



Kick-off event of the research network Dorothee Sölle

From 03.02.2023 - 04.02.2023 at the University of Cologne

Dorothee Sölle: The Beginnings – Call for Papers

Dorothee Sölle is without question one of the most important figures of 20th century Protestant theology. She is known as a "prophetess" and a "poet" and is associated with "power", if one follows the more recent book titles on her life and work (Cf. Ralph Ludwig: Die Prophetin. Wie Dorothee Sölle zur Mystikerin wurde, Wichern 2008 u. Hans-Martin Gutmann u.a. (eds.): Poesie, Prophetie, Power. Dorothee Sölle - the enduring provocation, EB Verlag 2013). She can be seen as something of a theological pioneer, because she very early focused on issues that are more relevant today than ever – for example, the ecological question and feminism. But are these buzzwords really adequate descriptions of her work, or are they labels attached to her for hagiographic reasons? Where are the origins of this fascinating thinking? How does her work fit into the intellectual-historical currents of the time?

Friedrich Gogarten and Rudolf Bultmann can certainly be considered the most influential teaching figures for Dorothee Sölle. But they are only two of many influences. Sölle received and adapted many ideas in the intellectual resonance space of the 1960s. The politicization of society and also of theology, existentialism, and also the literature of the time certainly influenced her. Moreover, Dorothee Sölle was not only a theologian, but also a Germanist and a poet. Both her dissertation and her habilitation are works in German studies. How did that affect her theology and, conversely, did theology affect her Germanistic works? What role does her poetry play?

Despite her prominence and importance, her thought and its genesis has been little researched. She is mostly seen as the "prophetess", political theologian, feminist, ecotheologian, etc.

The Institute for Protestant Theology at the University of Cologne would like to dedicate itself to the task of scientific research of Dorothee Sölle's Thinking. We will begin in February 2023 with an interdisciplinary workshop entitled "Dorothee Sölle – the Beginnings," which will address her early work in the context of the period in which it was written.

Interested junior researchers (not only from theology) are invited to submit a presentation abstract (max. 1 page). Please send your abstract to Konstantin Sacher: konstantin.sacher@uni-koeln.de by July 31. Selection will be made expeditiously. Travel and accommodation expenses may be covered.

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