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## POLITICS IN THE NEW EUROPE



*What's New in the New Europe? Redefining Culture, Politics, Identity* was a conference offering a wide range of presentations, with papers exploring subjects as diverse as philosophy, culture and politics. The seven texts in the political part of the ISSEI 2016 proceedings present different epistemic perspectives.

The first section entitled “Referendum as a New Tool of Democracy” consists of three texts which focus on direct democracy in the shape of national referenda – in the Baltic States (in Danuta Maj’s article), as well as Hungary and Albania (in the comparative study by Marcin Pomarański), and Belarus (in Wojciech Zięta’s analysis).

What follows is a section “New Politics through the Lens of (Modern) History and Philosophy.” Four articles constituting this part look at politics through the lens of (modern) history and philosophy. S. N. Nyeck examines strategic bargaining in East Africa in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Inspired by Deleuze and Habermas, Geoffrey Hinchliffe writes about the society of control and the mechanics of rationalization, while Giorgos Kataliakos dissects the idea of “State anti-cosmopolitanism” in his study of Thomas Hobbes’ *Leviathan*. Finally, in their collaborative work Richard R. Weiner and Iván López discuss the economic crisis in Spain that led to the formation of the so-called Indignados Movement.

All of these contributions tangibly prove that the New Europe faces certain challenges, to which remedies cannot easily be found. However, there is a ray of hope. Dr Gesine Palmer (Zentrum Jüdische Studien Berlin-Brandenburg) aptly summarized the ISSEI 2016 conference by stating that

the new challenge to Europe is the upcoming conservative Nationalism in many of its countries as a panicked reaction to economic and migration crises. Before us lies the

task to strengthen belief and trust in the values we – as Europeans – share with the Western world as a whole and to encourage cooperation, while showing due respect to the civil and cultural expressions of national memory and pride.

Let her words accompany all readers of this publication.