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# ANTWERP SUMMER SCHOOL IN PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIETY

## Political Myth, Propaganda, and the Politics of Imagination

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### \*\*\*TENTATIVE SCHEDULE\*\*\*

The first Antwerp summer school in philosophy and society addresses the topic of **the role of political myth and propaganda in contemporary western society**.

The use of propaganda and the creation of political myth are typically associated with the totalitarian regimes of the mid-twentieth century. Recent studies tend to emphasize, however, that these practices are also at the heart of our liberal democratic societies. The summer school will examine their continued presence and influence. It will analyze contemporary forms of propaganda and political myth and discuss whether they pose a threat to the proper functioning of liberal democracies. In exploring these questions, special attention will be paid to the political role of imagination in the processes of shaping opinion, securing consent and constructing collective identity.

With **lectures** and **workshops** by leading international scholars in the fields of the philosophy of political myth and the philosophy of propaganda.

With **close reading seminars** on classical texts by Cassirer, Arendt, Weber, Blumenberg, Lacoue-Labarthe & Nancy.

With an **evening program** of films and documentaries dedicated to the analysis of the politics of imagination.

#### Compulsory course literature:

Chiara Bottici, *A Philosophy of Political Myth*. Cambridge University Press, 2010 (2007), Parts 3 & 4.

Jason Stanley, *How Propaganda Works*. Princeton University Press, 2015, Chapters 3, 4, 6 & 7.

The compulsory course literature should be read before the start of the summer school. Once accepted and registered as students of the University of Antwerp (which will be validated at the latest four weeks before the start of the summer school), participants will have access to the e-book formats of both works via the Antwerp University Library.

## Monday, August 22

TIME	PLACE	ACTIVITY	
11:00-11:30		Coffee	Welcome
11:30-12:30	A.206	Meeting	Introduction
12:30-14:00		Lunch	
14:00-15:00	K.203	Reading seminar	<b>Lacoue-Labarthe/Nancy</b> , <i>The Nazi Myth</i>
15:00-17:00	K.203	Workshop	Access to the Summer School's group blog
17:00-18:00	A.206	Lecture	<b>Opening Lecture by Chiara Bottici</b> : "The Philosophy of Political Myth"
18:00-20:00		Dinner	
20:00-22:00	R.014	Film	<b>Aladdin</b> , Disney animated film by Ron Clements and John Musker (1992)

## Tuesday, August 23

TIME	PLACE	ACTIVITY	
09:00-11:00	A.206	Reading seminar	<b>Cassirer</b> , <i>The Myth of the State</i> – old and new
11:00-11:30		Coffee	
11:30-12:30	A.206	Lecture	<b>Lecture by Chiara Bottici</b> : “Classical theories of Political Myth”
12:30-14:00		Lunch	
14:00-16:00	K.203	Workshop	Workshop on Cassirer (interactive seminar with group work assignments, presentations and discussion) with Chiara Bottici
16:00-17:00		Reflection room	Writing session
17:00-18:00	A.206	Lecture	<b>Lecture by Benoît Challand</b> : “The Politics of Imagination”
18:00-20:00		Dinner	
20:00-22:00	R.014	Film	<b>The Power of Nightmares. Part 1: ‘Baby It’s Cold Outside’</b> , television documentary series (2004) by Adam Curtis

## Wednesday, August 24

TIME	PLACE	ACTIVITY	
09:00-11:00	A.206	Reading seminar	<b>Bottici/Challand</b> , <i>The Myth of the Clash of Civilizations</i>
11:00-11:30		Coffee	
11:30-12:30	A.206	Lecture	<b>Lecture by Chiara Bottici</b> : "Political Myths Today"
12:30-14:00		Lunch	
14:00-16:00	K.203	Workshop	Workshop on Bottici/Challand (interactive seminar with group work assignments, presentations and discussion) with Benoît Challand
16:00-17:30	K.203	Panel discussion	<b>Panel discussion with Chiara Bottici, Benoît Challand and Jason Stanley</b> : "Political Myth and Propaganda"
18:00-19:30		ASU activity	Visit and reception at the Antwerp city hall
20:00-23:00		Summer School Dinner	

## Thursday, August 25

TIME	PLACE	ACTIVITY	
09:00-11:00	A.206	Reading seminar	<b>Arendt</b> , <i>Totalitarian Propaganda</i>
11:00-11:30		Coffee	
11:30-12:30	A.206	Lecture	<b>Lecture by Jason Stanley</b> : "How Propaganda Works"
12:30-14:00		Lunch	
14:00-16:00	K.203	Workshop	Workshop on Arendt (interactive seminar with group work assignments, presentations and discussion) with Geert Van Eekert
16:00-17:00		Reflection room	Writing session
17:00-18:00	A.206	Lecture	<b>Lecture by Jason Stanley</b> : "Language as a Mechanism of Control"
18:00-20:00		Dinner	
20:00-22:00	R.014	Film	<b>Triumph of the Will</b> , propaganda film (1935) by Leni Riefenstahl

