

# Zeitenwenden

Thinking in Upheaval



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EINSTEIN  
FORUM

Conception:  
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# *Zeitenwenden*

## Thinking in Upheaval

Numerous developments over the last decade or so have signaled a tectonic shift in global affairs: a war of aggression in Europe, the COVID-19 pandemic, climate disruption, the forced displacement of millions, social polarization, the spread of misinformation and conspiracy theory, ubiquitous surveillance, unsettling advances in A.I., and the growth of authoritarianism—to name just some of the most alarming. Has the world reached what German Chancellor Olaf Scholz called a *Zeitenwende*, a turning point marking the start of a new era? If so, is it occurring along a single axis, or are multiple *Zeitenwenden* unfolding concurrently? How have recent upheavals challenged existing narratives and explanatory frameworks? What quandaries, real and conceptual, do they pose? How do different geographic, political, or social standpoints affect perceptions of historic change? And what are the possibilities for regaining a sense of orientation?

## Speakers and Themes

**Aleida Assmann** (Konstanz)

***A Zeitenwende That Has Yet to Come About***

In a time of anxiety concerning a proliferation of crises and ruptures, I am interested in a *Zeitenwende* that has not yet come about (and perhaps may never materialize). I am thinking of the future of the colonial past in Germany and its acknowledgement as part of a more diverse society's active memory and shared concept of self.

*Aleida Assmann* held the chair of English Literature and Literary Theory at the University of Konstanz, Germany from 1993 to 2014, and has taught as a guest professor at various international universities. The main areas of her research are history of media, history and theory of reading, and cultural memory, with a special emphasis on Holocaust and trauma. Together with her husband Jan Assmann she received the Peace Price of the German Book Trade in 2018. Currently she is directing a research group at the University of Konstanz on the topic of civic strength. Her publications in English include *Memory in a Global Age: Discourses, Practices, and Trajectories* (ed. with Sebastian Conrad, 2010), *Cultural Memory and Western Civilization: Functions, Media, Archives* (2012), *Shadows of Trauma: Memory and the Politics of Postwar Identity* (2016), and *Is the Time Out of Joint? On the Rise and Fall of the Modern Time Regime* (2020).

**Rokhaya Diallo (Paris)**  
***Centering the Margins***

Amid multiple serious global challenges, some are asking for the first time whether the world as they know it will end. Yet that question reflects a very Eurocentric view of present-day global realities. It has been centuries since slavery and colonialism created irreversible turmoil and caused the collapse of entire realms. Since then, many populations have been thinking in upheaval. Their creativity should serve as inspiration for so-called western countries as they confront the challenges of today.

*Rokhaya Diallo* is a French journalist, writer, educator, and award-winning filmmaker widely recognized for her work in support of human rights. She is a contributing writer to the *Washington Post*, a researcher in residence for the Gender+Justice Initiative at Georgetown University (Washington, DC) and was a host for the BET channel (VIACOM/MTV group). In France, she teaches a class on cultural studies in Paris 1 – La Sorbonne, and is a commentator for leading radio and TV channels. Rokhaya Diallo has written over ten books and directed several documentaries. She has also created the pioneering podcast *Kiffe ta race* (Binge Audio) along with Grace Ly, a show dedicated to addressing racial issues that was ranked amongst the best Apple podcasts. In 2022, Rokhaya launched W.O.R.D., the first French public-speaking school dedicated to bringing a wider range of voices to the public sphere.

**J Henry Fair** (New York/Berlin)

***On The Edge: A Portrait of Our Coastlines***

Art should foster dialogue and ask the difficult questions. The recent discovery of the impending collapse of the Thwaites Glacier in Antarctica reminds us that sudden catastrophe has struck civilization too often in history, always unexpectedly and with world-changing impacts. Pompeii, Katrina, Covid, all changed civilizations overnight, some local, some global. And the list of catastrophic storms around the world and at home has become too long to compile. Climate change is increasing storm activity and ocean rise, which will directly impact coastal areas. Natural shoreline features such as beaches, sand dunes, marshes, and mangroves act as buffers to weather systems, pliantly absorbing the impact of storms and high tides and thus protecting the hinterlands. Coastal development usually replaces these features with man-made structures that fare less well in storms and require expensive repair. There are essential dialogues about adaptation to this inevitable drastic change that our societies ignore and postpone at their peril. Art can address and initiate these dialogues in a world where debate has been polemicized.

