

Invitation to the Press Conference
on Wednesday, 7 December 2022, at 11 am

Roads not Taken Oder: Es hätte auch anders kommen können

9 December 2022 – 24 November 2024

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the Press,

It is our pleasure to invite you to attend the Press Conference on
Wednesday, 7 December 2022, at 11 am
in the **Zeughauskino** of the Deutsches Historisches Museum.

On the podium:

Raphael Gross, President of the Deutsches Historisches Museum

Dan Diner, historian and chair of the Alfred Landecker Foundation

Fritz Backhaus, project head of the exhibition

Elisabeth Breitkopf-Bruckchen, project head of the game station "Autumn 89 –
On the streets of Leipzig"

You can **view** the exhibition **before the press conference as of 10 am** in the Pei Building (basement). After the exhibition, the curator team, **Julia Franke, Stefan Paul-Jacobs and Lili Reyels**, will take you on a short tour through the exhibition.

Whether the fall of the Berlin Wall, the failed vote of no confidence against Willy Brandt, or the confrontation of Soviet and American tanks at Checkpoint Charlie – **they could have taken a different turn**. From this unusual perspective, the Deutsches Historisches Museum dares to undertake an exhibition experiment and to show history in an unaccustomed way. The new exhibition focuses on **key dates in German history from 1989 back to 1848**, when decisive historical events could have taken a different turn. This opens new historical possibilities: they are different in the degree of probability – but they all have in common that the actual course of history made it impossible for them to occur.

Along 14 distinctive caesurae in the German history of the 19th and 20th centuries, **the historian Dan Diner explores the potentials of unrealised history** – prevented by accidents, averted by misfires or the weight of personal shortcomings: this is what is known in the philosophy of history as contingency. This is not to spread alternative truths or to contrive a counterfeit historical narrative. Instead, it is about **postulating a contention**: how likely is it that a development inherent to the occurrence could have sent it off in a different direction? This perspective, unusual for a history museum, should make it possible to **see well-known facts in a new light and to encourage an understanding of the principal open-endedness of history** as a result of various constellations and



DEUTSCHES
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decisions, actions and omissions – in order to learn to better understand the historical event that actually happened.

The course of these caesurae begins in 1989 with the Peaceful Revolution in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and ends in the year 1848, when Germany first dared to attempt a democratic awakening. **In reverse chronological order, the exhibition takes up at decisive tipping points such topics as “Ostpolitik”, the building of the Wall, the Cold War, the Second World War and the Holocaust, the assumption of power by Hitler, the First World War, and the Austro-Prussian War** – in order to show how closely these events came to turning out in a different way.

This is illustrated in artistically staged “scenes” that provide a view to inherent situations and possibilities that did not come to pass. These scenes are each contrasted with a “reality room” that shows the real historical event that led to the caesurae that have burned their way into the common memory as a turning points in history. In this way, milestones such as the Stalin Note of 1952, the Korean War in 1950 in combination with the Berlin Airlift of 1948/49, the failed detonation of the bridge near Remagen in 1945, the assassination attempt on Hitler in 1944, the occupation of the Rhineland in 1936, the deposal of Chancellor Brüning in 1932, the revolution of 1918, the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, or the Austro-Prussian War of 1866, appear in a new light.

Please note the following guidelines and the registration form:

- The press meeting takes place only within the **time slot of 10 am (beginning of accreditation) to 2 pm.**
- We request you to **register** for the press conference. Non-accredited persons can only be permitted to attend if capacity is available.
- **Individual interviews** after the press conference are possible **after prior application**. Please address requests for **interviews and video shootings** to presse@dhm.de.
- Please observe the general rules for safe distancing and hygiene. **We recommend wearing a medicinal or FFP2 mask:**
<https://www.dhm.de/en/visit/your-visit/>

Please request your personal accreditation by Tuesday, 6 December 2022, 5 pm, under: <https://www.dhm.de/en/accreditation-for-the-press-conference-roads-not-taken/>