

Nietzsche's Perspectives on the Political

2019 Annual Conference of the Nietzsche Gesellschaft

17-20 October 2019, Naumburg an der Saale

Nietzsche did not formulate a political theory. The state, for him, was a “lie” and at best a means to an end. He denounced the dominant political ideologies of his day – liberalism, socialism, nationalism – in equal measure and proudly described himself as “the last anti-political German”. This critical distance, however, also enabled him to pose fundamental questions about the nature and purpose of politics, questions that remain relevant to this day.

This year's conference of the Nietzsche Gesellschaft aims to furnish new perspectives on Nietzsche's revaluations of the political. We are not primarily interested in re-examining his views on particular political events or developments, but in how his thought relates to the more general questions of political philosophy, notably authority, legitimacy, liberty, equality, and justice. Nietzsche's philosophy, despite his deep-seated elitism, nonetheless provides a template for new forms of community, beyond the liberal-democratic paradigm.

What are we to make of Nietzsche's demand that the philosopher “must be a legislator”? What kind of political norms and rules and what kind of polity, if any, can be derived from his own philosophy? How do we read Nietzsche's anti-politics – or, for that matter, his “great politics” – in the light of current political developments, in the West and beyond? Alternatively, how do we read these developments in the light of Nietzsche's works? Our conference seeks to reconstruct Nietzsche's political perspectives in all their radicalism and explosiveness, while approaching them with analytical rigour, philological care, and critical circumspection.

Keynote speakers: Maudemarie Clark (Riverside), Hugo Drochon (Nottingham), Franziska Dübgen (Münster), Simona Forti (Vercelli), Raymond Geuss (Cambridge), Vasti Roodt (Stellenbosch)

We welcome submissions on topics relating to the three conference panels:

A: “The cruelest animal”? On the psychology and anthropology of the political

B: Anti-politics – alternative politics: Transvaluations of the political

C: “The time for petty politics is over”: Beyond the state, citizen, and law

Please send a proposal of 200-300 words and a brief CV to Dr Ralf Eichberg at info@nietzsche-gesellschaft.de by 31 May 2019.

The conference organizers: Corinna Schubert (Carl von Ossietzky University Oldenburg)
Martin A. Ruehl (University of Cambridge)

Nietzsche-Gesellschaft e.V.

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