*J Henry Fair* is a photographer and environmental activist, best known for his “chillingly beautiful” (*Audubon Magazine*) environmental aerial photos. He holds a degree in journalism from Fordham University, and is widely published: from *The New York Times*, *National Geographic*, *Vanity Fair*, *TIME*, and *New York*, to *Die Zeit*, *The Guardian*, and *Le Figaro*. He has appeared on television on ARTE, TTT, CBC News, and *The Today Show*. J Henry is the winner of the 2019 Environmental Photographer of the Year award and the 2012 Earth Through A Lens award and was shortlisted for the Sony World Photography Awards. Among the three solo books J Henry has published, he is best known for his *Industrial Scars* series, about which Roberta Smith, chief art critic of *The New York Times*, said, “The vivid color photographs of J Henry Fair lead an uneasy double life as potent records of environmental pollution and as ersatz evocations of abstract painting... information and form work together, to devastating effect.”

**Ali Fathollah-Nejad** (Berlin)

***A Zeitenwende in the Making? Iran's Long-Term Revolutionary Process***

The 1979 revolution in Iran, later dubbed the Islamic Revolution, constituted a *Zeitenwende* not only nationally but on the global scale. For the emergence of the Iranian theocracy constituted a watershed moment as it catapulted “political Islam” or Islamism onto the prime stage of global politics, with wide-ranging ramifications to this day. In turn, four decades on, the revolutionary protests that engulfed Iran since the fall of 2022 have the capacity to constitute a historical corrective, potentially reversing the Islamization of state and society that was systemically imposed by the Islamic Republic since its inception. The talk will focus on the long-term revolutionary process in Iran, its characteristics and challenges, and the role of Western foreign policy.

*Ali Fathollah-Nejad* is the founder and director of the Center for Middle East and Global Order (CMEG), a think-tank devoted to exploring transformations and promoting a foreign policy that reconciles interests and values. The German-Iranian political scientist focuses on Iran, the Middle East, and the post-unipolar world order. He is also a McCloy Fellow on Global Trends of the American Council on Germany (ACG) as well as an Associate Fellow with the American University of Beirut's Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs (AUB-IFI). He is the author of the much-acclaimed book *Iran in an Emerging New World Order: From Ahmadinejad to Rouhani* (2021) and *The Islamic Republic of Iran Four Decades On: The 2017/18 Protests amid a Triple Crisis* (2020), where he proposed the start of a long-term revolutionary process in Iran. Ali is a former Iran expert at the Brookings Institution in Doha (BDC, 2017–2020) and at the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP, 2015–2018). He holds a Ph.D. in International Relations from the Department of Development Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London (SOAS), and was the winner of a 2016–2017 post-doctoral fellowship from the Harvard Kennedy School's Iran Project.

Carey Harrison (New York)

