

The Public Use of Reason – Philosophical Anthropology in the 21st Century

Workshop on occasion of the Conferral of the Helmuth Plessner Award upon Onora O’Neill

24 & 25 March 2021, 10-18 h, Zoom Conference

Organized by the Helmuth Plessner Society

<https://helmuth-plessner.de/?lang=en>

Public Use of Reason is under pressure. There are several reasons for that. Populist movements put pressure on public spaces and threaten to undermine the preconditions of public reasoning. Digitalization and social media change the conditions under which public reasoning can take place. Identity politics restrict the openness of open societies. The role of strong emotions (e.g. anger, outrage, fear) in public reasoning requires discussion.

Over the last decades, Onora O’Neill has continuously presented Kantian perspectives of practical philosophy to approach the public use of reason. For her, reasoning is in a fundamental sense political and public. According to the board of the Helmuth Plessner-Society, there are strong connections between such a view on practical philosophy and philosophical anthropology in the tradition of Helmuth Plessner. The workshop will explore different philosophical perspectives on contemporary conditions of the public use of reasoning.

On the initiative of the Helmuth Plessner Society (HPG), the city of Wiesbaden founded a prize in honor of Helmuth Plessner, the Helmuth Plessner Award. The award carries a monetary prize of € 20,000. The HPG and the city of Wiesbaden award the prize every three years.

Keynote lectures by Onora O’Neill, Volker Gerhardt, Sabine Maasen & Marcus Düwell

Call for abstracts

Presentations are welcome on the topic of the public use of reason in the work of either Kant, Plessner or O’Neill. Likewise, presentations are welcome that deal with the conditions of public reasoning in the digital age. There will be 20 minutes for each presentation. Presentations can be given in English or German.

If you are interested in participating, please send an abstract (up to 500 words) to Marcus Düwell, mduwell62@posteo.net. The dead-line is January 15, 2021. The board of the Helmuth Plessner-Society will make a selection before February 1.