

Special seminar of

**RCTHS**  
RESEARCH CENTRE FOR THEORY AND HISTORY OF SCIENCE

with

**Wolfgang Theis & Molly Taylor-Poleskey**

18<sup>th</sup> November 2013  
Sedláčkova 19, 306 14 Pilsen  
room RJ-209

14:30–15:30

**All ways lead to Rome – Paul Feyerabend's  
and Karl Popper's views on methods in science**  
Wolfgang Theis

15:30–16:30

**The Great Elector's Physician:  
Johann Sigismund Elsholtz and Diet  
at the Court of Brandenburg-Prussia, 1640–1688**  
Molly Taylor-Poleskey

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INVESTMENTS IN EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT

# ALL WAYS LEAD TO ROME – PAUL FEYERABEND'S AND KARL POPPER'S VIEWS ON METHODS IN SCIENCE

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The expression 'anything goes' has become a leading phrase of anarchistic scientists, who resist the enforcement of certain methods on the proof or falsification of a theory by practical experiments. Very often "reality" and theory differ and still the theory insists that its description of truth and reality is the only valid one. Paul Feyerabend criticizes the enforcement of methods in order to develop or advance a theory, as these methods and ideas would be based on old theories and methods already and there would not be just one true method, there would be many different ones to choose from. Only the liberty of using contrainductive ideas and hypotheses in order to advance the theory, would be the core of real science. Karl Popper on the other side states it very clearly that without a certain method, no progress in science could be achieved. Only the strict usage of the method of deduction would bring improvement in science and finally result in producing new ideas and thoughts. Without methods, which include the falsification and criticism of theories, science would stagnate.

Wolfgang Theis, studies in social sciences and cultural studies, worked at the Johannes Kepler University, Department of Culture, 2003–2008, worked at the University of Art and industrial Design Linz, Departments of Art Education, Media Design and Media, Art and Cultural Theory, 2008–2013; visiting researcher at Istanbul Technical University Turkey, Dept. of Urban Planning, 2001, Harvard University, Dept. of Social Theory, Boston, USA, 2003, Visiting Professor at Universidade Presbiteriana Mackenzie, Dept. of Philosophy, Sao Paulo, Brazil, 2008–current. Research interests and main focus: media theory, media philosophy, cultural theory, theory of recognition and philosophy of science. Publications about these topics as well as about teacher training, labour conditions at universities and political science. Chairman of the Representative Labourers Council of the Scientific and Artistic Staff of the University of Art and industrial Design Linz, Board Member of the Austrian Labour Union, Section University Teaching Staff, Vice Chairman of "Delta, The Philosophers Club", 2003–2005, afterwards Chairman until 2010.

**THE GREAT ELECTOR'S PHYSICIAN:  
JOHANN SIGISMUND ELSHOLTZ AND DIET  
AT THE COURT OF BRANDENBURG-PRUSSIA, 1640–1688**

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During the reign of Prince-Elector Friedrich Wilhelm (1620–1688), the court of Brandenburg-Prussia was at the juncture between demise (following the 30 Years' War) and royal ascension. It was also at the juncture between two schools of medical thought: the Humanist/Galenic and the “new” experimental natural philosophy. One court physician, Johann Sigismund Elsholtz (1623–1688), promoted both as he advised the elector and other courtiers on health regimen, carried out medical experiments, and encouraged the planting of new foods in the court kitchen gardens. Decisions about food consumption and dining at court are one way to track the cultural changes and values that preconditioned the political rise of the House of Prussia and health was one major consideration in food choice. This talk explores Elsholtz's influence on court dining and medical practice at central European courts more broadly.

Molly Taylor-Poleskey is doctoral candidate in History at Stanford University. Her primary scholarly interest is cultural and intellectual exchange in early modern Europe. As a research assistant for the Mapping the Republic of Letters Project, she studied large patterns of the Grand Tour in Italy. Her dissertation project looks at the rise of Brandenburg-Prussia after the 30 Years War by studying the cultural shifts and values at the court of Friedrich Wilhelm, the “Great” Elector, as manifested through dining culture.