*Plus ça change ...*

...plus c'est la même chose: an observation we owe to Alphonse Karr, a literary boulevardier (he often wrote for *Le Figaro*) whose life spanned the 19th century and whose professional and political ups and downs, as a staunch republican in an age of republican reverses, are mirrored in his best-known maxim (he published a book of them). Smug as it is, I dare say it's reassuring to recite plus ça change—three words will do, no need to complete the formula, so complete is our submission to it—while resigning ourselves to yet another example of history repeating itself. Yet there are developments, surprises, changes. There are shocks. There are permanent reverses. The challenge is to pick which ones are on the way. The slow-motion car wreck that is humanity's attitude to terminal climate change is both new and not nearly new enough; the spread of authoritarianism is hardly a novelty—the civilized world as it appeared in 1940 signalled that authoritarian regimes would soon dominate the liberal map. So... is the real shock coming from AI, from gene manipulation, from robotics? From generational conflict? Human infertility? From the revolutionary potential of income inequality, starvation, water shortage? These too are taking their time coming to the boil. They are boils that could drown us. And is the greatest threat one that we see coming yet refuse to lift a finger to resist? Or is it, as history surely insinuates, from a direction few if any could have predicted. Plus ça change, plus ça turns up out of left field. My own definitive shock came when the British Communist Party disbanded itself. You may laugh (I hope you do). You may be thinking, how could anyone tell? A valid point. But we had a member of Parliament once. (In wartime.) And I didn't think a Communist Party could declare itself defunct. Wasn't it an existential fact? Clearly not. So here's my question. Is the tipping point the one we identify as such, or precisely the one we missed, even as it was happening? Isn't the latter painfully true of private, personal, medical and domestic upheavals—maturing right under our nose, protected by our innate human compulsion to look at the wrong thing? Misdirection? Isn't *that* the thing that never changes?

*Carey Harrison* was born in London during The Blitz, the Luftwaffe's bombing onslaught, and as soon as the war ended he was taken to America, where he has lived on and off, for the past seventy-nine years. The off periods have coincided with his British education, at Harrow School and Cambridge, and a teaching post at Essex University. He has subsequently taught comparative literature at Cornell, at UC San Diego, at UT Austin, at the Florida Institute of Technology, and for the past thirty years at the City University of New York. He is the author of sixteen novels and over 200 plays and scripts for TV, theatre, radio, and film. His



work has been shown in thirty-seven countries, and translated into thirteen languages. His novels have won him a Fellowship at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin. He is Professor of Humor at CUNY's Brooklyn College and a member of the Einstein Forum's Board of Advisors.

**Stephen Holmes** (New York), **Ivan Krastev** (Vienna/Sofia)  
***After “The Light That Failed”: A Conversation***

Some readers have suggested that our 2019 book implicitly predicted February 22, perhaps because it blamed Putin’s obsession with tearing off the mask of Western hypocrisy for his strategically pointless aggression in eastern Ukraine. If true, then our book was more clairvoyant than its authors, for both of us, like many others, were profoundly shocked by the unhinged decision to invade and the homicidal rampage that followed. The question we wish to discuss, therefore, is how the analysis we presented in *The Light that Failed* needs to be revised in the face of the “identity war” without an endgame that Russia is waging in Ukraine as well as by related developments such the rising geopolitical importance of middle powers such as Turkey, Europe’s discomfort at being thrust back into the status of an American protectorate given uncertainty about the outcome of the next U.S. presidential election, the trend in countries such as India (and perhaps Israel as well) to see Russia’s war not as imperialistic but as the opposite, namely as a decolonization effort aimed at purging Western influence and restoring so-called traditional values, and of course China’s increasingly explicit challenge to the world America built after World War II.

*Stephen Holmes* is Walter E. Meyer Professor of Law at the NYU School of Law. He previously taught at Harvard, Princeton, and the University of Chicago. His fields of specialization include the history of liberalism, the disappointments of democratization after communism, and the difficulty of combating terrorism within the limits of liberal constitutionalism. He is the author of *Benjamin Constant and the Making of Modern Liberalism* (1984), *The Anatomy of Antiliberalism* (1993), *Passions and Constraint: On the Theory of Liberal Democracy* (1995), and *The Matador’s Cape: America’s Reckless Response to Terror* (2007). He is co-author of *The Cost of Rights: Why Liberty Depends on Taxes* (with Cass Sunstein, 1999) and of *The Beginning of Politics: Power in the Biblical Book of Samuel* (with Moshe Halbertal, 2017) as well as *The Light That Failed: A Reckoning* (with Ivan Krastev, 2019), and co-editor of the *Routledge Handbook of Illiberalism* (with András Sajó and Renáta Uitz, 2022).

