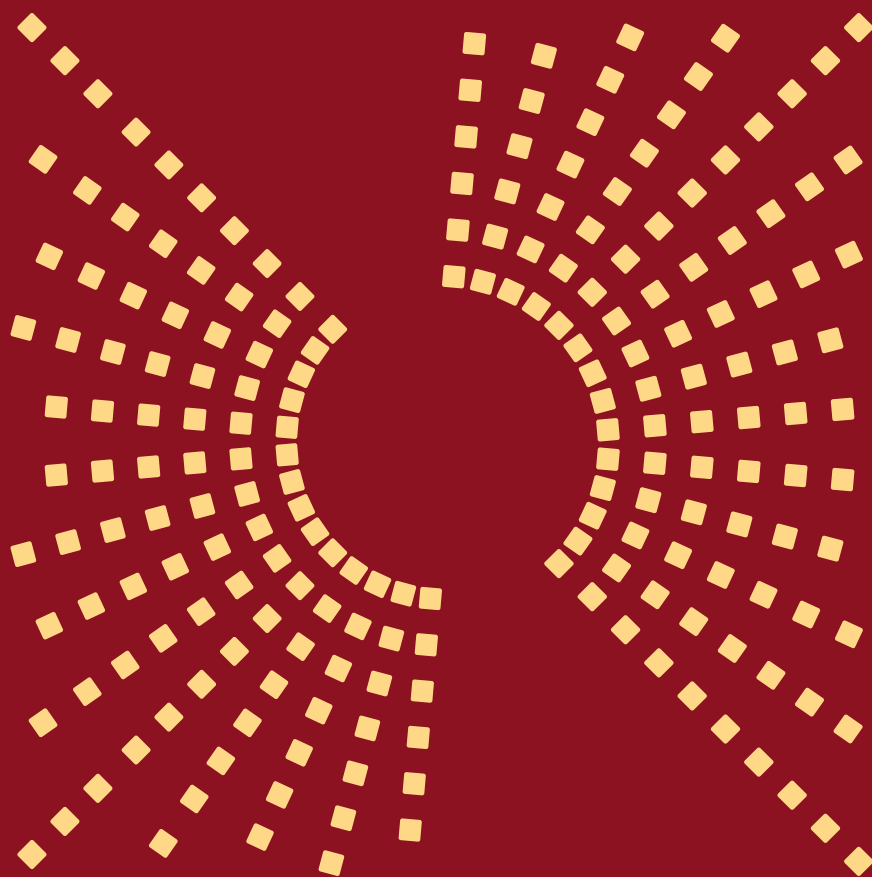


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15th
**BRAGA
MEETINGS**

ON ETHICS AND
POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

25-27 June 2025
UNIVERSITY OF MINHO
Braga - Portugal

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KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

JULIANA BIDADANURE / New York University

Trashification

Many contemporary political philosophers have been influenced by relational egalitarianism, which urges us to create communities where members can relate as equals, unmediated by rank and status. However, further progress is needed to develop the relational ideal beyond the somewhat opaque language of relations of equality. One way to advance this is by focusing on understanding our failure modes. We treat others as inferiors when we engage in infantilization, animalization, demonization, or objectification, for instance. In my presentation, I will theorize one inferiorizing mode of relating, which I call “trashification”—a form of objectification in which individuals are perceived as trash and treated accordingly. Since trash has negative value and must be discarded or hidden, trashification represents a particularly extreme form of objectification and should be singled out as such. By drawing on contemporary examples and using existing theories of objectification as a foundation, I develop an account of the uniqueness of trashification and illuminate its specific wrongness.

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BIO: Juliana Bidadanure is Associate Professor of Philosophy and, by courtesy, of Law at New York University. Before that, she was Assistant Professor of Philosophy and, by courtesy, of Political Science at Stanford University. At Stanford, she founded and directed the Basic Income Lab, an academic home for the study of the politics, economics, and philosophy of universal basic income. Most of Bidadanure’s research has been concerned with theorizing the distributive and relational value of equality and developing policy responses to inequalities. Her book *Justice Across Ages: Treating Young and Old as Equals* (Oxford University Press, 2021) developed a theory of justice between age groups that helps guide a fair distribution of goods like jobs, healthcare, income, and political power between people at different stages of their lives. Bidadanure still writes on the philosophy of inequalities, and in particular on what she calls “technologies of debasement” - those inferiorizing modes of relating that bring us down. She is writing on demonization and infantilization at the moment.

 SHANNON SULLIVAN /University of North
Carolina at Charlotte

Singing Life: Why Social Philosophers Should Read Wilhelm Reich

In this presentation, I will argue that the work of Wilhelm Reich can be very useful to contemporary social philosophy. Trained by Freud, Reich (1897-1957) was the Austrian-Hungarian psychoanalyst who initially gained praise for his work on character analysis and the mass psychology of fascism but then was ostracized and ridiculed for his (in) famous claims about orgasm as essential to emotional, physiological, and social well-being. After providing additional backdrop on Reich's career, I will focus on Reich's ideas concerning biolibidinal energy, sexual pleasure, and social-political organization. What is the relationship of sexual pleasure to life energy, and how do they function together vis-à-vis a society's tendencies toward authoritarianism? The upshot is to show how, in Deleuze and Guattari's words, "Reich, in the name of desire, caused a song of life to pass into psychoanalysis" and potentially into philosophy more generally. For that reason, social philosophers should be reading him again.

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BIO: Shannon Sullivan is Professor of Philosophy and Health Psychology at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (USA). She works in the intersections of American pragmatism/philosophy of the Americas, continental philosophy, feminist philosophy, and critical philosophy of race, especially critical whiteness studies. In addition to numerous essays, she is author or editor of ten books, including *Good White People: The Problem with Middle-Class White Anti-Racism* (2014), *The Physiology of Sexist and Racist Oppression* (2015), *White Privilege* (2019), and *Thinking the US South: Contemporary Philosophy from Southern Perspectives* (2021). She currently is working on the biopsychosocial experience of joy.



CÉCILE FABRE / Oxford University

Humankind's Common Cultural Heritage and Territorial Rights

Monuments, buildings and sites which are deemed to belong to humankind's common heritage are almost always located on the territory of a sovereign state. On what grounds do political communities have moral rights of territorial jurisdiction over those sites? On what grounds, conversely, is it morally legitimate to constrain those rights for the sake of our common heritage? In a first step, I address those questions by looking at relatively simple cases, where the heritage site is located on the undisputed territory of a single state (such as Notre-Dame Cathedral in France, or the Pyramids in Egypt); I then turn to two more complex cases: cases where the site is shared between states (such as the Roman Frontiers) and cases where the site is located on a disputed territory (such as Jerusalem).

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BIO: Cécile Fabre is Senior Research Fellow in Politics at All Souls College, Oxford. She holds degrees from La Sorbonne, the University of York, and the University of Oxford. Her research interests include theories of distributive justice, the rights we have over our own body, and the ethics of foreign policy. Her books include *Cosmopolitan War* (OUP 2012), *Cosmopolitan Peace* (OUP 2016), *Economic Statecraft* (Harvard UP 2018), and *Spying Through a Glass Darkly* (OUP 2022). Her current project is on the ethics of preserving cultural heritage. She is a member of Academia Europaea and a Fellow of the British Academy.

PANELS
AND
SESSIONS

PANEL 1 — TRANSFORMATIVE POLICIES FOR SUSTAINABILITY: UBI AND THE ECOLOGICAL TRANSITION

Convenor: Thiago Souza (CEPS, University of Minho)

As the world confronts profound socio-political and ecological challenges, there is a growing need to rethink foundational concepts in political philosophy and public policy. The transition to more sustainable societies demands not only technological innovations but also a radical reconfiguration of our political, economic, and ethical frameworks. This call for papers invites contributions that explore the theoretical and practical dimensions of the ecological transition, focusing on the roles that Unconditional Basic Income (UBI) and other transformative policies may play in this shift.

UBI has received increasing attention as a potential mechanism for promoting social and economic justice, but its impact on ecological sustainability is still evolving in political philosophy discussions. This event seeks to broaden the debate by inviting reflections on UBI in relation to other policies and philosophical perspectives that address the ecological transition. The aim is to foster a dialogue between political philosophers, environmental ethicists, and policymakers who are investigating the normative foundations and implications of these policies.

We welcome papers that engage with the following themes:

- UBI: How does the UBI fit into contemporary debates in political theory regarding justice, freedom, and equality? Can the UBI serve as a foundation for a more just and ecologically sustainable society, or are there alternatives that better address the complexities of ecological transition?
- Ecological Transition and Justice: What are the normative principles that should guide policies for the ecological transition? How can UBI and other policies promote intergenerational justice and the fair distribution of environmental burdens and benefits?
- Beyond UBI: Alternative or Complementary Policies: What other innovative policies (such as Green New Deal proposals, Degrowth, or circular economy models) should be considered in tandem with UBI for advancing the ecological transition? How do these approaches intersect with or diverge from UBI in their philosophical underpinnings?
- The Role of Work, Automation, and Ecological Limits: How should we rethink the concept of work in a world facing automation and ecological constraints? Can UBI or other policies help decouple human flourishing from resource-intensive production?

This call is aimed at scholars in political philosophy, ethics, environmental studies, and related fields. We encourage contributions that offer both theoretical insights and practical analyses of how UBI and other policy measures can contribute to the ethical and sustainable restructuring of societies.

PANEL 1
SESSION 1
ROOM: 0.13

1 | THE POTENTIAL OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
POLICIES FOR A JUST ECOSOCIAL TRANSITION:
PUBLIC-COMMONING INITIATIVES IN BARCELONA

Alejandra López | University of Barcelona

Climate change and environmental issues have gained prominence on urban agendas. Today, the debate on the limits of growth is increasingly present, although it is still secondary in international and urban policies from an economic development perspective, despite the urgent need to address the climate crisis. In contrast, urban, social and environmental movements are focusing on the need to transform economic growth models to address the ecological crisis, often defined as an eco-social crisis as a result of addressing climate and social agendas simultaneously, with ecological justice at the centre. At the urban level, movements and grassroots organisations not only call for change, but also propose local transformative solutions to the crisis based on degrowth, everyday environmentalism and the defence of the commons through socio-ecological practices. At the same time, from an urban governance perspective, there is a call for co-production of climate resilience and ecological transition policies, fostering collaboration between different types of local actors, including civil society and public administration.

From urban sociology and urban sustainability perspectives, this communication aims to understand how public, cooperative and grassroots groups, organizations and initiatives articulate ecosocial commoning practices to address the climate crisis and how local policies on community development can enhance them to move towards a just socio-ecological transition. Our empirical work focuses on the districts of Sant Andreu and Example, a peripheral and a central area of Barcelona. We conduct a qualitative analysis of discourses and initiatives through interviews and focus groups with public and community stakeholders. Our preliminary findings reveal that grassroots actors strongly defend that commoning and public-commoning initiatives are key to address socio-ecological problems, offering collective responses to both ecological and economic challenges that address real everyday needs through object-sharing networks, energy efficiency workshops, and urban gardens, among others.

Keywords: Urban sociology; urban governance; commoning; ecosocial transition; collective action.

2 | FUNDING A GREEN UBI

Thiago Souza | CEPS, Uminho

The present article focuses on debating different funding mechanisms for an Unconditional Basic Income that aims at alleviating and addressing the current environmental crisis. To that end, we begin by offering a literature review on the existing debate that explains the ecological urgency through a political philosophical lens. On that note, we assess the Green Republican literature, Ecocentric approaches, and the inseparability of socioeconomic and environmental agendas. Afterwards, we briefly explain how the Unconditional Basic Income fits the debate on the ecological crisis. Finally, we bring different funding mechanisms that ultimately connect them to the environmental concerns previously assessed.

Keywords: Unconditional Basic Income; Funding mechanisms; Ecological Republicanism; Environmental Justice; Pigouvian taxation.

3 | UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME AS A CONDITION FOR THE LEGITIMACY OF PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS

Alejandro Berroterán | Pompeu Fabra University

It is commonly considered that the taxes necessary to finance a Universal Basic Income (UBI) imply an infringement of the private property rights of taxpayers. From this point of view, when we evaluate the implementation of a UBI, we are faced with a conflict of rights. The taxes necessary to finance a UBI can be justified if the right to a UBI has more moral weight than the impairment of property rights.

Against this view, I will present a way of understanding UBI as a condition of legitimacy for private property rights. In my presentation I will establish that for private property rights to be reciprocally acceptable it is necessary that a social minimum be guaranteed to all people in the form of a UBI. Only if the benefits of private property rights are distributed through a UBI can those who have the least reasonably accept the duties inherent to private property. The taxes necessary to guarantee this social minimum, far from undermining private property rights, are a necessary requirement for its moral justification. Only because there are taxes that guarantee a social minimum can private property be morally accepted by those who have less. Therefore, there is no conflict between private property rights and the right to a UBI.

Keywords: Private Property; Legitimacy; UBI; Distributive Justice; Tax.

PANEL 2 — REASSESSING PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES ON LEISURE, GAME AND SPORT

Convenors: Paulo Antunes and Catarina Tello de Castro (CEPS, University of Minho)

Philosophy has long examined the profound impact of “play” on human experience. Activities such as games, rituals, singing, and dancing have been viewed as fundamental aspects of life (Plato). Schiller’s renewed emphasis on “play,” influenced by Kant and Romanticism, marked a pivotal development in this exploration. Over time, this philosophical tradition evolved into a multidisciplinary field encompassing sociology, anthropology, computational studies, and more. Huizinga’s *Homo Ludens* proposed that nearly every facet of human life—from the arts to politics and law—can be understood through the lens of “play.” However, the field has since diversified, often branching in new and challenging directions.

This call for papers invites submissions that explore the theoretical foundations of “game” (including board games, sports, and related activities) and “play” (in both specific and broad applications). We aim to critically engage with core topics shaping the field today, including the concepts’ nature, ethical implications (e.g., cheating, doping, professionalization), and the evolving role of technology in sports. Contributions addressing complex and controversial cases—whether historical or contemporary—are especially welcome, particularly those utilizing primarily (though not exclusively) philosophical approaches.

Potential questions we seek to address include:

- How does the concept of “play” shape social interactions and community building in contemporary society? - What paradigms can be traced within the history of philosophical thought on leisure and games?
- What are the ethical implications of sports practice today?
- Contemporary Philosophy of Sport: What are the main challenges, and what directions is it taking for the future?

