

Argument and Argumentation in Plotinus

25–27 September 2026 · Ligerz, Switzerland

Plotinus writes about logic, dialectics, judgement, and their role in philosophy throughout the Enneads. This raises many questions: Who is the subject of judgement? Are arguments concerned with being for Plotinus? Is scientific reasoning argumentative? What does the soul do when it judges sense-perception or when it infers a conclusion? By which standards? And how does Plotinus do it? What is the role of nous in argumentative reasoning and discussion? Conversely, large parts of the Enneads are thorough investigations and discussions of the arguments and dogmas of Plotinus' predecessors and contemporaries. However, it is not always clear whether Plotinus is arguing for or against the points made by other philosophers, or whether his goal is to present arguments conclusively or polemically, or to raise questions (without answering them). How does Plotinus argue for his own points and disprove or reinforce the arguments of others?

This workshop seeks to bring together research concerning Plotinus' thoughts on human reason, argument and judgement, as well as his own approach to argumentation.

Location: Aarbergerhus conference venue, Ligerz (2514)

Info & Registration: maximilian.nietschke@unibe.ch

Friday, 25 September

Afternoon / evening arrival

Dinner and informal gathering

Saturday, 26 September

09:00–09:30 Maximilian Nietschke

Introduction: Argument and Argumentation in Plotinus

09:30–10:30 Alexandra V. Alván León

Plotinus' Critical Philosophy: Destruction and Construction in Enn. 6.1–3

10:30–11:00 Coffee break

11:00–12:00 Riccardo Chiaradonna (online)

A Dialectical Argument on the Specific Differentia in Alexander of Aphrodisias and Plotinus

12:00–13:30 Lunch

13:30–14:30 Richard King

“One step beyond”: Is ἐπέκεινα its own source? Equipollent arguments in Plotinus VI 8 on the Good

14:30–15:00 Coffee break

15:00–16:00 Damian Caluori

The subjective and the objective view in On the Genera of Being II (Enn. VI.2)

16:00–18:30 Walk / Break

19:00 Dinner

Sunday, 27 September

09:00–10:00 Miira Tuominen

Plotinus on εὐδαιμονία in Enn. 1.4

10:00–11:00 James Wilberding

Plotinus on ἀκρασία

11:00–11:30 Coffee break

11:30–12:30 Dominic O'Meara

“But is it not rather the case that...”. The argumentative role of the particle ἤ in Plotinus

12:30–13:00 Final Discussion

13:00 Lunch and departure