*Ivan Krastev* is Chair of the Center for Liberal Strategies in Sofia, Bulgaria, and a permanent fellow at the Institute for Human Sciences, Vienna. He is a founding board member of the European Council on Foreign Relations and a contributing opinion writer for *The New York Times* and other publications. His latest books are *After Europe* (2017), *The Light That Failed: A Reckoning* (with Stephen Holmes, 2019), and *Is It Tomorrow Yet? Paradoxes of the Pandemic* (2020).

**Eva Illouz** (Jerusalem/Paris) in discussion with **Susan Neiman** (Potsdam)  
***The Emotional Life of Populism***

Eva Illouz's new book argues that we can understand the paradoxes of populism by examining four emotions on which populist politics rest: fear, disgust, resentment, and love for one's country. Taking present-day Israel as her primary example, she shows how this combination of emotions explains the rise and persistence of populism in many other countries as well.

*Eva Illouz* is Directrice d'Etudes at the EHESS and currently on sabbatical from the Hebrew University. She is also a visiting professor at the Berlin Social Science Center (WZB). Her research interests include sociology of culture, sociology of emotions, sociology of capitalism, and the effect of consumerism and mass media on emotional patterns. Illouz is the author of fifteen books translated into twenty-five languages. She received the EMET prize in Israel for lifetime achievement as well as the French Legion d'Honneur for her contribution to French culture. In addition to her scholarly work, she writes for *Le Monde*, *Der Spiegel*, *Die Zeit*, and *Ha'aretz* on literature, politics, social affairs, and various other subjects.

*Susan Neiman* is the director of the Einstein Forum. In *Left is not Woke* (2023), her most recent book, she critically examines the phenomenon of wokeness and the philosophical assumptions that underlie it.

**Harsh Mander** (New Delhi)

***Radical New Imaginations for a World in Tumult***

I will speak briefly of the ways in which our world is in tumult. The prospects of a life with dignity and security have become increasingly precarious if you are a minority of any kind, whether in terms of religion, race, ethnicity, caste, class, or gender. The consequences of unconscionable levels of inequality both between and within nations are catastrophic. At the core of this resistance to the world we live in—with frighteningly diminishing freedoms, widening inequalities, and surging hate—must be to create courageous, compassionate, and radically new imaginations of our collective futures. These require that we nurture ideas of solidarity, fraternity, social care, and radical love. I will illustrate some examples of these radical new imaginations.

*Harsh Mander* is a human rights and peace worker, writer, columnist, researcher, and teacher. He is the chairperson of the Centre for Equity Studies, in Delhi, which is devoted to the analysis and development of public policy for the rights of disadvantaged groups. In the autumn of 2017, he established Karwan e Mohabbat, an initiative to promote healing in families who have lost loved ones to violence. He is also the founder of Aman Biradari, a campaign for the defence of secularism and the creation of a just and humane world in response to the 2002 Gujarat riots. He has served the Indian government in various capacities, including as a member of the Prime Minister's National Advisory Council and as Special Commissioner to the Supreme Court of India in the Right to Food case, and he has launched various legal and community initiatives to help the homeless and the poor. He holds a PhD from Vrije University in Amsterdam and is a Distinguished Scholar in the research initiative Political Conflict, Gender and People's Rights, at UC Berkeley's Centre for Race and Gender. He teaches courses on poverty and governance at universities in India and abroad. In 2021–2022, he was a Richard von Weizsäcker Fellow at the Robert Bosch Academy in Berlin.