We warmly invite scholars from diverse backgrounds to join this exploration into the evolving field of play, games, and sport, contributing to an interdisciplinary understanding that bridges philosophy and society.

PANEL 2
SESSION 1
ROOM: 0.14

1 | GAMING THE SYSTEM: RULES, PLAY AND CHEATING

Marco Mazzocca | Pavol Jozef Šafárik University

Many of us have experienced games in one form or another. Sometimes, we carefully read a rulebook before playing; other times, we rely on experienced players to correct us as we learn through participation. At first, we may struggle to grasp the rules, but as we continue playing, we internalize them and shift our focus to strategy and creativity. No longer concerned with merely following the rules, we instead explore the possibilities they allow. However, games are not purely structured by rules — they also involve uncertainty, risk, and a space for interpretation.

Yet, what happens when the rules are broken? Classical perspectives on game philosophy often argue that violating the rules removes one from play. Cheating, in this view, is not part of the game but rather its negation. This paper challenges that assumption, arguing instead that cheating is a complex phenomenon that does not simply exclude the cheater from play. On the contrary, cheating occurs within the game and involves an active manipulation of its framework.

To clarify this distinction, this paper draws from legal philosophy and game studies, particularly the differentiation between constitutive and regulative rules. Constitutive rules define what a game is—without them, the activity ceases to be that particular game. Regulative rules, by contrast, shape behavior within an already established framework. This distinction is crucial in understanding why cheating is not a mere rule infraction but rather a strategic engagement with the rules themselves. The cheater does not abandon the game but instead exploits its internal structure, creating a space where rule adherence and rule subversion coexist.

Moreover, the perception of cheating is not universal—it is shaped by cultural and contextual factors. Some gaming communities celebrate creative rule-bending as innovation, while others strictly enforce adherence to even the smallest regulations. This phenomenon is not limited to games. In legal and social contexts, similar dynamics occur: just as a player exploits ambiguities in a game, legal actors may manipulate legal loopholes to their advantage while still formally acting within the system. By drawing parallels between cheating in games and the strategic navigation of legal norms, this paper explores how games function as microcosms of broader rule-based human interactions.

Ultimately, this work argues that games are not merely structured activities with fixed rules but evolving systems of meaning shaped by the interplay between order and improvisation. This perspective enriches contemporary debates on the philosophy of play and sport, offering insights into the ethical, social, and legal dimensions of rule adherence and violation.

Keywords: Play; Cheating; Rule-breaking; Legal Philosophy; Game Studies.

2 | LINES ON FRESH SNOW: DEFENDING THE ESSENCE OF SKI MOUNTAINEERING

Giulia Bistagnino | University of Milan

In a recent development within the ski mountaineering community, French world champion William Bon Mardion staged a protest during the World Cup event in Andorra by refusing to compete in the individual race. His protest aimed to highlight concerns over course design, which, he argued, deviated from traditional ski mountaineering by incorporating groomed slopes and gates more typical of alpine skiing. Bon Mardion's stance has gained support from fellow athletes and fans, including prominent figures like Kilian Jornet. As a result, the #SaveSkimo movement has gained traction in public debates.

This study examines whether the concerns behind #SaveSkimo are justified by exploring the fundamental nature of ski mountaineering. Specifically, it questions whether the discipline should be classified as a sport or rather as a mountain activity deeply rooted in the natural environment. While ski mountaineering requires physical effort and technical skill, it does not fully align with conventional definitions of sport, which emphasize institutionalization, competition, and predefined rules. Instead, it resonates more with broader mountain practices, prioritizing autonomy, decision-making, and an intimate connection with nature.

A key distinction emerges when comparing the practice of ski mountaineering with competitive uphill ski racing or artificially designed uphill slopes for training. Uphill ski competitions domesticate the mountain environment, focusing on athletic performance under controlled conditions. In contrast, ski mountaineering in its purest form involves navigating an unpredictable, untamed environment, where the relationship with nature is central. The mountain itself acts as an active force, requiring constant adaptation and decision-making beyond sheer physical ability. Unlike traditional sports, where competition drives progress, ski mountaineering is not inherently about winning but about personal experience, exploration, and interaction with the environment.

This interaction is especially relevant when considering the role of judgment in ski mountaineering. A skilled ski mountaineer is not simply one who ascends and descends efficiently but one who can read the mountain, anticipate environmental risks, and make wise decisions under uncertainty. The ability to renounce reaching a peak due to unsafe conditions is considered a mark of expertise, reinforcing the idea that ski mountaineering is fundamentally different from competitive sports, where the goal is to outperform others.

The study also critiques the increasing institutionalization of ski mountaineering through formal competitions. While organized races popularize the activity, they risk distorting its original ethos by introducing external constraints that contradict the freedom, self-sufficiency, and mutual aid that define traditional ski mountaineering. Structured race formats, which impose predetermined routes and rankings, contrast with the essence of ski mountaineering, where individuals leave their own paths in the snow rather than following set tracks.

Ultimately, this study argues that ski mountaineering should not be reduced to a conventional sport but recognized as a unique mountain practice. It transcends traditional sporting categories by emphasizing environmental interaction, independent decision-making, and personal fulfillment over institutionalized competition. Therefore, it suggests that the term 'ski mountaineering' should not be applied to competitive events, which should be referred to as 'uphill ski races' to better reflect their nature.

Keywords: Ski Mountaineering; Sport Ethics; Nature-Specific Sport; Environmental Connection; Competition.

3 | THE ETHICS OF DIGITAL DUPLICATES IN FOOTBALL MANAGEMENT

Radu Uszkai | University of Bucharest

In the past decade, football has been undergoing a digital revolution. Among other top clubs, Liverpool has largely been credited by pundits and analysts as being at the forefront of this revolution. While many have turned to their former manager, Jürgen Klopp, and a great generation of players led by the likes of Virgil van Dijk and Mohamed Salah, as an explanation for their success, others have highlighted the pivotal role played by Ian Graham, the former head of their data analytics team, in reshaping Liverpool's philosophy of playing football and club management. In light of these new developments, Serguei Belousov, the CEO of Acronis, has even touted AI powered robots as potentially making human football managers obsolete.

While we have strong reasons to be skeptical that robo-managers will make the likes of Klopp obsolete in the world of football management, there are other ways in which AI might change the face of the sport as we know it. In recent years, the AI boom in Large Language Models (LLMs) has opened the door for a philosophical debate around personalised digital duplicates and digital doppelgängers (PDDs) (Voinea et al. 2024; Danaher & Nyholm, 2024). From Chinese influencers using digitally cloned AI avatars of themselves to increase the quantity of their livestreaming content (Hawkins, 2023), to philosophers like Daniel Dennett, Luciano Floridi or Peter Singer and the LLM digital replicas of themselves (Schwitzgebel et al., 2023; Floridi & Stohlman-Vanderveen, 2024; Singer, 2024), it is safe to say that PDDs of managers like Klopp, Guardiola or Mourinho are, at least in principle, conceivable.

The goal of my talk is to explore the permissibility of PDDs in football and of the ways in which they could change the face of management and coaching. I will begin by first outlining the state of the art of the academic discussion around PDDs and of the project of building “partial, at least semi-autonomous, digital recreations of real people” (Danaher & Nyholm, 2024, p. 2). I will then explore what shape could the PDDs of real managers take in the organisational structure of a football club: advisors, assistant managers and, potentially, even full-time managers.

Drawing from Danaher & Nyholm (2024), the bulk of my presentation will focus on what they call the minimally viable permissibility principle (MVPP) of PDDs creation and how it might apply in the case of football (and sports management in general). While three of the five elements of MVPP are trivially non-problematic (the transparency, mitigation and non-authenticity conditions), two of them require an in-depth analysis. Thus, due to the competitive nature of professional football, I will argue that the consent condition is less problematic since there might be a *prima facie* right of creating a PDD of a rival football team's manager for tactical purposes, even without their explicit approval. Last but not least, the positive value condition for creating PDDs in football raises some important questions. On the one hand, one could argue that the existence of PDDs could play a role in leveling the playing field between top and smaller clubs, by allowing the latter to have access to a type of tactical insight which their managers lack. On the other, achieving a higher level of fairness might be hampered by the potential high costs of developing such PDDs which, for top clubs in important leagues around the world, might not require making too much of an economic sacrifice.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence; Digital Duplicates; football; management; ethics.

PANEL 2
SESSION 2
ROOM: 0.14

4 | THE DYNAMICS OF PLAY:
REDISCOVERING THE NOBLE AIMS OF LEISURE

Lorenz Moises J. Festin | University Manila

The significance of play varies because of its applicability on a great variety of activities and events. Sports is a kind of play, but so are performing arts like dramas, musical plays, dances, skits, musical performances, etc. Play is likewise used to describe ways of carrying out activities such as when one employs a play of words in speaking or when people in their relationships, be it romantic or otherwise, are said to be playing a game. And even when “players” are nonhuman, one can speak of play, such as the play of lights, the play of water fountains, etc. Accordingly, play is often taken to have no singular or even focal sense. It’s just that it could mean a variety of things. And it’s rather described as a case of what Wittgenstein calls family resemblances. Nonetheless, this does not prevent philosophers from attempting to identify common traits among these activities, all regarded as plays. One example of such characterization is Gadamer’s observation that play always involves a to-and-fro movement, whereby one is said to be playing with something or someone other than oneself. Thus, even in solitaire or computer games, one may be said to be engaging something else in one’s play. Or take the case of a cat playing with ball of wool. Even that, according to Gadamer, is a case of a to-and-fro movement so long as the ball responds to the cat’s play. Gadamer’s main point here, however, is that play is not so much about players carrying out their play as about them themselves being immersed in the dynamics of the play. And I think this is quite important in appreciating why sports and any kind of plays are indicative of what Aristotle regards as the noble aims of leisure. For they are not just activities people engage in. They are also and most importantly indicative of human beings’ capacity and tendency to go beyond the necessities of everyday life, so as to direct themselves to what transcends their mundane pursuits. My main goal in this paper then is to argue how even physical games like sports can be an itinerary towards transcendence. It is the very dynamics of games that immerses and engrosses players. And they provide them with opportunities to discover that human life has far greater capabilities and nobler goals

Keywords: Play; Leisure; Gadamer; Aristotle.

5 | UNFAIR PSYCHOLOGICAL ADVANTAGE – AN ARGUMENT FOR THE CONSTRUCTIVIST POSITION IN THE DEBATE ON GENDER CATEGORIES IN SPORT

Klaudyna Horniczak & Wojciech Ciszewski | Jagiellonian University

This paper contributes to the discussion regarding the construction of gender categories in sport. The public debate on the issue is very heated, especially when it comes to the inclusion of trans and intersex individuals in gendered sport categories. Two very recent cases: of the swimmer Lia Thomas, who is a trans woman, and of the boxer Imane Khelif, who has been labelled intersex by the media, illustrate this point.

In the academic debate, there are three main positions concerning the necessity of gender categorization in sport (i.e., separate categories for men and women), and membership criteria into the gender categories: Anatomists, Identitists, and Abolitionists. In a nutshell, Anatomists believe that there should be gender categories in professional sport competition, and membership in these categories ought to be based on gender ascribed at birth (i.e., 'biological sex'). Identitists also claim that sport competition ought to be divided between genders, but being included in a given category should be decided by what gender the athlete identifies with (i.e., 'gender identity'). Abolitionists believe that there should be no gender division in professional sport, since any attempt to construct the gender categories will be arbitrary to some extent, given the variety of gender features that may be chosen for membership criteria.

In this paper we propose a fourth position in the debate: the Constructivist position. It is based on a premise that there ought to be gender categorization in professional sport, but the categories should be constructed around the socially understood concept of gender, i.e., as a member of what gender category is the athlete recognized by their community. The Constructivist position is built around a premise that fairness is a fundamental value in sport, and because we live in a sexist society, social gender of the athlete may significantly influence their chances in sport competition.

In a nutshell, the argument can be presented in the following form:

(P1) Fairness constitutes a fundamental value in sport competition.

(P2) Sport competition is not fair if a competitor has an unfair advantage over others.

(P3) In a sexist society there are psychological differences between men and women.

(P4) Psychological differences between men and women converts into advantages in sport competition.

(P5) Psychological advantages of men over women in sport competition are unfair.

(P6) Constructivist approach to gender provides the best proxy for tracking unfair psychological advantages of men over women.

(C) Constructivist approach to gender safeguards the value of fairness in sport competition to the greatest extent.

In the paper we will present the argument for the Constructivist position and show how it manages to make sense of cases of trans and intersex athletes, i.e., cases where the Anatomists, Identitists, and Abolitionists struggle.

Keywords: Gender constructivism; gender equality; fair competition; trans athletes; intersex athletes.

PANEL 3 — ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, NEUROTECHNOLOGIES, AND NEUROETHICS

Convenor: Jorge Mateus (CEPS, University of Minho)

The intersection of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and neurotechnologies is transforming human experiences and reshaping our understanding of the mind-machine boundary. This convergence raises profound ethical and philosophical questions about autonomy, identity, and mental privacy. Technologies such as neural interfaces, brain-machine interfaces (BMIs), and AI-driven predictive algorithms now allow unprecedented direct interaction between the human brain and digital systems. These innovations open new possibilities for physical, cognitive, emotional, and social enhancement, offering transformative applications in therapeutic settings, from treating neurological disorders to augmenting cognitive capacities.

However, these same technologies present significant risks. While they promise healing and enhancement, they also introduce the potential for behavioural manipulation, thought surveillance, and erosion of personal autonomy. The integration of AI in neurotechnology poses growing concerns about the potential for coercion, misuse, and control over human decision-making. Predictive algorithms, with their capacity to anticipate and influence human actions, challenge traditional concepts of mental privacy, agency, and freedom.

This panel seeks to explore these intersections in depth, welcoming contributions that critically engage with the ethical, philosophical, and social dimensions of AI and neurotechnologies. Topics of interest include, but are not limited to:

- The erosion of cognitive liberty and autonomy through AI-driven neurotechnologies;
- The implications of AI and predictive algorithms on mental privacy, consent, and coercion;
- Ethical frameworks for governing BMIs and neuromodulation technologies;
- The impact of these technologies on identity, self-perception, and personal agency;
- Safety, security, and justice in the deployment of AI-integrated neurotools;
- Regulatory and policy considerations to ensure responsible development and use of neurotechnologies;
- AI, neurotechnologies, and neurorights;
- Neurotechnologies, human nature, and human flourishing.

