

Thursday 21 July
1pm Milgate Room, ADH

Adam Kotsko

Neoliberalism's Demons

The devil is one of the most enduring Christian theological symbols, a figure that has taken on a life of its own in the culture of secular modernity. In this talk, Adam Kotsko traces the origin of the devil back to his theological roots in the problem of evil. One of the greatest challenges to traditional monotheism has always been the existence of suffering and injustice—if God is all-good and all-powerful, why does he allow it? The devil emerged as a convenient scapegoat, a fallen angel who was created good by God and yet freely chose to rebel. This placed the devil at the root of a theological system that used the idea of free will as a way of deflecting blame away from God and toward his wayward creatures. Kotsko will argue that the neoliberal order implies the same logic—deploying notions of free choice as a way of blaming individuals for systemic failures.

*Adam Kotsko is Assistant Professor of Humanities at Shimer College in Chicago. He is the author, most recently, of *The Prince of This World* (forthcoming from Stanford University Press) and is the translator of many works of the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben.*



Hieronymus Bosch, 'Devil on the Night Chair' (detail from *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, 1490-1510)

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