**Thomas Meaney (Berlin)**

***The Use and Abuse of Zeitenwende as a Concept***

To great acclaim, the concept of a *Zeitenwende* has been enlisted by the German Chancellor in the war between the West and Russia. We have, according to official report, entered into nothing less than a new dimension of European time. But what has the *Zeitenwende* actually meant? For Germany, at least, it's a license for Social Democrats to build up weapons, for Greens to scour the earth for fossil fuels, and for Liberals to accommodate fiscal largesse. But what about for contemporary Europe as a whole? What are the uses, risks, and illusions of the *Zeitenwende* concept? Beginning with some reflections on past candidates for *Zeitenwende*, the idea is treated historically with the help of Reinhart Koselleck and other thinkers about time. Much like the contemporary fanfare around the concept of a "polycrisis," the notion of a *Zeitenwende* represents an elite-led effort at Western refuge-taking from political responsibilities and a conveniently revised picture of historical causality.

*Thomas Meaney* is the editor of *Granta* magazine. He was an Einstein Fellow in residence at Caputh.

**Eva Menasse** (Berlin)

***Everything and Nothing: Communication in the Digital Age***

If it is true that a *Zeitenwende* is underway, then a primary driver has surely been the rise of digital social media. Ubiquitously available, they have irrevocably changed how we think, feel, and debate. The forms of communication they provide have fueled vaccine skepticism, conspiracy thinking, rigidity, the loss of empathy and compassion, the inability to compromise, and the placement of personal beliefs above all else. Today's society is undergoing an unparalleled stress test as we reckon with the digital revolution and its consequences.

*Eva Menasse*, born in Vienna in 1970, has lived in Berlin since 1999. Originally a journalist with *profil* and *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, she works today as a writer and essayist. She is the recipient of the Heinrich Böll Prize (2013), the Friedrich Hölderlin Prize (2017), and the Ludwig Börne Prize (2019), among other distinctions. Most recently she published the novel *Dunkelblum* (2021). Her next book, *Alles und nichts sagen*, about mass communication in the digital age, will appear in the fall of this year.

**Fintan O'Toole** (Dublin/Princeton)

***Divide and Misrule: Thinking About Tribalism***

For a long time, the experience of tribal politics on the island of Ireland seemed anachronistic. The Northern Ireland conflict was almost universally characterized as a throwback to the upheavals of post-Reformation Europe. Yet more recently I have had to wonder whether it might be as much a portent of a possible future as a weird anomaly from the past. We have to think again about how tribalism works, why it appeals and, most importantly, how democrats can respond to its growing allure.

*Fintan O'Toole*, one of Ireland's leading public intellectuals, is a columnist for *The Irish Times* and Leonard L. Milberg '53 visiting lecturer in Irish Letters at Princeton. He also contributes to *The New York Review of Books*, *The New Yorker*, *Granta*, *The Guardian*, *The Observer*, and other international publications. His books on theater include works on William Shakespeare, George Bernard Shaw, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and Thomas Murphy. His books on politics include the bestsellers *We Don't Know Ourselves: A Personal History of Modern Ireland* (2021), *Heroic Failure: Brexit and the Politics of Pain* (2018), *Enough is Enough: How to Build a New Republic* (2010), and *Ship of Fools: How Stupidity and Corruption Sank the Celtic Tiger* (2009). In 2011, *The Observer* named O'Toole one of "Britain's top 300 intellectuals." He has received the A.T. Cross Award for Supreme Contribution to Irish Journalism, the Millennium Social Inclusion Award, and Journalist of the Year in 2010, the Orwell Prize, and the European Press Prize. Fintan's *History of Ireland in 100 Objects*, which covers 100 highly charged artifacts from the last 10,000 years, is currently the basis for Ireland's postage stamps. He has recently been appointed official biographer of Nobel Prize-winning poet Seamus Heaney. In 2023, Fintan was named an International Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

**Olúfẹmi Táíwò (Ithaca)**

***Against Decolonization: Taking African Agency Seriously***

How should we understand and explain social and political phenomena in Africa in the past and at the present moment? The dominant theoretical discourse framed by decolonization is barely useful if not completely useless when it comes to describing and explaining African phenomena. It privileges, in the most unhelpful way, colonialism in the history of the continent and obscures the path to illuminating contemporary situations there. This is primarily because it either does not recognize or fails to take seriously African agency, again, through its history. Once we take African agency seriously, we stop treating Africans at all levels as if they were permanent children whose wills are readily bent by their colonizers sixty years after independence and who may not have their choices scrutinized. Let us restore African agency to the centre of our analyses and pay attention to the complexities of the continent and its peoples.