PANEL 3
SESSION 1
ROOM: 0.15

1 | HOW TO KEEP YOU IN THE LOOP?
SAFEGUARDS FOR CLOSED-LOOP BCI

Jorge Mateus | CEPS, University of Minho

The rise of Brain-Machine Interfaces (BMIs), particularly closed-loop systems capable of detecting and responding to neural activity, has introduced profound opportunities for medical and cognitive advancements. However, such devices also pose significant ethical challenges, especially regarding their impact on users' autonomy and decision-making processes. By automating certain responses or presenting advisory outputs, BMIs risk leaving users outside the “decisional loop”, potentially undermining their sense of control and self-governance. In this presentation, I address these concerns arguing that implementing robust procedural safeguards can help preserve, and even improve, users' involvement in the decisional loop. I propose a framework of safeguards that include counselling, informed consent protocols, and adaptive monitoring systems that aim to balance the technical capabilities of BMIs with the ethical imperative of maintaining human agency and striving for human flourishing. While achieving complete decisional involvement may be challenging, these safeguards provide a practical path towards preparing users to engage with BMIs more responsibly and thoughtfully, fostering a model of shared decision-making that respects personal autonomy, psychological well-being, and safeguarding personal responsibility and individual rights.

Keywords: Brain-Machine Interfaces; Autonomy; Closed-Loop devices; Control.

2 | DOES SCAFFOLDED COGNITION CHALLENGE THE
NEURORIGHTS MOVEMENT?

Giacomo Figà-Talamanca | RWTH Aachen

Theories of the extended mind (EM), according to which an extra-cranial item can, under appropriate conditions and on the premise of functional parity, co-constitute our cognitive processes, have been fruitfully deployed in neuroethics and applied ethics of technology, and share some ethical concerns with the neurorights movement (Ienca, 2021). Theorists of EM argue that interventions upon an artifact, if appropriately complemented to our cognitive system, should call for the same moral concerns as would interventions on the brain itself (Levy, 2007; Farina & Lavazza, 2022), without limiting their focus to the complex and not fully understood relationship between mind and brain. In contrast, so-called theories of the scaffolded mind draw from similar premises in not viewing cognition as not exclusively dependent on the brain, but tend to focus on how specific cognitive and affective processes are transformed by extra-cranial items, while being pluralist

regarding the nature of cognition (Varga, 2018). Both these approaches to the mind find a common interest with the neurorights movement in defining the way emerging (neuro) technologies affect our mind and identity, and the ethical significance of such change.

I argue that theories of scaffolded cognition present a challenge to the neurorights movement. I argue that such theories, which shift the focus from the boundaries of the individual's mind to specific cognitive and affective practices, may also de-construct the conceptualization of neuro-rights as entitlements of individuals. I first introduce the three frameworks at play in my argument: the neurorights movement; Extended Mind Theory; and theories of the scaffolded mind. While neurorights and EM have found common ground and mutual implementation, the implications of theories of the scaffolded mind for neuroethics and neurorights have not yet been explored. I argue that the pluralistic characteristic of scaffolded mind theories challenges the neurorights movement, as it problematizes the relationship between mind and brain in a way that the neurorights movement may struggle to account for. If the target of protection of neurorights is, rather than an identifiable entity - i.e., a person's mind, extended or not - a plurality of processes, as theories of the scaffolded mind argue, then it is warranted to reconsider what, exactly, are neurorights trying to protect. I then conclude three potential strategies that neurorights theories may follow to address this challenge, each with potential downsides: either endorsing one specific theory of the mind-body relationship; focussing exclusively on brain processes and the implications of their alteration; or focussing first and foremost on mental processes and how they may be affected by emerging technologies.

Keywords: Scaffolded Cognition; Neurorights; Extended Mind; Mind-Body Problem.

3 | LIBERTARIANISM, ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, AND THE PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE: NAVIGATING EXISTENTIAL RISK

Lukasz Swiecicki | University of Siedlce

The development of artificial intelligence (AI) is one of the most profound challenges of our time, with the potential for existential risk. In the context of political theory, particularly libertarianism, a key question is how to balance the need to regulate this technology with the preservation of individual freedom. Libertarianism emphasises minimising or rejecting government intervention to protect personal freedom. However, the emergence of AI, particularly in neurotechnologies and predictive algorithms, raises concerns about the potential risks not only to individual freedoms but also to the survival of civilisation itself. This presentation will try to critically analyse whether libertarianism's commitment to absolute individual freedom can still hold in the face of the existential threats posed by the development of AI. Drawing on the precautionary principle, which argues for preventive action in the face of uncertain but potentially catastrophic risks, this paper will explore whether libertarianism as a political philosophy can make exceptions when the survival of humanity is at stake.

Keywords: Libertarianism; artificial intelligence; existential risk; precautionary principle.

PANEL 3
SESSION 2
ROOM: 0.15

4 | FROM DIGITAL REPRESSION BY AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES TO THE NEED FOR A “HABEAS MENTEM”

Gabriele Giacomini | University of Udine

John Locke argued that citizens have the right to rebel, even resorting to violence, when a state abuses their fundamental rights, such as liberty and life. Today, ICTs provide valuable support in the early stages of popular mobilizations against tyrannical regimes, particularly in terms of organizational aspects. However, ICTs also offer extremely effective tools to politicians with authoritarian inclinations. In recent years, the failure of uprisings against authoritarian regimes in countries such as Myanmar, Iran, Egypt, Hong Kong, and Belarus has shown that ICTs are not sufficient and, in some cases, can even be detrimental for those attempting to exercise their right to resistance. Oppressive regimes widely exploit these technologies to surveil, propagate, censor, and suppress fundamental freedoms.

The actions of regimes can be reactive, focusing on repression, or proactive, aiming to manipulate citizens into compliance. A reactive example is the use of AI-powered surveillance systems, such as facial recognition networks combined with predictive algorithms. This type of surveillance can identify individuals suspected of dissent, anticipate protests or gatherings, and act before these events occur. Such measures stifle attempts at resistance or popular organization, as citizens can be penalized or suppressed even before acting. A proactive example is the use of online propaganda by regimes, supported by psychographics and microtargeting enabled by massive data collection and AI. In the future, neurotechnologies might even be used to directly influence mental processes, allowing regimes to induce states of passivity or conformity among citizens.

Given the risk of despotic drifts in many countries worldwide, this theoretical reflection aims to explore which rules and institutions could help citizens defend their freedom and self-determination when threatened in the digital sphere, after outlining some challenges posed by AI and neurotechnologies.

In the past, one of the fundamental political achievements was the principle of Habeas Corpus, which literally means “that you have the body.” It represented a right that ensured individuals could not be imprisoned without just cause, providing protection against abuses of physical power by the state. Today, however, with the advent of advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence and neurotechnologies, the power exercised by regimes is no longer limited to physical control but extends to psychological control. This is why there is a need for a new principle, which can be called Habeas Mentem (“that you have the mind”), aimed at protecting mental freedom and the cognitive integrity of individuals. This research identifies which rights (e.g., the recognition of the right to cognitive liberty as an extension of fundamental human rights, the right to privacy, the right to be forgotten, the right to anonymity, the right to encryption) and which countervailing powers (e.g., a renewed configuration of digital separation of powers, the establishment of new independent authorities, regulation promoted by international bodies in favor of

secure and citizen-friendly communications) can be implemented to contribute to the protection of individual freedoms and the self-determination of peoples.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence; Neurotechnologies; Surveillance; Authoritarianism; Cognitive Liberty; Habeas Mentem.

5 | THE ROLE OF CAREGIVERS IN BCI USERS' IDENTITY AND AUTONOMY

Alessia Cadelo | LUMSA

In the literature, many works have been dedicated to BCI users and their feelings about themselves. Many studies indeed have investigated their perception about their identity, sense of agency and control. Rather, caregivers received much less attention: according to one scoping review, just 43.6% of articles examined included at least one mention of caregivers. However, their assistance is essential to taking part in a trial; they perform research tasks both at home and in a clinical environment and monitor the study participant's cognitive function and emotional well-being during the trial. More fundamentally, caregivers are involved in decision-making, especially in the context of cognitive impairment. They actually are an integral part of a patient's care experience, so they are actively involved in the process of informed consent. Their participation in the procedure underlines the relational nature of the BCI users' autonomy and identity. Values, preferences, and goals are partially formed through the influence of those close to us; relationality is thus constitutive. In this perspective, in order to understand how BCI implants might influence users' identity, it is important to investigate not only users' perception but also that of caregivers'. Although users may believe they are the same as they were prior to the implantation, their family members may observe some differences; they could even perceive them as alienated. In a similar way, many patients reported that with the implant they experienced an increased sense of control and confidence. In other terms, users could regard themselves as autonomous agents, accountable and responsible for their own actions. However, in the relational model of autonomy conceived by Mackenzie, even others should regard the person as an autonomous agent (that is the "social recognition condition"). In this respect, caregivers could recognise the patients as autonomous, but at the same time, as BCI affects users' agentivity, they might ask themselves whether the responsibility for a given action lies with the patient or the device. To sum up, further research on the role of caregivers in BCI research would be required from a relational perspective; specifically, it would be necessary to analyse not only their practical contributions to BCI research but even their feelings and perceptions regarding users' identity and autonomy. In this way, we may have a better comprehension of the BCI's impact on autonomy and identity.

Keywords: Caregivers; BCI; relationality; autonomy; identity.

6 | CAN IMAGINATION JUSTIFY THE BELIEF THAT SUPRA-PERSONS ARE PHYSICALLY POSSIBLE?

Alexandru Dragomir | University of Bucharest

Neuroenhancement technologies (e.g, nootropic drugs, brain-computer interfaces, transcranial direct current stimulation, transcranial magnetic stimulation etc.) have given rise to numerous debates within bioethics and neuroethics regarding their potential to create supra-persons (or: post-persons; see, e.g., Agar 2013, Buchanan 2009, DeGrazia 2012, Douglas 2013, McMahan 2009). Supra-personhood is a category of moral status above personhood, in the sense that supra-persons might be entitled to a larger set of moral rights and stronger protection of those rights than mere persons. The worry is that creating supra-persons (as a result of enhancing moral status-relevant cognitive capacities) would further reduce the moral inviolability of mere persons, making it permissible to sacrifice the rights and interests of mere persons if this would benefit protecting those of supra-persons.

The possibility of supra-persons is considered plausible as a result of inductive arguments (Agar 2013), and imaginability arguments (see, e.g., DeGrazia 2012, Douglas 2013, McMahan 2009). Although the inductive arguments have been criticized, the imaginability arguments for the possibility of supra-persons have not undergone scrutiny using the results and conceptual utensils of imaginability-based modal epistemology, i.e., the domain of philosophy that tackles questions regarding whether and to what extent imagination justifies our beliefs about what is possible.

We will argue for the epistemic claim that imaginability arguments are not sufficient to justify the belief that supra-persons are physically possible. We will begin with the observation that some categories of imaginative acts should not count as justifying believing possibility statements. Two major such categories were discussed in the modal epistemology literature: the first involves imaginative acts based only on stipulations (Kung 2010), while the other involves imaginative acts involving concepts between which there are no substantial a priori connections (Hill 1997). The first part of our argumentation will point to what is involved in the content of scenarios aimed at imagining supra-persons:

- (a) Beings that possess cognitive capacities relevant for moral status to a higher degree than beings typically ascribed the moral status of personhood, and
- (b) All else being equal, the interests of such beings matter more than mere persons' interests.

We will argue that, given what is involved in imagining a supra-person, any thought experiment act aimed at imagining supra-persons belongs to the two categories of unreliable imaginings.

Keywords: Cognitive enhancement; neurotechnologies; supra-persons; post-personhood.

PANEL 4 — JUSTICE ACROSS GENERATIONS

Convenors: Manuel Sá Valente (CEPS, UMinho), Devon Cass (Nova-Lisbon) and Axel Gosseries (UCLouvain)

Debates on intergenerational justice have been gaining traction in political philosophy recently. Questions about disparities between the young and the old, worries about what will be left to the unborn, concerns about what to do about historical injustice - none of these have been as pressing as they are today. There has been significant progress in debates over what non-overlapping cohorts owe to each other, especially what the living owe the future. Less explored but rising in popularity are questions of justice between age groups and questions about what duties living persons have towards the past. Despite some advancements, there is still much to do. Much more must still be said about the prospects for new accounts of intergenerational justice (e.g., neo-republicanism, relational egalitarianism, communitarianism, contractualism) and how these compare with more familiar theories of justice across time. There are also questions about how much age-group justice affects debates about what cohorts owe to one another (and vice-versa). There are also many topics to which theories of intergenerational justice have rarely been applied but are increasingly crucial, such as the welfare state.

This panel welcomes submissions on any of these topics and more. Contributions related to the following issues, although not limited to them, are hence welcome:

- Theories of intergenerational justice
- Ageism and Age-group Justice
- Historical Injustice Today
- Ethics of Extinction
- The Temporal Scope of Justice
- The Welfare State and Retirement pensions
- Intergenerational versus Global Justice
- Ethics of Demographic Ageing
- Climate Justice
- Generational sovereignty
- Constitutional Rigidity

PANEL 4
SESSION 1
ROOM: 1.09

1 | IN DEFENCE OF INTERGENERATIONAL
EGALITARIANISM: INTERGENERATIONAL JUSTICE AND
POSITIONAL GOODS

Tim Meijers | Leiden University

Egalitarianism is often dismissed as a pattern of intergenerational justice (Finneron-Burns 2023; Schmidt 2024) because it has implausible implications, even by proponents of intra-generational egalitarian views. Critics raise several objections. They argue that intergenerational justice is under-demanding and leads to levelling down (allowing or even requiring future people to fare as poorly as the present generation). Others argue that intergenerational egalitarianism is overdemanding (given the sheer number of future people), or that it falls prey to the non-identity problem. Rival views, such as sufficientarianism, have gained more traction as a pattern for intergenerational justice (Timmer 2023).

In this paper, we challenge the prevailing dismissal of intergenerational egalitarianism and instead offer a conditional defense. We argue that a commitment to egalitarianism intergenerationally does not require equal resources across generations. This may sound like a contradiction. However, many inequalities between generations are simply irrelevant from an egalitarian perspective. Many of the goods egalitarian justice is concerned with are, on closer inspection, positional goods—goods whose value depends on the relative distribution within a specific group.

