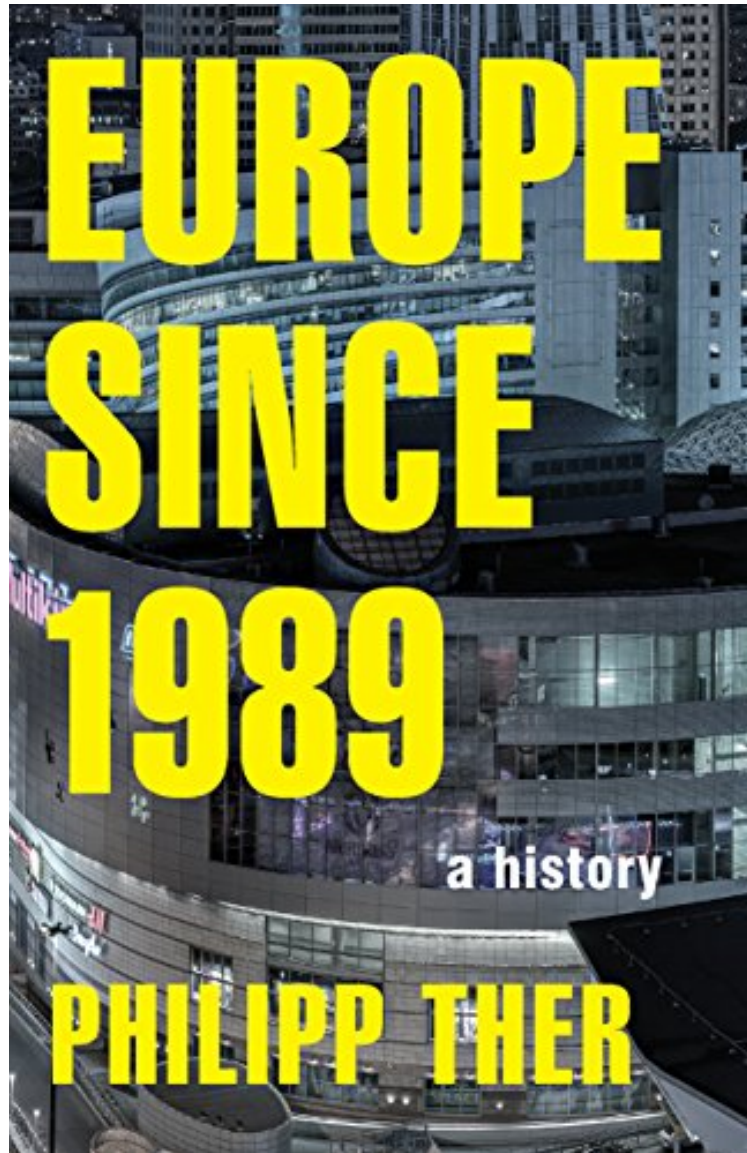


## Europe since 1989: A History

*Philipp Ther*

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**Philipp Ther : Europe since 1989: A History** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Europe since 1989: A History:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A great book explaining why Europe is the way it is ...By Frank OlssonA great book explaining why Europe is the way it is 25 years later. IMF and austerity will never be pillars of the great society.This is just economists and accountants trying to produce better numbers. What is missing is empathy and a healthy sense of community. The good society needs more than impressive GDP numbers - it also needs hope for the many disadvantaged.Europe would do well by looking less to America for building the good society and continue

to develop its own more caring approach. The Scandinavian countries, although not flawless by any means, continue to provide some light in terms of finding future harmony. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Highly recommended! By PF This book is exactly what's been missing from many a bookshelf of those of us invested, personally or professionally, in the subject of Europe after the fall of Communism in the so-called Other Europe. In a style that shows his erudition yet remains extremely readable, Ther offers fascinating insights on the effects of neoliberal policies imported en masse under the pretext of "there is no alternative" into the post-communist countries from the West. While Poland, Hungary, or, say, the Czech Republic have seen a huge increase in their citizens' standard of living, which is obvious to anyone visiting their capitals or major cities, Ther reminds us that many of them also suffered a great deal thanks to the "shock therapies" carried out by native and foreign-born acolytes of Thatcherism and Reaganism. While he doesn't make the point of separating explicitly the people and their countries into winners and losers of the post-1989 changes, which would've been a mistake, Ther does highlight the fact that the negative effects of the policies linger on, which in turn helps to explain the rise of populism and anti-immigrant sentiment across Europe and the U.S. today. It is to Ther's credit that he peppers his study with personal anecdotes, since historical events and economic policies do not occur in a vacuum, where they can be reduced to a few dates and statistics, but rather have very human consequences that affect us all. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Neoliberalism and if it works. By R Dunbar Checked this out of the library in 2017. A rather dry mostly economic history. You get a little bit about the writer's personal history that's OK. And the history of important people at the time, but it's information you could find anywhere else. And you better learn about Neoliberalism because you will hear it over and over again. As someone who grew up at that time I was hoping for more inside information and not why Poland had faster economic growth than the Czech Republic. If you like charts and economics this is the book for you.