*Olúfẹmi Táíwò* is Professor of African Political Thought and Chair at Cornell University's Africana Studies and Research Center. His research interests include philosophy of law, social and political philosophy, Marxism, and African and Africana philosophy. Táíwò is the author of *Legal Naturalism: A Marxist Theory of Law* (1996), *How Colonialism Preempted Modernity in Africa* (2010), *Africa Must Be Modern: A Manifesto* (2012), *Can a Liberal Be a Chief? Can a Chief Be a Liberal? On an Unfinished Business of Colonialism* (2021), and *Against Decolonization: Taking African Agency Seriously* (2022). He was joint editor with Olutoyin Mejiuni and Patricia Cranton of *Measuring and Analyzing Informal Learning in the Digital Age* (2015). His writings have been translated into French, Italian, German, Portuguese, and Chinese. He has taught at universities in Canada, Nigeria, Germany, South Korea, and Jamaica.



**Carl Tham** (Stockholm)  
***Zeitenwenden in Sweden***

Russia's invasion of Ukraine not only shocked Swedes; it precipitated an until-then-unthinkable sea change in Swedish foreign relations: the abandonment of the country's long-held policy of neutrality. Now with NATO membership pending, it remains unclear how the new political climate will affect Sweden's previous commitments to nuclear disarmament, human rights, non-intervention, and peacebuilding.

As momentous as the Russian invasion has been for Sweden, a profound domestic change stands to have an even greater effect on the country: the growing influence of right-wing politics. Sweden is not alone in this regard, of course. Over the past ten to fifteen years, far-right movements have gained a significant foothold throughout much of Europe and in the United States. But Sweden and other Nordic countries are particularly instructive examples because they were long held up as model societies due to their well-educated populations, strong economies, robust welfare systems, and low levels of income inequality. Inspired by Tony Blair, Sweden came to embrace neoliberal dogmas that favored the primacy of the market over the primacy of politics. The shift left low-income workers, hit with economic dislocation and insecurity, feeling deserted. It also gave right-wing parties the opportunity to champion classic labor-party issues such as unemployment benefits and economic policy in addition to the cultural chum that has always been their bread and butter. For all the ticklishness of drawing historical parallels, it's worth remembering that prewar fascist movements came to power on precisely that dual political platform.

*Carl Tham* was party secretary, MP, and minister for the Swedish Liberal Party from 1966 to 1982. In the 1980s, he switched to the Social Democratic Party, where he later served as Minister of Higher Education and Research (1994–1998). He has also been Director General of the Swedish Energy Agency and SIDA (Sweden's government agency for development cooperation) and the Swedish ambassador to Germany (2002–2006).

**David Van Reybrouck (Brussels)**  
***From International Institutes to Global Governance***  
***Climate Change and the Need for New World Politics***

The Pakistan floods of 2022 are a turning point in recent world history. One of the countries least responsible for global warming was dramatically affected by it, killing close to 2,000 people and leaving two million homeless. The global south is paying the price for the global north. How are we to avert this new form of colonialism? Beyond a political discussion on repairing loss and damage, what the world really needs are new institutions—ones that are no longer “international” but truly global—by incorporating everyday people from across the world.

*David Van Reybrouck* is a Brussels-based author and democracy expert. His books on colonial history—*Congo: The Epic History of a People* (2014; original Dutch edition 2010), and *Revolusi: Indonesia and the Birth of the Modern World* (English edition forthcoming; original Dutch edition 2020)—have become international bestsellers. A pioneering advocate for democratic innovation, David is a Senior Fellow at Bard College’s Hannah Arendt Center for Politics and Humanities. His essay *Against Elections: The Case for Democracy* (2016; original Dutch edition 2013) was translated into over twenty languages and received praise from Kofi Annan.