In this paper, we argue that future generations are generally not part of the same distributive group as contemporaries. This means that their shares of positional goods affect us differently, if at all, than those of our contemporaries. This means that objectionable positional inequalities do not typically arise between nonoverlapping generations. By drawing on this distinction between positional goods and non-positional goods in intergenerational justice, we argue that several prominent objections to intergenerational egalitarianism are significantly weakened.

Keywords: Intergenerational justice; distributive justice; positional goods; equality; sufficiency.

2 | SLOUCHING TOWARDS MORAL PROGRESS
(ACROSS GENERATIONS)

Pablo Magaña | Trinity College Dublin

What, if anything, do we owe future generations? While most philosophers nowadays agree that we do owe them something, they disagree about the content, scope and grounds of these obligations. Any account faces well-known challenges, such as the problems of non-existence and non-identity. But they also face comparatively less discussed, but equally crucial, problems of uncertainty and paternalism. On the one hand, it seems

extremely difficult to predict future generations' interests and needs—for those quite distant in time, some claim, we may even be clueless. On the other hand, and even if we could reasonably anticipate future generations' interests, the worry would remain that respecting their autonomy requires ensuring that they can freely choose which of these interests they want to pursue. Concerns with paternalism arise, for instance, by Toby Ord's and other long-termists' proposal that humans engage in a "long reflection" (spanning, potentially, thousands of years) in which we settle what is ultimately of value for us, before taking possibly irreversible decisions, such as spreading to the stars or massively tinkering with our biology.

Worries about uncertainty and paternalism have led some—such as Dennis Thompson—to argue that what we most fundamentally owe future generations is the survival of well-functioning democratic institutions, through which they can jointly decide what to do for themselves. In this paper, however, I argue that this view is too restrictive. First, because, while rightly emphasizing the importance of securing the persistence of flexible, open-ended problem-solving mechanisms, the proposal arbitrarily singles out only one such mechanism (i.e. democracy). Second, because democracy is too open-ended, and might fail to respond to serious dangers of moral catastrophe—for instance, a failure to extend humanity's moral circle to include entities such as insects or future, advanced AI system if, as many increasingly claim, they are sentience candidates.

In response to these concerns, I suggest that we have a duty to secure for future generations the social, political, and economic pre-conditions of moral progress. Drawing on several bodies of empirical research, alongside the emerging literature on moral progress, I argue that future moral progress will arguably require i) a capacity for large-scale social cooperation; ii) a substantial amount of interpersonal trust; iii) the capacity to reduce the costs arising from deviations from the status quo, and iv) opportunities for political self-government. All of which require markets, democracy, technological innovation, constraining population decline, and safeguarding well-functioning methods of knowledge-storage and transmission.

Because moral progress is open-ended and must be carried out by successive generations themselves, my proposal provides an answer to the problems of uncertainty and paternalism. And, because it does not only single out democracy, avoids the charge of arbitrariness. Finally, securing the pre-conditions of moral progress, while ultimately leaving the last word to future generations, makes it likelier that they will at least be in a position to successfully address potential moral catastrophes.

Keywords: Intergenerational justice; future generations; moral progress; uncertainty; paternalism.

3 | DWORKIN'S THEORY OF JUSTICE AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

José Gusmão | FCSH, NOVA University Lisbon

The central question of this presentation is: How can Dworkin's theory of justice be adapted to the intergenerational sphere? Ronald Dworkin (1981) proposes a theory of distributive justice designed to address resource allocation within a given society. According to his framework, a distribution of resources is just if and only if it satisfies an envy test—meaning that no individual in that society would prefer someone else's bundle of goods over their own. This principle aims to ensure fairness by eliminating envy as a measure of inequality, focusing on individuals' subjective valuations of resources rather than imposing an external standard of equality. Dworkin argues that the mechanism to achieve such a distribution for the initial allocation of resources is a hypothetical auction. In this thought experiment, all members of society begin from a position of equality, endowed with identical purchasing power, typically symbolized by an equal allocation of abstract “currency” (e.g., clamshells in Dworkin's original formulation). Each person then bids for the bundle of goods they most prefer, resulting in a distribution that reflects their choices and satisfies the envy test.

However, Dworkin recognizes that real-world complexities, such as natural inequalities like disabilities, challenge the simplicity of this auction. To address this, he introduces a hypothetical insurance scheme. Under a veil of ignorance—where individuals do not know whether they possess a disability—each agent considers what insurance premium they would be willing to pay to mitigate the risk of disadvantage. This mechanism adjusts the initial distribution to account for natural inequalities, ensuring that justice remains sensitive to circumstances beyond individual control. Building on this logic, we propose that Dworkin's framework can be extended to the intergenerational sphere, a domain where traditional theories of justice often falter due to the asymmetry between present and future agents.

Adapting the hypothetical auction to intergenerational justice requires rethinking the temporal scope of resource distribution. We suggest that the savings rate imposed on each generation can be interpreted as a form of intergenerational insurance. Just as individuals in Dworkin's insurance scheme protect against the risk of disability, generations can protect against the uncertainty of belonging to a cohort that inherits depleted resources or adverse conditions—such as environmental degradation, economic instability, or technological stagnation. In this adapted model, what the members of each generation should save for those yet to come corresponds to the amount they would be willing to set aside if they operated under a veil of ignorance regarding their generational position. This approach mirrors John Rawls' concept of justice across time but integrates Dworkin's emphasis on individual choice and resource distribution.

This intergenerational insurance scheme ensures that present generations account for the needs of the future without presuming to dictate their preferences. By determining savings through a hypothetical deliberation—where agents seek to safeguard against the worst-case scenario of belonging to a disadvantaged generation—the model balances fairness and autonomy. It also invites further exploration into how economic, environmental, and social resources should be quantified and preserved, offering a robust framework for addressing one of the most pressing ethical challenges of our time: justice across generations.

Keywords: Dworkin; Intergenerational Justice; Domestic Distributive Justice; Just Savings.

PANEL 4
SESSION 2
ROOM: 1.09

4 | AGE JUSTICE AND “AGE-BLINDNESS”

James Hart & Sapfo Lignou | University of Oxford

Our target in this paper is what we see as the main approach to justice between different co-existing age-groups and generations in policy contexts. We call this approach ‘age-blind justice’ or simply ‘age-blindness’ due to its similarity with racial ‘colour-blindness’ (Schaef-fer, 2008, pp.321-322). Racial colour-blindness combines the belief that ethnicity ought not to affect a person’s treatment with the assertion that ignoring ethnicity is the best way to achieve this aim. Similarly, age-blindness maintains that age ought not to affect a person’s treatment, and that justice between different age groups and generations involves ignoring their age. Justice, on this view, can thus be achieved by eliminating discrimination based on age and ensuring that all people are treated equally regardless of age.

On the face of it, both age-blindness and colour-blindness seem like appropriate re-sponses to unequal treatment. But in both cases, they fall short of achieving true justice. There is significant criticism of colour-blindness amongst scholars and within anti-racist movements (Suleman & Qureshi, 2023) (Williams, 1997) (Scruggs, 2009), and much of that criticism is specific to racial injustice. However, there are three broad criticisms of colour-blindness that we shall show also apply to age-blindness. These are that blind approach-es (1) overlook potential differences in needs, values or goals; (2) do not avoid making assumptions about what is ‘normative’; and (3) obscure underlying inequalities and in-justices. We thus advocate for a more ‘age-sensitive’ approach to justice, as a corollary of ‘colour-conscious’ approaches to racial justice, wherein we recognise the importance of age and incorporate it into relevant decision-making.

Lastly, we consider ‘age-sensitive’ approaches to justice in the context of healthcare. We might think that healthcare is already age-sensitive, as we seem to incorporate age into many different healthcare policies and approaches (e.g. vaccination programmes, screen-ing programmes). Our contention, however, is that whilst healthcare institutions are not explicitly committed to age-blindness (and do in fact sometimes accommodate for age) age-blindness remains in the background. Whilst there are some accommodations for age, age-blindness still has significant influence over healthcare, especially at the popu-lation level. Where age is incorporated, it is in only the most obvious cases, in a limited manner, and usually for non-justice reasons.

Keywords: Age; Justice; Distribution; Healthcare; Resources.

5 | AGE-BASED DISENFRANCHISEMENT, VOTERS' COMPETENCE, AND ITS CRITICS: DEMOCRATIZING POLITICAL COMPETENCE

Marco Miglino | Piemonte Orientale University

Is age-based political disenfranchisement legitimate? Democratic theory offers different competing answers to this question. A good part of them, nonetheless, presuppose that possessing some competences is a precondition for enfranchisement, so that answering the aforementioned question requires determining whether age is a good proxy for voters' competence. The legitimacy of this view is contested by other scholars, according to which disenfranchising citizens on competence-based criteria is incompatible with the egalitarian underpinnings of the democratic ideal. This work argues – against the latter perspectives – that the demos' capacity for meaningful self-determination relies on citizens' capability to engage in rational public deliberation. This, at first glance, justifies the requirement that at least the significant majority of voters possess the competences required for the purpose, and then the employment of some competence-based criteria of inclusion deputed to avoid that the number of non-competent voters exceeds the one that democratic systems can sustain.

However, I also argue that, so far, the existing debate has proven incapable to determine what these criteria should be and that, rather, the offered solutions to this purpose reveal a democratic dilemma. Indeed, to preserve the electorate's competence without contradicting the democratic ideal, the criterion employed should, at once, grant that at any given time, all competent citizens are enfranchised, and that any citizen (with few and well-circumscribed exceptions) is enfranchised at least at some point throughout their life. The dilemma appears because the traditionally offered criteria can satisfy either of these two conditions, but not both: age-based criteria are compatible with the latter condition, but not with the former, insofar as age can be an indicator of average individuals' capacities, but not of statistically exceptional persons – as the example of gifted children clarifies – that, then, may risk to be unfairly disenfranchised. Conversely, the opposite is true for the main alternative offered by the debate – voting tests open to citizens of any age, that can better assess individuals' competences, but risk to determine the permanent exclusion of less competent voters.

This dilemma, I argue, does not admit a definitive solution. At the same time, it does not make the employment of competence-based criteria for enfranchisement illegitimate to the extent that such criteria are understood as democratically negotiable. Indeed, I argue that despite democratic inclusion requires some competences, which competences exactly voters should possess, and how to determine who possess them can be subject to reasonable disagreement, and then to political negotiation. My claim is that such negotiation should be open to both those who are already considered competent voters and those who are not. Applied to a regime within which citizens' competence is assessed on age-based criteria, this view entails that minors should be able to contest the grounds on which their disenfranchisement is publicly justified. While not solving the aforementioned dilemma, this approach permits to mitigate its potential exclusionary effects, giving to the excluded the capacity to contest the (alleged) arbitrariness of their own exclusion.

Keywords: Age-based disenfranchisement; political competence; dilemma of democratic inclusion; democratic legitimacy; democratic contestation.

6 | DEMOCRATIC LEGITIMACY, YOUTH EMPOWERMENT, AND FUTURE PREFERENCES

Axel Gosseries & Manuel Sã Valente | UCLouvain & CEPS UMinho

Whenever we vote on an issue of long-term importance, one possible claim is that younger generations should have more of a say in that decision. After all, their lives will be more affected by this vote than those of older people. In this paper, we begin by laying out the pro-tanto argument for extra youth electoral empowerment. More specifically, we examine a proportional reading of the all-affected principle across time. This view holds that, for any given election or decision whose effects last beyond the electoral cycle, the young will - other things being equal - be more relevantly affected than older persons because of their higher additional life expectancy. While this pro-tanto argument seems persuasive, it also faces certain complications. What if there was a systematic pattern such that voters consistently change their political views as they age? And what if the phenomenon were such that the best predictor of young voters's future electoral preferences could be found in the current electoral preferences of older voters? Under such age effects, it is questionable whether giving the young additional power to vote on behalf of their older selves is legitimate. This paper aims to discover whether these effects challenge the pro-tanto case for youth electoral empowerment by identifying challenges such an argument would have to surmount to succeed.

Keywords: Democratic legitimacy; youth empowerment; age effects; future preferences; the all-affected principle.

PANEL 4
SESSION 3
ROOM: 1.09

7 | HISTORICAL INJUSTICE AND RETIREMENT
PENSIONS: THE CASE OF CHILE

Javiera Arias | Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile

Chile's pension reform, developed in 2024 and pending approval, offers a compelling case study for examining the intersection of historical injustice and retirement pensions, particularly the systemic gender disparities. The reform highlights contemporary societies' dual responsibilities: addressing past harms while ensuring equitable conditions for the future. By analyzing Chile's reform, I explore the moral responsibilities of society in confronting past injustices, providing insight into policy design and justification within welfare states.

Historically, gender disparities in Chile's pension system have been shaped by systemic barriers such as the gender wage gap, unpaid domestic labor, career interruptions due to maternity, and exclusion from leadership roles (de Mesa & Monteemos, 1999), which have led to significantly lower pension savings for women compared to men. The privatized pension model introduced in the 1980s exacerbated these disparities by linking retirement income solely to individuals contributions, disregarding the broader socio-economic factors shaping labor market outcomes (Biehl et al., 2019; Chamorro, 2018; de Mesa & Monteemos, 1999). Consequently, women's reduced pensions result not from individual failings but from systemic barriers.

Chile's pension reform addresses these injustices by acknowledging them and by redistributing resources to women with lower pensions. Fraser's (2009) argument—that justice requires both recognition and redistribution to correct systemic imbalances—aligns with the reform. Such measures are crucial to ensuring future generations do not inherit these disadvantages. The reform also draws on Young's (2011) concept of structural injustice, which attributes injustice to systemic processes rather than individual actions. This framework supports the reform as a response to the historical systemic disadvantage faced by women.

Critics who claim the reform unfairly burdens male workers—called a “tax for being a man”—overlook the benefits that certain groups have historically derived from inequitable structures (Butt, 2013). These critiques also miss the essential point: addressing structural injustice requires collective responsibility and systemic solutions. Fullinwider's (2000) concept of “corporate liability of the nation” further supports the idea that society as a whole bears responsibility for past harms, rather than assigning individual guilt. The reform seeks to promote equity by addressing cumulative disadvantages through collective action.

Additionally, the reform illustrates justice as proportional equality (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1130b-1132b). Women's unpaid labor has long benefited society without recognition in economic systems. By redistributing resources, the reform acknowledges these disproportionate burdens. This approach reflects Barry's (1991) indirect reciprocity. In this case, those who benefit from inequitable systems bear a moral responsibility to

contribute to rectifying them. The reform establishes institutional fairness by equitably distributing burdens and benefits.

