

TECHNOSCIENTIFIC POLITICAL FUTURES THROUGH THE LENSES OF CLASSICAL STUDIES

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Abstract:

Classical studies are not purposeless nor a mere exercise of cultural archeology. While the effects of new technologies are increasingly visible in contemporary society, a serious and in-depth analysis of their political influences is increasingly necessary to understand the direction in which our society is moving. The new challenges posed by technology require new, original and interdisciplinary perspectives of analysis. This panel proposes to address this issue by starting with a reading of the classics. The techno-scientific apparatus is a modern creation, but moderns themselves have repeatedly claimed to be on the shoulders of ancient giants. With this panel we propose a lateral and heterodox approach to the challenging political problems posed by technology. Our departing point assumes that taking into consideration past phenomena and the way those were responded by philosophy and literature can shed light on the nooks and crannies of politics and technology. Reread in open and plural manners, classics can become a useful tool for understanding our future in these regards.

Is it possible to use Plato's reading of citizen education to discuss social media? Can the Stoic paradigm be mobilised to create a legislative framework to protect against the invasion of privacy? Can the hedonist vision enrich the debate on biotechnology? Can we still think about the Trojan horse as a poisoned thanksgiving device, which was indeed a subtle political trap, in order to envision the future of a cyborg, monetized and oppressed human being? Can Athenian democracy be paralleled with the restricted access to information and power in the Web? These are some possible examples of questions we would like to discuss during the session.

This panel welcomes perspectives that combine, in an original and, if possible, interdisciplinary way, classical studies and analyses of the socio-political effects of new technologies. In this sense, we are happy to host presentations of research projects as well as working hypotheses and analysis approaches that are not yet fully completed. The aim of the session is not only to communicate results that have already been achieved, but also to stimulate the reflection and imagination of researchers and thus be the starting point for future projects.

Key words:

Classical studies; interdisciplinarity; ancient philosophy