**Zukiswa Wanner (Nairobi)**

***Despite, in Spite of, Sometimes to Spite Our Governments***

***How the COVID-19 Pandemic Opened Artists to Solidarities and Collaborations***

Music, visual art, performance art, literature—for many, the best are aesthetically pleasing as they help us think differently, and think in upheaval, if you will. My talk will focus on how lockdown allowed artists and consumers of art to see beyond the limited space they are normally exposed to and create solidarities in campaigns such as #BlackLivesMatter, #ZimbabweanLivesMatter, and #EndSars, among others. Equally, it will look at collaborations that may have otherwise gone unmade in film, music, visual art, and literature across linguistic and “national” borders and what that means for our past, how that’s working in the present, and possible implications for the future.

The 2020 Goethe Medalist *Zukiswa Wanner* is an author, editor, publisher, and curator currently residing in Kenya but born in Zambia to two political exiles (a South African father and a Zimbabwean mother). Zukiswa has written four novels, three children’s books, two works of nonfiction and has been a columnist for *True Love* (South Africa), *The Star* (Kenya), *The Nation* (Kenya), *Mail & Guardian* (South Africa), and the pan-African monthly *New African*. She has also written for *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, *The New York Times*, and *The Guardian*. The authors she has published include Yara Nakahanda Monteiro (Angola), Maimouna Jallow (Gambia), Mukoma wa Ngugi (Kenya), and Nokuthula Mazibuko Msimang (South Africa). She is the founder and curator of *Afrolit Sans Frontières*, the pandemic’s first virtual literary festival which later morphed into *Virtually Yours; Artistic Encounters*, which has been on stages in Nairobi and Johannesburg and is currently exhibiting in Zurich; and *Displacement & Refuge*, a series of dialogues for the Goethe Institute in Nairobi.

## Program

### Thursday, June 29

7:00 pm

Susan Neiman (Potsdam)

*Introduction*

7:15 pm

Eva Menasse (Berlin)

*Everything and Nothing:  
Communication in the Digital Age*

### Friday, June 30

10:00 am

Aleida Assmann (Konstanz)

*A Zeitenwende That Has Yet to Come About*

10:45 am

Olúfẹ̀mi Táíwò (Ithaca)

*Against Decolonization  
Taking African Agency Seriously*

12:00 pm

Thomas Meaney (Berlin/London)

*The Use and Abuse  
of Zeitenwende as a Concept*

3:00 pm

Ali Fathollah-Nejad (Berlin)

*A Zeitenwende in the Making?  
Iran's Long-Term Revolutionary Process*

3:45 pm

Carl Tham (Stockholm)

*Zeitenwenden in Sweden*

5:00 pm

Harsh Mander (New Delhi)

*Radical New Imaginations  
for a World in Tumult*

5:45 pm

Fintan O'Toole (Dublin/Princeton)

*Divide and Misrule: Thinking About Tribalism*

7:00 pm

Rokhaya Diallo (Paris)

*Centering the Margins*

### Saturday, July 1

10:00 am

Zukiswa Wanner (Nairobi)

*Despite, in Spite of, Sometimes to Spite Our  
Governments: How the COVID-19 Pandemic  
Opened Artists to Solidarities and  
Collaborations*

11:15 am

David Van Reybrouck (Brussels)

*From International Institutes to Global  
Governance: Climate Change and the Need  
for New World Politics*

12:00 pm

J Henry Fair (New York/Berlin)

*On The Edge: A Portrait of Our Coastlines*

3:30 pm

Eva Illouz (Jerusalem/Paris) in discussion with

Susan Neiman (Potsdam)

*The Emotional Life of Populism*

4:45 pm

Stephen Holmes (New York),

Ivan Krastev (Vienna/Sofia)

*After "The Light That Failed": A Conversation*

5:45 pm

Carey Harrison (New York)

*Plus ça change...*