Chile's reform exemplifies the integration of reparative and corrective justice into policymaking. It demonstrates that recognizing past harms aligns with commitments to intergenerational equity. As Lyons (2004) suggests, systemic corrective justice—rather than individual compensation—is necessary to rectify ongoing inequities derived from historical injustices. By addressing historical injustices and preventing future inequities, the reform fulfills Hill's (1991) argument for integrating backward and forward-looking perspectives into a cross-temporal moral framework. Far from imposing new injustices, the reform aligns moral responsibility with social policy, demonstrating how collective efforts can achieve justice across time.

Keywords: Historical injustice; gender disparities; collective moral responsibility; reparative and corrective policymaking.

8 | AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND INTERGENERATIONAL JUSTICE

Pascal Mowla | University of Oxford

Affirmative action is typically presumed to apply to recruitment but never lay-offs. Policies of affirmative action which only apply to recruitment are known as entry initiatives whilst exit initiatives involve lay-offs. In this paper, I work from the assumption that entry initiatives are justified as a means to redress inequality of opportunity. Assuming that either quota or goal-based affirmative action can be justified in such a way and that we endorse the equal opportunity rationale in support the relevant policies, I instead consider the following question: on whose shoulders should the burden of affirmative action fall? At the site of existing initiatives, affirmative action typically pertains only to recruitment rather than lay-offs and this is supported by the normative presumption in favour of entry initiatives. Since entry initiatives disrupt competitive procedures with either quotas or goals in order to influence the entry of women or minorities into advantageous positions, those who currently carry the burden of these policies tend to be young, majority candidates. Conversely, exit initiatives shift the burden of the relevant policies to older, majority role-occupants who tend to be bigger beneficiaries of both vertical and horizontal opportunity-gaps.

In what follows, I begin by raising Judith Thomson's presumption against affirmative action policies which involve lay-offs as a stand-in for the extant position within both philosophical and public discourse that currently eschews exit initiatives in favour of entry schemes. I then proceed to differentiate exit from entry initiatives and suggest adopting a "mixed" construal of the former that requires the implementation of either quotas or goals when rehiring for the open positions which exit initiatives generate. In Section 2, I strengthen the case for exit initiatives of this kind by elucidating the equal opportunity rationale for such policies and illustrate the ways in which they are able to promote equality of opportunity both within and across birth-cohorts. Having elucidated pro tanto egalitarian support for mixed exit initiatives, I turn to consider eight different objections to the relevant policies in Section 3. I argue that each of these objections cannot reasonably be taken to decide the case against exit initiatives without deciding the case against

affirmative action tout court and so, a duty borne by the relevant institutions to implement mixed exit policies remains plausible provided that one is committed to similar duties in the parallel case of exit initiatives. I conclude by gesturing towards alternative policies which could be justified in a similar manner and contemplate whether my argument constitutes an inadvertent attempt at a kind of *reductio ad absurdum*.

Keywords: Affirmative Action; Equality of Opportunity; Intergenerational Justice; Intersectionality.

9 | ON SENTIMENTAL VALUE

Andrea Villalba Cuesta | University of Texas at Austin

What duties do living persons have toward the past? One possible answer is that certain remnants of the past should be preserved. But what distinguishes a ‘good’ reason for preservation from a ‘bad’ one? At the very least, we would expect conservationists to be motivated to preserve something of value. This raises a follow-up question: what kinds of value deserve preservation? Philosophers have primarily focused on impersonal value—the value held by things that are valuable for everyone, across time. Take, for example, Sequoia trees, the ruins of Syria, or celebrated works of art. However, impersonal value does not account for all that merits preservation. Sometimes, we hold onto things because of the emotional attachments we or others have to them, either now or in the past. Think, for instance, of the love letters your grandparents exchanged during their courtship, civil war memorabilia, or the first dollar bill framed on the wall of your favourite dive bar. These objects may hold value for specific individuals rather than for everyone.

Philosophers have a name for the value that love letters, civil war memorabilia and framed dollar bills carry: sentimental value. Despite its ubiquity, there is little consensus on how to define it. As a value theorist, I aim to change that. In the first half of my talk, I will examine and ultimately reject the only two accounts of sentimental value in the literature, those proposed by Anthony Hatzimoysis and Guy Fletcher. I will argue that their accounts are missing a crucial appeal to self-narrative. Then, I will suggest a new account of sentimental value, drawing on David Velleman’s theory of narrative understanding. According to my view, something has sentimental value if it evokes an emotion that “completes” or concludes what Velleman refers to as an “emotional cadence”—a sequence of feelings that together form a story. We value sentimental items because they allow us to reconnect with, and ultimately make sense of, our self-narratives.

In the second half of my talk, I will argue for the surprising conclusion that reflecting on sentimental value gives rise to a distinct obligation of intergenerational justice: the past worth preserving may very well be the past that held sentimental value for someone other than ourselves. Justifying these obligations will require us to think about the kinds of self-narratives or stories we should allow to live on for future generations. This is no easy task.

Keywords: Sentimental value; preservation; narrative; intergenerational justice.

PANEL 4
SESSION 4
ROOM: 1.09

10 | PARTIALLY AGGREGATIVE POPULATION ETHICS

Karri Heikkinen | University College London

In this paper, I propose a new theory of population ethics, based on the idea of deontic partial aggregation (Kamm 1993, Scanlon 1998, Voorhoeve 2014, Tadros 2019, Mann 2021, Zhang 2024). The view, called PPA, goes as follows:

Procreative Partial Aggregation (PPA).

- 1) If person X would have a net positive life, then we have a procreative reason to create X. The better X's life, the stronger this reason is.
- 2) If X would have a net negative life, then we have a procreative reason against creating X. The worse X's life, the stronger this reason is.
- 3) If the strongest procreative reason in favour of one option is, in individual comparison, much stronger than any procreative reason in favour of a competing option, then the latter reasons are disabled. Disabled reasons do not count for determining which option we have most procreative reason to choose.
- 4) In a choice of population, we ought to choose the alternative that we have the most procreative reason to choose.

The view takes as its starting point that there are moral reasons that, in one way or another, speak in favour of or against creating particular people, and that these reasons are a function of how good or bad the lives of the people we could create would be. Let us call these our procreative reasons. This is not meant to imply that we personally engage in procreation—rather, the point is that whenever our choices change the identity of future people, we are, in one sense, creating those people, since otherwise some other people would have existed instead. So, procreative reasons are the reasons we have for choosing one population over another.

I combine the concept of procreative reasons with the idea that reasons can both outweigh other reasons and, if one reason is much stronger than another in individual comparison, disable them (see Scanlon 1998, Tadros 2019, Zhang 2024). This gives rise to a view that, borrowing from the literature on interpersonal aggregation, can be labelled partially aggregative. Roughly, the idea is this: when choosing between possible future populations, we should aggregate the welfare in each population and choose the one that maximises total welfare, unless it is the case that the welfare levels of the people in the competing options, individually compared, are very far apart. In this case, the stronger procreative reasons disable the weaker, even if the latter correspond to higher total welfare.

After introducing PPA, I show that it gets the non-identity problem right, while avoiding the Repugnant Conclusion (Parfit 1984) and the Sadistic Conclusion (Arrhenius 2000). I then argue that PPA provides an appealing response to the Mere Addition Paradox (Parfit 1984). Finally, I show that it can be combined with various positions with regards to the procreative asymmetry (Narveson 1973, Frick 2020), because there are many views we might accept about the relative weight of procreative reasons and ordinary moral reasons. Thus, PPA emerges as a promising view.

Keywords: Population ethics; partial aggregation; non-identity; Repugnant Conclusion.

11 | TAKING THE INEVITABILITY OF HUMAN EXTINCTION SERIOUSLY

Aida Martínez Suárez | University of Oviedo

If we agree that human species is bound to biological processes like those of other species, there are enough reasons to believe that, at some point, we will face our own extinction. However, current debates on this topic often fail to acknowledge this inevitability and, instead, extinction is framed either as a catastrophe to be prevented at all costs or as a desirable outcome. This framing is problematic and potentially harmful to future generations, and it can lead to unrealistic and impractical decision-making when planning for humanity's future.

On the other hand, by acknowledging the almost certain inevitability of human extinction, we can address two crucial issues:

1. The need for a balanced long-term planning. We should seek for strategies that balance immediate needs with the satisfaction of future ones. This involves changing our attitudes and recognizing that future-oriented decisions should account for humanity's finitude, avoiding assumptions of an eternal existence. This would allow for better allocation of resources, prioritizing the well-being of all generations that are to exist before extinction, instead of investing large amounts in efforts to try to perpetuate humanity ad infinitum regardless of general wellbeing.

2. Preparation for extinction scenarios. Framing extinction as a natural process allows us to go beyond the cliché of post-apocalyptic narratives and work on real ethical considerations such as justifying why the challenges faced by the last generation(s) would be significantly different from the ones we are familiar with, and why we should care. There are also issues of distributive justice, like the amount of resources we should allocate to the last generation(s) as compensation for their lack of future, i.e., they'll be deprived of an experience that every generation has enjoyed before them. Or if, since they're the last, a sufficientarian allocation will be enough, considering that it will be pointless to give extra resources to a generation that will not be able to invest them in their future. We would also need to imagine what kind of specific needs they might have, which is particularly difficult due to the high uncertainty concerning what kind of future they'll have. However, I think we can be confident about at least one issue: the last elders will face a particularly tragic situation, with no younger population taking care of them. Therefore, special consideration should be given to the last elders. Finally, this is a question of intergenerational justice not only because it dwells on the fate of the last generation, but also because it requires intergenerational planning and cooperation to adequately satisfy the needs of the last generation(s). How can each generation contribute? Should each of them have an equal participation, or should the generations closest to the last ones make a higher contribution? All these are aspects of the preparation.

In conclusion, my proposal is to advocate for a fundamental change in how we conceptualize and prepare for human extinction, considering that this might have a high impact on the last human generation(s).

Keywords: Future generations; extinction; intergenerational justice; distributive justice; duty.

12 | GENERATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY: A CRITIQUE

André Santos Campos | FCSH, NOVA University Lisbon

This paper tries to expand the concept of sovereignty to establish whether applying it to temporally situated political agents such as generations makes sense. In the first section, I offer a short survey of the genealogy of the concept of sovereignty. In this survey, I show that, unlike the usual meaning afforded to the term, as synonymous with absolute or limitless power, there have always been two cumulative meanings of sovereignty: one consistent with limitation and one as groundless ground or ultimate justification. In the latter case, the sovereign is the one whose exercise of power becomes automatically legitimate (as *de jure* power) simply because the one exercises it (sovereignty is entirely source-based).

In the second section, I apply the first meaning to generations. Following Bentham's phrasing according to which sovereignty is the absence of a superior authority, there seems to be only one instance in which generations have no superior of the same nature: the making of the first historical constitution. At that moment, the generation has a total disruptive capacity vis-à-vis any previous constitutional order and the *ab ovo* leverage to develop constituent power. However, two implications follow. First, the disruptive capacity is always latent in each actual generation, so the idea of 'no superior' is always carried by each generation as a threat of dissolution of the body politic. Each generation is a 'sleeping sovereign' in this sense. Second, constituent power exercised by the makers of the first historical constitution is not entirely limitless. The demos arises from the conversion of the constituent movement to the establishment of constituted powers, which are supposedly the means by which that specific generation exercises power *qua* one single generation – the generation of all those alive at that moment. Constituent power cannot, then, have a short temporal horizon, as the long-term interests of all the members of that generation extend along their lifetimes. The upshot is that present generations are not entirely limitless, but that does not have to be incompatible with the qualification 'sovereign'.

In the third section, I apply the second meaning of sovereignty to generations. Within this frame of reference, we realise that no new generation is a clean slate in an already established system of constituted powers. In addition, the generation of the first historical constitution does not have its bedrock in the very exercise of constituent power, as the founding founders gather the dispersed values, discourses, and forces of the disruptive moment into a unit. The groundless ground of justification depends on the continuous mixed capacity of disruption, constituent power and constituted powers. The upshot is that present generations are not 'without inferior', without the need for an external justification of their own exercise of power, so they do not fully meet the justificatory qualification of 'sovereign'. Sovereignty is, therefore, probably not the proper term to apply to the temporal frameworks of the exercise of power.

Keywords: Generational sovereignty; intergenerational justice; self-government; constituent power; political realism.

PANEL 5 — AN EPISTEMOLOGY FOR FOOD WASTE. INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES

Convenor: Nicola Piras (CEPS, University of Minho)

Try asking someone whether wasting food is morally acceptable and, most likely, they will express the view that no, wasting food is morally wrong, and that it should be avoided or, failing that, morally condemned. However, approximately one-third of the food produced is wasted, amounting to about 930 million tons annually. This wastage plays a significant role in climate change, with some estimates suggesting that if food waste were a country, it would rank as the third-largest global emitter of greenhouse gases. Indeed, reducing and effectively managing food waste stands as a crucial objective within the framework of the UN 2030 Agenda (Goal 12.3). Still, interdisciplinary literature remarks two notable obstacles to accomplish that goal: flawed extant definitions that fall short to really identify food waste and the absence of a universally applicable and consistent set of criteria for defining food waste. Such a definition would play a crucial role in underpinning measurements of the economic and environmental impacts of food waste. Additionally, if consumers and agencies adopt, as often happen, different definitions of food waste that might undermine attempts to reduce or revise wasteful behaviors. But how can such a definition be established? Who possesses the suitable knowledge? Who should have the epistemic authority and how to ascertain their expertise? While these questions have sparked debate among scholars across various disciplines, it is somewhat surprising that philosophy has only played a marginal role in addressing them. This limited interest is puzzling, given that addressing the epistemological foundation of relevant piece of knowledge should arguably be one of philosophy fundamental missions.

This FCT Exploratory Research Project endeavors to fill this gap deploying philosophical tools for grounding and assessing the epistemology of food waste. However, philosophers may still think that defining food waste requires only a trivial expertise. This is because answering questions like “what is food waste?” and “is this food waste?” could appear to demand basic skills. However, these questions conceal a host of complexities that warrant deeper exploration: should the disposal of food to increase its market value be considered wasteful?, does overconsumption or overprovisioning qualify as food waste?, what properties does an observer detect when categorizing an item as wasted?, are these properties intrinsic or relational? To offer consistent and robust answers to these and cognate questions, this project aims at laying down a comprehensive food waste epistemology, by pursuing three objectives.

