

Multipolar encounters: Carl Schmitt and the political left.

Despite his anti-enlightenment and anti-egalitarian thinking, Carl Schmitt, who is considered by some to be the "Kronjurist" of National Socialism, has exerted an unbroken fascination on leftist intellectuals since the 1920s. Particularly well-known and controversial in this context is Walter Benjamin's reception of Schmitt, the extent and significance of which is still controversially discussed today. Personal acquaintances such as those between Schmitt and Jacob Taubes also testify to a lively intellectual exchange, which by no means only had an effect on Schmitt's discussion partners and recipients, but conversely also influenced Schmitt's reflections. In general it can be stated that Carl Schmitt not only exerted a great influence on left-wing thinkers but was himself an attentive reader of left-wing writings.

Schmitt's great influence on his opponents is exemplified by Hannah Arendt's main work *Elements and Origins of Total Dominion*. There, Arendt uses terms such as "political romanticism" with explicit reference to Schmitt for her analysis of the National Socialist system, which Schmitt had partially worked towards with his writings. The fact that Schmitt, who is decisively rejected by Habermas as a fascist thinker, is still highly regarded by parts of the left in the recent past is shown in an anthology published by Chantal Mouffe in 1999. In this volume Slavoj Žižek, among other authors, uses Schmitt's ideas to argue against liberalism.

The interdisciplinary and international conference "Multipolar encounters: Carl Schmitt and the Political Left", which will take place from 12 to 14 March 2021 at the Albert-Ludwigs-University of Freiburg im Breisgau, will focus on the question why it is precisely Carl Schmitt's thinking which has had such a strong impact in parts of the political left. The event aims to portray a broad spectrum of Schmitt's left-wing reception since the 1920s. In this way, we intend to provide a historical and systematic overview of which writings, theorems and considerations Schmitt were and still are of particular interest to the left reception, what role the 'left-wing Schmittians' played and still play within the political left, and how their internal dynamics and tensions are also reflected in their reception of Schmitt.

We kindly ask for abstracts (max. 3000 characters) in which you present the topic of your talk. The lectures should not exceed 30 minutes. The publication of selected contributions in an anthology is planned. We are seeking project funding from the Thyssen Stiftung.

Kommentiert [MW1]: Klingt Banane, ich weiß. Auf deutsch: „Multipolare Begegnungen: Carl Schmitt und die politische Linke.“

Bei „multipolare Begegnungen“ handelt es sich um eine Anspielung auf Carl Schmitts Begriff des „multipolaren Ordnungsdenkens“

Kommentiert [MW2]: Klingt grauenhaft, der Satz...