked out by foreign Critical theorists. The third subchapter concentrates on prospects for the future, i.e. what the authors think would deserve further elaboration – their own ideas about the future direction of social research.

The scope of the book covers the work of several generations of Czech Critical theorists. Members of the second generation, i.e. those born more than eighty years ago, paved the way for the development of Critical theory in the Czech Republic. In this book, readers will find contributions from the third generation, i.e. theorists in their sixties, the fourth generation of authors in their forties, and the emerging younger authors, now in their thirties. Obviously, the generational divide is not absolute, as some straddle the border between generations.

The connection between the Czech and Slovak language environments in Critical theory, and the co-operation between Czechs and Slovaks, is reflected mainly in the inclusion of two chapters by Slovak colleagues.

All the Czech contributors to this book belong to the Prague school of Critical theory, a loosely formed group offering its own perspectives and crystallized in cooperation with other groups and individuals from the various parts of the world.