Objective 1. Defining the Expertise on Food Waste. This part will explore what skills and expertise should be required to define food waste, following the guiding hypothesis that this expertise does not rest only on quantitative and scientific kind of knowledge, but it requires also everyday experiences and traditional ecological knowledge.

Objective 2. Integrating the Normative Dimensions in Food Waste Epistemology. Empirical surveys offer substantial evidence that people tend to condemn food waste. Asking “what is food waste,” thus, not only requires a descriptive account of its scope, but also involves a normative inquiry, which still deserves to be pursued.

Objective 3. Assessing the Relation between Political Authority and the Epistemology of Food Waste: Debates concerning the definition of food waste tend to be highly specialized, while the management and the social and economic consequences of wasting food usually involve ordinary people's daily lives. This, arguably, raises different kinds of political questions. On the one hand, how to assess whether a definition of food waste complies with the political principles that the community at stake endorses and, on the other hand, whether stakeholders should actively participate in negotiating the definition, for example, through citizen science or deliberative democracy. These three objectives are pursued by scholars, inside and outside philosophy, who rarely interact with each other and this kick-off event aims to bring them together to initiate the discussion.

The Exploratory Project "EpiFoWa: An Epistemology for Food Waste. Interdisciplinary Perspectives" team and consultants will meet to discuss preliminary assumptions and possible directions for future research. Scholars will briefly present their initial ideas and collaborate on drafting a short note outlining potential themes related to food waste epistemology.

PANEL 6 — FOOD (IN)JUSTICE. PHILOSOPHICAL AND POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES

Convenors: Michelangelo Bestazzi, Lena Marinova and Nicola Piras (CEPS, UMinho)

The food we eat has an impact that goes far beyond the mere fact that it feeds us. This is the core of food justice: it is about food availability and accessibility as well as its impact on global health, communities, and the environment, in developed and developing countries. Food justice takes the form of both a reflection within the broad landscape dealing with food ethics (Barnhill & Doggett, 2018) as well as the implementation of initiatives by social movements and institutions that aspire to achieve specific political goals. Theoretically, a growing body of scholarship (e.g., Kaplan, 2019) is examining how various inequalities are both reproduced and challenged within food systems, with significant impacts on the lives of individuals and communities.

More precisely, food justice studies focus on the fair distribution of benefits and risks across all stages of food production, distribution, and consumption, shedding light on the struggles against exploitation, oppression, and discrimination within food systems, from a variety of angles, for instance: the (in)just distribution of economic advantages and disadvantages of international food market; the relation between food systems and climate change (Kortetmäki 2019) or with environment and types of diet (Budolfson 2018); the massive production rates in modern husbandry which cause multi-resistances by misusing antimicrobials for growth promotion (Rollin 2001); how food justice goes beyond a merely anthropocentric approach to encompass a broader species spectrum (Milburn 2023); food justice and gender (Portman 2018) and racial issues (Hope and Agyeman 2011); food (mis)representation and epistemic injustice (Korthals 2012); the justice in sites where people eat and drink (Bonotti et al. 2023)

This panel aims to discuss these and other aspects of food justice bringing together scholars from various perspectives to explore ethical, social, economic, and political dimensions of food systems. Topics include, but are not limited to:

- Animal welfare
- Cultural appropriation;
- Food aids and bans;
- Food choices, diets, and global health;
- Food industry and its ethical challenges;
- Food representation and epistemic injustice;
- Food sovereignty;
- Hunger and malnutrition;
- Right to food;
- Food and oppression (race and gender);
- The ethics of microbes in food production;

We look forward to receiving your insightful contributions and fostering engaging discussions!

PANEL 6
SESSION 1
ROOM: 1.10

1 | LUNCHBOX MOMENT: AGAINST PARENTAL CONCESSION

April On-pui Chan | Northwestern University

For many children of immigrants, being mocked or bullied in a school cafeteria for one's ethnic lunch is a painful childhood memory. In this paper, I examine "the lunchbox moment" and argue that immigrant parents ought not preemptively mask their children's cultural identity by packing non-ethnic lunches, nor should they concede to their children's request easily even when they demand non-ethnic lunches as a result of peer harassment. My positive proposal is what I dub the 'empathy-based strategy', where immigrant parents provide supportive guidance on their children's lunchbox choice before ultimately deferring to their children's judgment.

To get the phenomenon in view, I illustrate, through first-person testimonies and narrative portrayals, three constitutive features of "the lunchbox moment": (a) the child eats ethnic food at home and likes it, (b) the child's friends make fun of the food at lunchtime, and (c) the child wants to fit in. Following Gheaus (2021)'s child-centered childrearing framework, I argue that the most important moral consideration that is relevant to immigrant parents' decision in this regard is their children's interest in relation to three parties—their cultural ancestry, their parents, and their peers. In the rest of the paper, I use these three criteria to evaluate possible parental responses to the lunchbox moment.

I first reject **imposed resistance**—i.e. packing ethnic lunches for one's children as a form of resistance—based on two arguments: it unfairly imposes ethical and emotional costs onto the children, and it risks irreparably damaging the parent-child relationship.

Next, I reject **preemptive masking**—i.e. shielding one's children from food-based bullying by packing non-ethnic lunches on the first day of school—by highlighting three unique normative features of this case, one of which is the importance of diasporic food culture as a site for the preservation of the intergenerational relationship goods between the children and their elders.

I also reject **easy concession**, i.e. immediately concede to their children's choice when they do explicitly request non-ethnic lunches. Similar to my rationale against **preemptive masking**, my arguments here are based on the fact that ethnic lunches are markers of cultural identity, as well as considerations about respecting the children's agency. The former means that opting for the easy concession might exacerbate the risk of the children experiencing internalized shame about their own cultural upbringing, and the latter requires that immigrant parents inform their children of the ethical costs (see Morton 2019) involved in such decisions.

To achieve the best balance in helping the children navigate xenophobia, respecting the children's agency, and minimizing the children's ethical costs, I recommend an empathy-based strategy whereby immigrant parents defer to the children's decision **only after** helping them process their emotions and clarify their motives in a way that combats internalized shame. My recommendation, I argue, enables the children to make an informed

decision based on morally important considerations rather than acting on shame-motivated impulses. Moreover, it fosters the children's moral thinking and emotional-regulation skills as well as strengthens the parent-child relationship.

Keywords: Lunchbox moment; parenting; immigration; assimilation; food culture.

2 | THEORISING FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Jenny Brown | University of Warwick

Food sovereignty is an ideal that is increasingly invoked in articulations of ideal food systems. But what this concept entails, and how we should interpret it, is under-theorised. The central participant in the movement for food sovereignty is the peasant or small-scale farmer. Indeed, the Nyéléni Declaration, which articulates a vision of food sovereignty, was organised by La Via Campesina, an organisation representing peasants worldwide, with membership estimated to be between 200 and 300 million. The main threat to food sovereignty by this account is neo-liberal, global capitalism, and the concrete demands consist of territorial rights and (cultural) self-determination.

In an endeavour to bring food sovereignty movements into conversation with normative theory, Matteo Bonotti proposes a republican interpretation, that emphasizes freedom as non-domination, rather than a liberal multiculturalist understanding (Bonotti, 2018). Although I agree with the theoretical manoeuvre, the effect of the discussion is to de-centre the peasant's struggle as archetypical of the food sovereignty movement, by de-emphasizing the ideas of control over space (territorial rights), cultural resilience, and democratic participation. Instead, Bonotti shifts to other cases, such as the urban dweller in a food desert, to centre the need for more equality between neighbourhoods and better representative institutions at the global level.

In this paper, I want to resist the shift away from the peasant experience, whilst acknowledging the need to theorise food sovereignty holistically, that is, by considering those who produce food, those who prepare it, and those who consume it, as all essential to the account. I proceed by considering three cases within the globalised food system where intuitively food sovereignty is lacking. I compare these to the paradigmatic peasant case, emphasizing continuity, and showing other features that the three cases highlight that are only implicit in the peasant case but, I argue, also central to food sovereignty. Maintaining the republican approach suggested by Bonotti, I argue that food sovereignty posits not only power and control over space (land) and culture, but also resources, time, and knowledge. Certain elements of each area of control may be more or less central to certain cases, but, I argue, all are significant to each. Finally, I argue for placing emphasis on the ways in which people are connected to each other through food, showing how knowledge about these relationships gives us more opportunities and incentives for participating in political action directed towards greater food sovereignty.

Keywords: Food sovereignty; republicanism; La Via Campesina; self-determination; food justice.

3 | IS VEGANISM NOT GOOD ENOUGH? INDUSTRIAL PLANT AGRICULTURE AND UNNECESSARY HARM

Joshua Jarvis-Campbell | University of Exeter

Some philosophers have sought to reject industrial animal agriculture by appealing to what we may call the Principle of Unnecessary Harm – the principle according to which it is wrong to cause, or support practices that cause, extensive, unnecessary harm to animals. Since factory farming causes extensive, unnecessary harm, so the argument goes, it is morally impermissible. But, as some philosophers have argued, certain forms of industrial plant agriculture may also cause extensive harm to animals as a result of harvesting, pesticides, and land clearing. Furthermore, this harm may be unnecessary, since we could eat plants from less harmful sources such as backyard or vertical farms. If so, then simply being vegan (or having a diet consisting of plants and non-factory-farmed animal products) is not good enough, since one may also have an obligation to abstain from certain plant foods if the production of such foods also causes unnecessary harm to animals.

In this paper, I assess the plausibility of this argument. First, I give some reasons for thinking that industrial plant agriculture may not cause extensive harm to animals. I do this by defending two claims: (a) the wild animals killed in industrial plant agriculture may not be (significantly) harmed by death, and (b) the practice may not cause an all-things-considered harm to wild animals because the wild animals killed would not have existed if it weren't for the practice.

Second, I argue that even if industrial plant agriculture does cause extensive harm to animals, this harm is plausibly necessary. I suggest, following several philosophers who defend the Principle of Unnecessary Harm, that a harm qualifies as being “necessary” provided two conditions are met: (1) the harm X must be caused in the name of an end Y that is worth the cost of the harm X, and (2) we cannot achieve end Y unless we perform some activity that produces harm X. I argue that one of the ends of industrial plant agriculture – providing cheap food to large numbers of people – may be worth the cost of the harm caused by the practice, and may not be attainable by any other means of food production. As such, the harm caused by industrial plant agriculture may satisfy the two conditions above, and so should be considered plausibly necessary.

For these reasons, I argue, industrial plant agriculture is not morally problematic according to the Principle of Unnecessary Harm. I finish by arguing, however, that even if the practice as-a-whole does not cause extensive, unnecessary harm to animals, certain individuals (such as the relatively affluent) may have an obligation to abstain from purchasing industrially produced plant foods, and should instead opt for plant foods from less harmful sources.

Keywords: Industrial plant agriculture; factory farming; unnecessary harm; veganism; new omnivorism.

PANEL 6
SESSION 2
ROOM: 1.10

4 | FOOD(S) POWER(S)

Michelangelo Bestazzi | CEPS, University of Minho

I advance a philosophical investigation into the powers of food entities, arguing that food entities instantiate both natural and socially mediated powers that warrant systematic analysis. Drawing on contemporary metaphysical tools, I will distinguish between the property of “being food” and the entities that instantiate it, emphasizing the human-dependent and relational character of food. Through the construction of a taxonomy of foods’ powers—encompassing biochemical, psycho-sensory, physicochemical, semiotic, and value powers—I would like to elucidate the multifaceted ways in which foods operate as causal agents across biological, cultural, and political domains. Furthermore, I will emphasise how this analysis bears significant implications for debates in food justice. By clarifying the vast array of foods’ powers, the framework provides new conceptual resources for understanding how food can be a means implemented to shape behaviors, structure social relations, and contribute to patterns of domination and resistance. Moreover, the proposed taxonomy is deliberately designed to be culturally neutral and adaptable: it aims to accommodate diverse food ontologies, respecting cultural variation and ethnoontological frameworks.

Keywords: Food ontology; powers; metaphysics; social ontology; social powers.

5 | RURAL ECOGRIEF: INSIGHTS FROM PORTUGAL AND ROMANIA

Irina Velicu | Central European University

This article proposes the politicization of ecogrief as a dimension of environmental injustice through the experiences of small farmers Portugal and Romania. By integrating insights from ecopsychology, political ecology, and environmental justice (EJ) studies, it explores the socio-emotional impacts of environmental and climate change, including rural depopulation, land-grabbing, and extreme weather events. Using qualitative methods such as interviews and participatory observation, the research identifies five dimensions of peasant ecogrief related to the loss of solace, social fabric, purpose and agency, dignity, familiarity or predictability. These losses are experienced not only as ecological but deeply political, tied to systemic marginalization and abandonment by decision-makers. The findings reveal how grief over environmental change is intertwined with historical traumas and contemporary injustices, highlighting the embodied distress of rural communities as a form of resistance and a call for justice. This research contributes to the emerging “emotional turn” in political ecology and EJ, emphasizing the importance of acknowledging non-economic losses in UN climate policy. It argues for restorative justice approaches beyond monetary compensation and rooted in grassroots agroecological

practices and relational ethics. By reframing ecogrief as a political issue, the study underscores the need for democratizing justice frameworks to address the intertwined crises of climate, rural livelihoods, and socio-ecological well-being.

Keywords: Socio-environmental (in)justice; loss and damage; ecogrief.

6 | FROM BLOOD TO MEAT: ON THE ROLE OF ICELANDIC BLOOD MARES IN EUROPEAN MEAT PRODUCTION

Eyja M. J. Brynjarsdottir | University of Iceland

In a handful of countries in the world, blood is systematically collected from pregnant mares to harvest equine chorionic gonadotropin (eCG), also known as pregnant mare serum gonadotrophin (PMSG). This hormone is used to produce fertility drugs given to pigs, sheep, goats, cows, and rabbits. The end goal is, of course, increased meat production. Thus, the process taking place before a slice of ham lands on our plates may have involved human interference with the fertility of two animal species, first with the impregnation of a mare, and then using her pregnancy hormone to produce a drug given to a sow to increase the number of her offspring.

Within the European Economic Area, the only country in which this blood harvesting from mares is practiced is Iceland. This practice has been very controversial, with a number of critics both local and from abroad voicing their disapproval. The main focus of the debate has been the treatment and well-being of the horses, such as whether they suffer due to the bloodletting, whether they are in some way abused during the procedure, and possible harms and risks concerning their health. These are of course things that matter, but the end goal of the procedure, i.e. increasing meat production in factory farms, has gained much less attention. The main focus when it comes to justifying the harvesting of eCG from pregnant mares has been on economic profitability for the horse farmers and the biotech company that buys the mare blood and produces the fertility drugs.