## Friday, August 26

TIME	PLACE	ACTIVITY	
09:00-11:00	A.206	Reading seminar	<b>Weber</b> , <i>Economy and Society. Part III: Types of Domination</i>
11:00-11:30		Coffee	
11:30-12:30	A.206	Lecture	<b>Lecture by Jason Stanley</b> : "Propaganda in Contemporary Liberal Democracies"
12:30-14:00		Lunch	
14:00-16:00	K.203	Workshop	Workshop on the philosophy of propaganda (interactive seminar with group work assignments, presentations and discussion) with Jason Stanley
16:00-17:00	Extra muros	Summer café	Conversation and discussion

## Monday, August 29

TIME	PLACE	ACTIVITY	
09:00-11:00	A.206	Reading seminar	<b>Blumenberg</b> , <i>Prefiguration: Work on Political Myth</i>
11:00-11:30		Coffee	
11:30-12:30	A.206	Reading seminar	<b>Blumenberg</b> , <i>Prefiguration: Work on Political Myth</i>
12:30-14:00		Lunch	
14:00-18:00	K.203	Paper sessions	Paper presentations, questions and answers, plenary discussion
18:00-20:00		Dinner	
20:00-22:00	R.014	Film	<b>Hitler, a Film from Germany. Part 2: A German Dream</b> , experimental film (1977) by Hans-Jürgen Syberberg

## Tuesday, August 30

TIME	PLACE	ACTIVITY	
9:00-11:00	A.206	Seminar	Group work presentations
11:00-11:30		Coffee	
11:30-13:00	A.206	Reading Seminar	<b>Lacoue-Labarthe/Nancy</b> , <i>The Nazi Myth</i>
13:00-14:00		Lunch	
14:00-15:00	A.206	Meeting	Conclusion

Please note that this schedule is tentative and subject to change.  
The final schedule will be available by the end of May.



## Speaker's biographies



**Chiara Bottici** (The New School for Social Research) obtained her PhD from the European University Institute (Florence, Italy) and taught at the University of Frankfurt before joining the New School for Social Research. She has written on myth, imagination, ancient and early modern philosophy, Frankfurt School, psychoanalysis, contemporary social and political philosophy. Her main research interests are the philosophy of political myth and the role of imagination in social and political philosophy. Her recent publications include: *Imaginal Politics* (Columbia University Press 2014); *Imagining Europe: Myth, Memory, and Identity* (Cambridge University Press 2013, co-authored with Benoit Challand); *The Politics of Imagination* (Routledge, Birkbeck Law Press 2011, co-edited with Benoit Challand); *The Myth of the Clash of Civilizations* (Routledge 2010, co-authored with Benoit Challand) and *A Philosophy of Political Myth* (Cambridge University Press 2007, paperback 2010).



**Jason Stanley** (Yale University) earned his PhD in 1995 at the Department of Linguistics and Philosophy at MIT. Before coming to Yale in 2013, he was Distinguished Professor in the Department of Philosophy at Rutgers University and also taught at the University of Michigan and Cornell University. He is now the Jacob Urowsky Professor of Philosophy at Yale University. His recent research interest focuses on the philosophy of propaganda. He has published four books, two in epistemology, one in philosophy of language and semantics, and one in social and political philosophy. His first book is *Knowledge and Practical Interests* (Oxford University Press 2005). It was the winner of the 2007 American Philosophical Association

book prize. His second book, *Language in Context* (Oxford University Press 2007) is a collection of his papers in semantics published between 2000 and 2007 on the topic of linguistic communication and context. His third book, *Know How*, was published in 2011, also with OUP. His fourth book, *How Propaganda Works*, was published by Princeton University Press in May, 2015.



**Benoît Challand** (New York University) obtained his PhD at the Social and Political Sciences Department of the European University Institute (Florence, Italy). He taught at the University of Bologna before moving to New York, with positions held first at the New School for Social Research and now at New York University. He has written on political sociology; civil society mobilization; Western European Marxism, religion and modernity, and Arab civil society. His recent publications include: *The Struggle for Influence in the Middle East: The Arab Uprisings and Foreign Assistance* (Routledge 2016, co-edited with F. Bicchi and S. Heydemann), *Imagining Europe: Myth, Memory, and Identity* (Cambridge University Press

2013, co-authored with Chiara Bottici); *The Politics of Imagination* (Routledge, Birkbeck Law Press 2011, co-edited with Chiara Bottici); *The Myth of the Clash of Civilizations* (Routledge 2010, co-authored with Chiara Bottici), and *Palestinian Civil Society: Foreign Donors and the Power to Promote and Exclude* (Routledge 2009, paperback 2010).