The year 1989 brought the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe. It was also the year that the economic theories of Reagan, Thatcher, and the Chicago School achieved global dominance. And it was these neoliberal ideas that largely determined the course of the political, economic, and social changes that transformed Europe—both east and west—over the next quarter century. This award-winning book provides the first comprehensive history of post-1989 Europe. Philipp Ther—a firsthand witness to many of the transformations, from Czechoslovakia during the Velvet Revolution to postcommunist Poland and Ukraine—offers a sweeping narrative filled with vivid details and memorable stories. He describes how liberalization, deregulation, and privatization had catastrophic effects on former Soviet Bloc countries. He refutes the idea that this economic "shock therapy" was the basis of later growth, arguing that human capital and the "transformation from below" determined economic success or failure. Most important, he shows how the capitalist West's effort to reshape Eastern Europe in its own likeness ended up reshaping Western Europe as well, in part by accelerating the pace and scope of neoliberal reforms in the West, particularly in reunified Germany. Finally, bringing the story up to the present, Ther compares events in Eastern and Southern Europe leading up to and following the 2008–9 global financial crisis. A compelling and often-surprising account of how the new order of the New Europe was wrought from the chaotic aftermath of the Cold War, this is essential reading for understanding Europe today.

"His central thesis demands serious consideration. He argues that a 'neoliberal train,' put on track in Margaret Thatcher's Britain and Ronald Reagan's United States, began to cross Europe in 1989.' He says he uses neoliberalism 'as a neutral, analytical term,' and rightly distinguishes between its intellectual history and the specific social and political circumstances of its implementation."--Timothy Garton Ash, *New York Times Book Review* "Eye-opening."--*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* "Groundbreaking . . . and beautifully written."--*Die Zeit* "Bound to become the standard work for Europe's transformation since 1989."--Frank Boumlsch, *H-Net* "Recommended, not just the usual and interesting to see 'the West' treated as the periphery. Makes you wonder if eastern Europe ever had a chance."--Tyler Cowen, *Marginal Revolution* "A very sobering read."--Yuval Levin, *National Review* "[Europe since 1989] . . . is well-documented. It can be recommended to general readers and students of postcommunist history in Europe."--Choice "From the Back Cover" "This is a great and original book. It offers keen personal observations of a wide range of European countries across several tumultuous decades, and brings forward new facts and perspectives. It will remain the history of the European transition from communism to capitalism for many years to come."--Mitchell A. Orenstein, *University of Pennsylvania* "This brilliant book is a masterpiece of contemporary history and far and away the best thing that's been published about the huge historical turn that began in Europe in 1989. It instantly becomes the go-to book for understanding the period, totally supplanting previous accounts. Philipp Ther makes the events of 1989, and what followed, not simply a history of Eastern Europe, but a history of Europe as a whole, with both east and west entranced, and partly blinded, by the neoliberal imperative."--Larry Wolff, *New York University* "This book features a lively and imaginative intellect on every page. But Philipp Ther's erudition is also extraordinary; he ranges with authority over the entirety of Europe in prose that sparkles and flows effortlessly. Europe since 1989 provokes,

informs, and entertains, and there is not a dull moment in the entire book."--John Connelly, University of California, Berkeley  
"Philipp Ther provides a richly detailed history of postcommunist Europe, employing key comparisons enhanced by wonderful personal knowledge of many locations. At a time when the public seems finally ready to question the neoliberal orthodoxy of the past few decades, Ther's narrative offers some major evidence."--Charles S. Maier, Harvard University  
About the Author  
Philipp Ther is professor of Central European history at the University of Vienna. His books include *The Dark Side of Nation-States: Ethnic Cleansing in Modern Europe* and *Center Stage: Operatic Culture and Nation Building in Nineteenth-Century Central Europe*. He lives in Vienna.