The goal of this talk is to consider the full process from pregnant mare to meat on a plate from the perspective of feminist ethics. Can this kind of double exploitation of animal fertility be justified with the human desire for cheap meat? Are there analogies to be drawn with exploitation of human women's fertility? To what extent should the welfare of the nonhuman animals, and their potential interests and rights, be considered to have moral significance in this? I will be looking to three different works that are to various extents concerned with emphasizing the moral significance of animals as well as comparing abuse and oppression of animals with other common forms of oppression and discrimination in human society, considering how and why we tend to allow some into our moral circle while excluding others: *Animals and Why They Matter* (1983) by Mary Midgley, *Inside Ethics* (2016) by Alice Cary, and *The Sexual Politics of Meat* (1990) by Carol J. Adams.

Keywords: Animal ethics; feminist ethics; moral scope; meat production; horse blood farms.

PANEL 6
SESSION 3
ROOM: 1.10

7 | JUSTICE AND FOOD HERITAGE PRESERVATION

Adriana Clavel-Vázquez, M. Jimena Clavel Vázquez & Siba Harb | Tilburg University

In recent years, mainstream culture has seen an increase in attempts to preserve or recreate traditional food practices that have been abandoned. For example, in the past few years, Mexican cuisine enthusiasts in the US and Mexico have sought to step back from industrial corn dough production processes that lead, not only to bland-tasting tortillas, but, more importantly, to the loss of an important piece of cultural heritage (see, e.g., Brown 2024). Chefs have led trends that call for a return to nixtamalization, the traditional process of tortillas production: a process first discovered by pre-Columbian indigenous peoples. On the one hand, one might value the enterprise these chefs and entrepreneurs are engaged in: to rescue and promote Mexican heritage through the preservation of traditional food practices. On the other hand, one might think it matters who is engaged in these efforts and who will see their benefits. The recent nixtamalization trend is spearheaded by members of very privileged communities: upscale restaurants and supermarkets in both the U.S. and Mexico and the economically advantaged foodies they target. As literature on cultural appropriation has noted (Heldke 2001; 2003), who has a say in what concerns the preservation and pursuit of certain practices and traditions depends on preexisting unjust social practices and structures.

Our contribution in this paper is twofold. First, building on existing literature, we identify three different problematic practices that arise within efforts to preserve traditional food practices: commodification, appropriation and epistemic injustice, particularly when the enterprise isn't led by the relevant community. Second, and this is our primary contribution, we argue that even if the abovementioned concerns were to be mitigated, it is unclear that the preservation of food heritage may be done in a just way. Consider, for example, the fact that the development of what is now recognized as Mexican cuisine was partly enabled by the exploitation of indigenous people in colonial, post-colonial and post-revolutionary Mexico. Or consider the role that traditional gender roles play in sustaining food practices. One needn't look further than the case of tradwives. This trend involves the preservation of traditional food practices associated with, for example, an idealized (and often distorted) view of domestic tasks in the XIXth century in rural US (see Sherman 2024) and depends on the celebration of traditional (oppressive) gender roles. These examples reveal weaknesses in the case for non-appropriative preservation of food practices. Even if preservation of food heritage is carried out by members of the relevant communities, we argue that injustices may occur. This is the case because many traditional food practices arose from systems of oppression. Without structural remedies, then, we argue that food heritage preservation may perpetuate injustices. We will argue that food heritage preservation seems unable to avoid contributing to injustices in the form of appropriation, commodification or exploitation.

Keywords: Food justice; Heritage preservation; historic injustice; epistemic injustice.

8 | FEEDING WHAT TO WHOM? ETHICAL DISCUSSIONS ON FARMING EDIBLE INSECTS

Sara Madera Gómez | University of Milan

Edible insects are often presented as a sustainable and nutritionally rich alternative to conventional livestock. They contain high-quality protein, vitamins, and essential amino acids while requiring significantly fewer resources to produce the same amount of protein. For instance, crickets need six times less feed than cattle, four times less than sheep, and half as much as pigs and broiler chickens. Additionally, insect farming emits fewer greenhouse gases and ammonia, and insects can be grown on organic waste, further enhancing their environmental appeal. Given these advantages, edible insects have been proposed as a solution to global food security challenges, either for direct human consumption, as an ingredient in recomposed foods, or as a protein source in animal feed.

By 2050, the human population is expected to reach 9 billion, exacerbating issues of food security, nutrition, and equitable food distribution. In response, the FAO has actively promoted edible insects as a viable dietary option since 2003, particularly in regions facing food scarcity. However, while much of the discourse has centered on sustainability and economic potential, there has been little ethical discussion regarding the implications of scaling up insect farming. Instead of reducing industrial farming, this approach introduces a new form of mass animal exploitation, raising concerns about the ethical treatment of insects.

A key question remains largely unaddressed: should insects be considered sentient beings, and if so, what are the ethical implications of breeding them in confined environments solely for human consumption? While insects are not traditionally regarded as sentient in the same way as mammals or birds, emerging research suggests they may experience forms of pain and distress, challenging the assumption that farming them is ethically unproblematic. Furthermore, the push to integrate insect farming into the economies of developing countries raises additional concerns. The assumption that edible insects should or will be more readily consumed in these regions risks reinforcing problematic global hierarchies in food systems, where certain populations are expected to adapt to alternative food sources while wealthier nations continue to rely on traditional livestock.

My proposal, critically examines the ethical dimensions of edible insect farming, questioning the underlying assumptions that frame it as an unambiguously positive solution to food insecurity. It explores the moral status of insects, the risks of perpetuating exploitative farming models, and the socio-economic implications of positioning insect-based diets as a solution primarily for the Global South. In doing so, it seeks to contribute to broader discussions on food justice, sustainability, and the ethics of emerging food technologies.

Keywords: Edible insects; farming; overpopulation.

9 | TRANSGENIC CORN AND EPISTEMIC INJUSTICE: CHALLENGES TO CULTURAL HERITAGE AND FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IN MEXICO

Francisco Javier Eguiluz Ruiz | Universidad de Guadalajara

The proposal is to analyze the controversy panel of transgenic corn between Mexico and United States to show how its resolution acute epistemic injustice that consists in systematically ignoring ancestral knowledge about corn in indigenous or non-indigenous communities. Argue that this injustice contributes to homogenization of corn production, in favor of transgenic varieties. Resulting that in the possible loss of ancestral knowledge related to practice corn production in Mexico, therefore this represents a threat to the preservation of traditional agriculture practices, eroding cultural identities. In conclusion, this proposal justifies the need to consider the traditional knowledge about corn in the agricultural policies to safeguard biodiversity, food sovereignty and cultural heritage of Mexico.

The recent controversy about transgenic corn, especially the recent ruling in this regard, between Mexico and United States, reveal a deep problem: epistemic injustice that ignores the ancestral knowledge of indigenous and no-indigenous peasant communities, excluding their agricultural practices in favor of technologized agriculture that only respond to productivity issues. This contempt not only despites the cultural wealth linked to corn in Mexico, also puts the biodiversity and food sovereignty of the nation at risk. In consequence, it's urgent to analyze how this exclusion of traditional knowledge in decision making impacts, negatively, the sustainability and cultural identities in Mexico.

To justify this theoretical proposal is necessary to define what is epistemic injustice: consists in the exclusion or despise certain types of knowledge due the lack of valuation, due to economic, political and/or dominant scientific systems. In Mexico this kind of injustice has been systematically perpetuated in relation to traditional knowledge about corn, favoring, as consequence, technified agricultural practices with the objective to maximize production. An example is the epistemic injustice that represents the recent failure of the controversy panel of transgenic corn between México and United States. The verdict of the panel implies forced purchase of transgenic corn to Unites States, this not only harms the food sovereignty of Mexico, also ignores the intrinsic value of traditional agricultural practices that have supported the development of the vast variety of maize and they have been the livelihood of the great genetic and cultural wealth of the country for centuries.

This analysis tries to demonstrate that the systematic exclusion of ancestral knowledge about corn in Mexico threatens the great cultural richness that surrounds this important grain but also puts at risk the great genetic diversity of traditional varieties. To avoid this, is an obligation to do epistemic justice to indigenous and no-indigenous peasants integrating their knowledge into modern practices, public policies and, together, make a new construction of knowledge related to corn.

In summary, the proposal is the creation of a participatory and symmetrical research program, this with the intention to order, identify, document and value ancestral knowledge about corn with the objective to integrate them into agricultural practices. That can respond to the need for develop, conservation and improve strategies that resolve the needs of the population and the construction of country's food sovereignty and the continuity of corn as cultural identity.

Keywords: Epistemic Injustice; Food Sovereignty; Cultural Heritage; Transgenic Corn and Biodiversity.

PANEL 7 — CONCEPTUALIZING AND RESISTING POWER: DOMINATION, STRUCTURE AND AGENCY

Convenors: Sofia Alexandratos (Ca' Foscari University), Elena Icardi and Ines Zampaglione (CEPS, UMinho)

Nowadays sexism, racism, economic inequalities and the environmental crisis – all cross-cultural elements of contemporary societies – are acknowledged as pathological phenomena resulting from social relationships of power. Despite the social and institutional attempts to temper gender and class inequalities, racism, and climate change, the persistence and reproduction of these social pathologies show that power is a complex phenomenon, which needs to be clarified and disentangled in its levels and dimensions.

Traditionally, the concept of power has been mainly intended in intersubjective terms, namely, as the oppression by one social group of the needs, capacities, interests, and values of other groups. Nevertheless, critical theory and contemporary accounts of political philosophy, such as neo-republicanism, have been enriching this traditional conception. Accordingly, a great effort has been made to unveil the structural dimension of domination and, on the other hand, to identify a continuity between the individual, intersubjective, and structural mechanisms of power. Disclosing transformative perspectives and acknowledging the possibility of social subjects' emancipatory potential require, therefore, a multi-layered account of power. Such an account should investigate, firstly, the different levels of reproduction of relationships of domination in non-dualistic terms, dismissing both agentless conceptions of power reproduction and unilaterally agent-relative interpretations of power exercise. Secondly, it should account for the productive and enabling effects of power at both individual, intersubjective, and structural levels.

This panel aims to investigate the multilayered dimensions of power in order to problematize the (re)production of social oppression and domination as well as to disclose transformative perspectives on human society. By putting political and social philosophy in dialogue, it wants to gather theoretical perspectives capable of reconciling how power operates oppressively both intersubjectively and in cultural and economic terms - determining one's susceptibility to marginalization and exploitation - but can also enable contestation, transformation, and resistance. We welcome proposals related (but not limited) to the following topics:

- Structural and non-structural account of domination
- The relation between power and responsibility in the context of structural injustice/ domination
- Impersonal and agentless domination
- Structural power and individual agency
- Power in intersectional frameworks
- Power and resistance, from individual to collective struggles
- The relations between structural and interactional power

We welcome submissions from scholars engaging with non-Western traditions/conceptions of power. Submissions from members of the academia belonging to minorities groups are encouraged.

PANEL 7
SESSION 1
ROOM: 0.20

1 | IS POWER INVISIBLE TO THOSE WHO WIELD IT?
EMBODIED DOMINATION AND THE QUESTION
OF RESPONSIBILITY

Giovanni Mariotti | University of Parma, University of Paris X-Nanterre

Contemporary accounts of structural domination have given increasing attention to the material and embodied dimension of power dynamics, highlighting how power relations are often reproduced through customs and practices rather than through explicit commitments to certain beliefs. While deeply insightful, this non-doxastic approach to domination risks being unable to hold accountable the individuals who benefit from an unjust power distribution by making privilege epistemically inaccessible. This paper aims to identify this possible blindspot and provide a viable solution.

Firstly, I will present the case for a non-doxastic account of social domination. Consider how, despite a majority of people not regarding themselves as racists and even explicitly rejecting racism, racial inequality persists (Bonilla-Silva 2017) through an array of habitual behaviors regulating the encounter with the racialized other, independently of one's explicit commitments (Sullivan 2006; Ngo 2017). The social norms structuring interpersonal interaction can be, in fact, construed as collective practices shared by social groups in the form of behavioral regularities (Bicchieri 2017). Adopting a social role is, thus, not simply a matter of being assigned one but involves a material process of acquisition through repetition and imitation (Witt 2023), with gender and racial privileges reflected at the psychological and physiological level (Sullivan 2015). Collectively, the coordinated ensembles of these practices, attitudes, and norms are what Jaeggi (2018) considers the 'forms of life' defining our systems of social organization. Rather than a set of explicit beliefs, this framework provides a complex web of embodied malpractices, hidden biases, unwritten social norms, and unreflective executions of social scripts.

Any structural account of domination faces the problem of responsibility (Young 2011; Zheng 2018): if domination is a prerogative of the structure (institutions, laws, norms, etc.), how can individuals be responsible for an unjust distribution of power? In the second part, I will show how the non-doxastic approach is in a unique position regarding this problem. On the one hand, by directly implicating the subjects in the exercise of power, down to the corporeal level, this approach satisfies the agential conditions for responsibility (Levy 2015; Fischer & Ravizza 1998). On the other, however, it seems *prima facie* unable to hold those wielding power in a system of oppression accountable for their compliance, as they lack the epistemic condition for responsibility (Björnsson 2017; Furman 2018).

Drawing inspiration from Brandom's (1994, 2000) scorekeeping model and Habermas's (1981) theory of communicative action, I will conclude by arguing that participating through practices, customs, and attitudes to a power system means making implicit yet epistemically accessible doxastic commitments. Members of oppressed groups can, therefore, legitimately exercise their right to justification (Forst 2011) by directly challenging those practices. This solution has the benefit of reclaiming the epistemic advantage

of the powerless, in the spirit of feminist standpoint epistemology, without absolving the powerful of their duty to take responsibility for their actions.

Keywords: Domination; Responsibility; Embodied Practices; Social Norms.

