

Manchester Centre for Political Theory (MANCEPT), University of Manchester, UK

MANCEPT Workshops in Political Theory 2015

1st September – 3rd September 2015

<http://www.mancept.com/mancept-workshops/>

CfP - Critical Perspectives on Human Rights

Workshop convenor: Dr Birgit Schippers (St Mary's University College Belfast)

Recent work in political theory, in critical legal theory, and in history has challenged human rights' purported regulatory, disciplinary and exclusionary effects; further, it has highlighted the anthropocentric assumptions underpinning rights discourse, and it has questioned the alleged privileging of juridical procedures, criticising human rights' predilection for 'jurocratic rule' (Honig) at the expense of democratic practices. In response to these challenges, critical human rights scholarship draws on agonistic, aporetic and performative readings of human rights, and it seeks to excavate those discursive conditions that constitute the human as a bearer of rights.

The aim of this workshop is to present, discuss and consider such critical interventions in human rights scholarship, and to appraise the continued significance of human rights for critical theory and practice. Paper presentations engaging with the following topics and questions are particularly welcome, but proposals that extend beyond these themes will also be considered:

- Which thinkers, traditions, and resources enable the articulation of critical perspectives on human rights? What would a critical theory of and/or for human rights look like? What are the benefits of a paradoxical, or aporetic, construal of human rights? How do we conceive of human rights in relation to theories of agonism or performativity?
- How does 'difference', broadly construed, frame our understanding of human rights? What kind of critical readings emerge from non-western, postcolonial, feminist, queer etc. approaches to human rights? How do practices of cultural translation and vernacularization reshape the human rights debate?

- What implications for human rights follow from the recent turn to posthumanism? For example, do challenges to the morphological, social and species boundaries of the human require new ways of considering human rights?
- In what ways do human rights relate to the corporeal and affective dimensions of (human) being, and what are the implications for the future direction of human rights?
- What should a critical human rights practice look like? Papers might want to consider case studies relating to issues such as immigration, social and economic rights, freedom of speech etc.

If you wish to present a paper at this workshop please send a title and abstract (400 words) on or before 30th May 2015 to b.schippers@smucb.ac.uk