2 | MORE THAN REPRODUCTION: CEMENTING INJUSTICE IN THE STRUCTURE OF SOCIETY

Barbara Bziuk | Utrecht University

Some structural injustice scholars point to the risk of reproducing unjust structures by powerful agents in situations when they might seem to be doing what justice requires. For instance, Dorothea Gädeke (2021) points out that a slaveowner who sets her slave free, while doing something morally praiseworthy, makes use of the power to unilaterally decide about the terms of interaction with the disempowered person. Thereby she inevitably reproduces, rather than challenges, the very structure of injustice. Similarly, Andrew Dilts (2017) points to a tension in relation to the US justice system: while as a political theorist of race and punishment he advocates for an abolition of prison and police, in the face of police officers killing Blacks, he cannot help but desire “justice,” that is, to have the police officers arrested and punished. At the same time, he recognizes that a “successful” verdict, one that would deliver “justice,” would in fact reinforce the very system that Dilts considers fundamentally unjust.

These examples show that sometimes, when powerful unjust agents do something that justice seemingly requires, they actually make use of unjust structural properties thereby reproducing them. While these cases might seem to point to a serious challenge for theorizing about responsibility of powerful unjust agents, reproduction of injustice is in fact almost per definition inevitable from a structural injustice perspective. We are entangled in various structures of injustice that we cannot help but reproduce through our often innocent action. Is there anything special about powerful unjust agents reproducing injustice that should make us re-access their justice-promoting action?

In my paper, I argue that there is something distinctively wrong when powerful unjust agents act in the name of justice. They act in the name of justice when they perform an action with an explicit aim to promote justice, or contribute to alleviating injustice, in a forward-looking proactive and positive way. The wrong amounts to, what I call, cementing injustice. Powerful unjust agents cement injustice when they epistemically misconceive about their relation to in/justice as well as politically demobilize relevant agents in their struggle for structural transformation. When cementing injustice, an agent not only reproduces an unjust structure, but most importantly, makes it harder to dismantle it as it necessitates additional epistemic and political work.

I contribute to the literature on structural injustice and responsibility by advancing a new concept that adds nuance to our understanding of the workings of structural injustice. This has consequences for our theorizing about responsibility of powerful unjust agents for structural injustice. I illustrate my argument and its consequences with an example of business corporations that engage in social justice projects. Through these projects, business corporations present themselves as essential to the struggle for justice, they deepen relations of dependency between them and other relevant agents and distort democratic processes. In this way, they epistemically and politically undermine the

struggle for justice in the form of corporate reform, and thus cement, rather than merely reproduce, unjust structures. This makes such projects distinctively and pro tanto wrong.

Keywords: Structural injustice; responsibility; powerful agents.

3 | THE POLITICAL IS PERSONAL: POLITICAL POWER AND PERSONAL AUTONOMY

Maria Mendez | Universidad Mayor

The feminist slogan ‘the personal is political’ allowed for crucially transformative discussions and actual practical changes regarding the boundaries of the political sphere. Feminists questioned what was considered ‘private’ and domestic to push for re defining what counts as the ‘appropriate content’ of political decision making. The title of this talk switches the order of the slogan as a means to focus our attention, not on the content and boundaries of the political, but on the impact that our interactions and political decisions have over our lives. Accordingly, I advance the view that personal autonomy has a political aspect. I will hold that we cannot be fully autonomous if we stand in oppressive political relations and that the key to prevent our political relations from becoming oppressive is to redefine political power.

Researchers interested in the value of personal autonomy have usually explored the effect of oppressive political contexts and our enjoyment of autonomy as separate issues. This lack of attention to the connection between personal autonomy and the relations we hold in the political sphere has two problematic consequences. First, it obscures the effect over our lives of the limited involvement we experience in current democracies, especially for marginalised groups. Second, it reduces the political sphere’s capacity to foster our personal autonomy—the space where some of the most important collective decisions are made. Hence, I argue that we cannot be fully autonomous unless we enjoy autonomous relations in the political sphere as well. I will show that there is something particular about the political sphere that both, explains its relevance for our enjoyment of autonomy, and shows how our political relations cannot be subsumed into the notion of ‘social relations’. To support this claim, I identify two elements that are particular of the political sphere: the kind of decision-making processes that take place in it, and the power that rules them: political power. I will focus on this second component. I begin by briefly looking into feminist approaches to power to situate my view within these readings and to develop a critical analysis of the notion. I will address some objections to specific versions such as the critique to the master/slave model and continue by introducing my own reading.

The approach to political power that I will present is both descriptive and normative. My intention is to provide a characterisation of political power that makes sense of our intuitive understanding of how power works in the political sphere, whilst also offering a novel approach that could transform how we relate to one another with respect to political decision-making. To do so I develop what I call power as authoritative influence, a definition that understands power as a shared capacity and that is connected to Philip Pettit’s approach to non-domination. I conclude that valuing our autonomy should lead us to focus on our political relations and the exercise of political power that shapes them.

Keywords: Relational autonomy; political power; non-domination.

PANEL 7
SESSION 2
ROOM: 0.20

4 | RESISTING THE “EXISTENCE IS RESISTANCE” NARRATIVE

April On-pui Chan | Northwestern University

To truly understand the realities of the oppressed, María Lugones maintains, we must “read” resistance by **witnessing faithfully**, which requires us to “sense resistance, to interpret behavior as resistant even when it is dangerous.” Some activists in grassroots social justice movements and scholars in resistance studies have followed Lugones’s advice by championing the **existence is resistance** (EIR) slogan. Marc Lamont Hill, for instance, explains, “The very idea of existence is resistance is to acknowledge that in the context of patriarchal, homophobic, transphobic, capitalist empire, our very bodies, our very existence, our very lives is a threat to power.”

Although I too find the act of proclaiming one’s own existence as resistance to be invaluablely empowering, I am wary of the conceptual ambiguities that arise from the EIR slogan and the risks that accompany the act of applying this narrative to others. My goals in this paper, then, are to clarify the meaning of the slogan and to caution against ascribing the EIR narrative to others—that is, using the EIR narrative to interpret others’ everyday actions in the absence of their explicit endorsement of the narrative. To be clear, my view is not that the ascription of such narrative to others is **never** appropriate or justified, but that it is **rarely** so due to the epistemic difficulty involved in deciphering someone’s intentions, as well as the grave moral costs that are often inherent in the very act of speaking for others.

My argument proceeds in three steps. First, in §2 I get the target phenomenon in view by analyzing Collins (1990)’s and Santa-Ramirez (2022)’s applications of the EIR narrative onto Black domestic workers and illegalized college students in the US respectively. Second, in §3, I propose what I call aptness reasons against the use of EIR by illustrating cases in which the application of EIR is simply inaccurate. To this end, I first explore the nature of **resistance**, arguing that it requires one’s (accurate) recognition and rejection of oppression, but not one’s acknowledgement that one’s act **as resistance**. That is to say, whereas **de dicto** intention to resist is neither necessary nor sufficient for resistance, **de re** intention is a necessary condition for resistance. I then use the case of US Supreme Court justice Clarence Thomas as a counterexample to the assumption that EIR is true for everyone who is oppressed, and argue that the prevalence of oppressive double binds—as put forth by Frye (1983) and Hirji (2021)—further undermines this assumption.

The two subsequent sections develop three moral reasons against ascribing the EIR narrative to others: In §4, I draw from Lackey (forthcoming) to argue that the ascription of EIR can (inadvertently) disseminate flat stories and thereby generate miskonwng about the individuals at question. Finally, in §5, I draw from Bettcher (2009) and Lindemann (2001) to explain how the ascription of EIR can violate others’ first-person authority over their own life story and further undermine the oppressed’s narrative agency and their ability to construct their own autonomous self-concept.

Keywords: Resistance; existence is resistance; activism; representation; narrative agency.

5 | THE POWER IN SLURS: DEROGATION, RECLAMATION AND MEANING

Dan Zeman | University of Porto

Slurs are expressions that target individuals based on membership in groups that are perceived to (essentially) instantiate negative characteristics. These groups are usually delineated along such dimensions as race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, physical and psychological traits, etc.

It is not surprising that slurs have been and are often used to target disadvantaged, discriminated or oppressed groups and individuals. According to what many take to be almost a definition of slurs, their main function is “to derogate or dehumanize, to signal that their targets are unworthy of equal standing or full respect as persons” (Jeshion, 2013). Besides meaning, slurs have what philosopher J. L. Austin has called illocutionary and perlocutionary effects: they constitute and change reality – for example, by changing what it is permissible to say in a given context (e.g. McGowan, 2019). Many authors in the slurs literature have noted the deep connection between these effects of slurs and ideologies, and thus their dependence on political power. There is an interdependence between the said effects of slurs and ideology: while the derogatory uses of the former require some ideology that takes members of the target group to be inferior, ideologies get perpetuated and cemented by repeated uses of slurs. The exact nature of this interdependence is a matter of dispute: some have claimed that slurs invoke ideologies (McCready & Davis, 2020), that they cue them (Swanson, ms.; Kukla, 2018), that their use dialogically reproduces existing power relations present in the society at large (Popa-Wyatt & Wyatt, 2018) etc.

In this paper, I focus on a different yet remarkable phenomenon also connected to the use of slurs: reclamation. This is the process by which members of an oppressed group use the same word as their oppressors, but endow it with a new, positive meaning – with the aim of “tak[ing] the power back and have control over our own lives”, as W. E. B. Du Bois brilliantly put it. While various accounts of reclamation exist (e.g., Anderson & Lepore, 2013; Bianchi, 2014; Anderson, 2018; Cepollaro, 2020; Jeshion, 2020; etc.), they don’t seem to apply to all forms this complex phenomenon takes. As pointed out early on by Brontsema (2004), reclamation can proceed by preserving the negativity encoded in a slur’s meaning (as a form of conscientious protest – for example, the n-word used by some communities of African Americans) or by discarding it and creating a new use for the word (as it commonly happens with mainstream slurs such as “queer”). I criticize two main approaches that each successfully applies to one of these forms of reclamation (the Echoic Theory of Bianchi and Cepollaro, and the “addressing” view proposed by Anderson). Finally, I present a view that takes slurs to be polysemous and show how it can be implemented in a rich-lexicon theory (a theory that conceives of the meaning of words as having various lexical dimensions, out of which one or several are selected in a given context), arguing that it captures both forms of reclamation pointed out by Brontsema.

Keywords: Slurs; ideology; power; meaning; derogation; reclamation.

6 | RESISTING SEXUAL VIOLENCE: COLLECTIVE POWER AND SHARED VULNERABILITY IN THE WAKE OF THE 2011 EGYPTIAN REVOLUTION

Maša Mrovlje | University of Leeds

The paper focuses on a unique contemporary example of resistance against gender oppression: Opantish (Operation Anti Sexual Harassment or OpAntiSH), a feminist activist group that formed in the wake of the 2011 Egyptian Revolution against mass sexual assaults of women protesters. I argue that Opantish's unique form of resistance offers insight into how power operates through hierarchies and structures of gender inequality, how this enabled the marginalization and oppression of women resisters but also led to new struggles and solidarities neglected in the 2011 uprisings.

As Yasmin El-Rifae writes in the Radius—her account of her participation in Opantish—Opantish arose from an “extreme disappointment” with revolutionary groups and political parties that failed to address “repeated sexual assaults against female participants” and assume responsibility for securing Tahrir square. This realization that the revolutionaries themselves were complicit in the attacks led Opantish to reach a deeper understanding of the complex, structural causes of sexual violence and how it could be traced to the broader issue of everyday violence against and objectification of women that made women activists highly vulnerable to abuse in the public space.

Opantish's deeper understanding of the mob attacks inspired a highly unique political response: women (and men) organized to protect women's right to participate in political action in the streets—and in the public sphere more generally—and affirm women's right to both speak about and fight the violence perpetrated against them. This response disclosed an immense source of collective power that was based not in trying to deny or transcend women's embodied vulnerability but in the acknowledgement and sharing of this vulnerability. To protect women's right to participate in street protests, intervention and safety teams affirmed the victims' vulnerability as a shared burden and enacted their solidarity by risking their own bodies to save them. Further, this recognition of shared vulnerability inspired a broader vision of a feminist revolution aimed at challenging the oppressive attitudes towards women in revolutionary circles and the broader society.

Thus, Opantish's collective power mobilized a new form of resistance that challenged both the systemic violence of the repressive regime and the oppressive attitudes within the resistance movement. Opantish's unique response may not allow for optimism about the reduction of rape or sexual violence against women more generally. But accounting for how individuals managed to organise against mass assault shifts the conditions of possibility for future engagement—foregrounding the power potential of people relating to one another and refusing to be passive bystanders to (gender) oppression.

Keywords: Feminist resistance; vulnerability; collective power; 2011 Egyptian Revolution; Opantish.

PANEL 7
SESSION 3
ROOM: 0.20

7 | RECIPROCITY AND STRUCTURAL INJUSTICE

Catarina Neves | Utrecht University

It is difficult to find anyone who has never heard about the ‘golden rule’ of reciprocity. You might have heard it from your parents, when you were told to ‘treat others as you would like to be treated’. The golden rule finds its way into our day to day, and in the realm of distributive justice, it is translated as a principle of economic reciprocity, which determines that to receive the fruits of social cooperation, able bodied people need to contribute productively. The principle has been justified by appealing to conceptions of justice as mutual advantage (Gauthier, 1986), justice as fairness (Rawls, 2001), appeals to mutual respect (White, 2003; Lister, 2011) or because relations of equality require it (Hartley, 2014). But the aims reciprocity seems to fulfill in these accounts seem to fall short of what has been done in the name of reciprocity, including the infamous poor laws or more recently the demands of workfare that stigmatize but often also dominate the poor (Anja Elveld, 2020, 2021). Hence, several claims have argued in favour of relaxing the principle of reciprocity in distributive justice. And while I am sympathetic to these concerns, I believe disregarding reciprocity falls short of understanding where the problem with these policies lies.

I wish to show that existing accounts of the principle of economic reciprocity fail to capture the role of the social context in shaping our reciprocal interactions, and that doing so is of consequence to the discussion. When we fail to consider individuals as socially situated, we are prevented from seeing how commitments of a reciprocal nature reproduce structural injustice. This is because, for the least advantaged members of society, obligations of reciprocity, and the institutions that enforce them, produce two wrongs: they reduce individuals’ capacity to reciprocate and they compromise individuals’ self-realization. I aim to show that these two wrongs promote structural injustice, where the latter is conceptualized as a network of social relations of reciprocity. This will hopefully be helpful in both diagnosing what is wrong, but also what we can do to do remediate it.

This reading of reciprocity as a norm that promotes structural injustice makes two different contributions to the literature. The first, is a methodological claim. While sociological and anthropological work on reciprocity have largely taken its relationality into account, political philosophy has yet to consider it seriously. I thus follow the work of people like Iris Marion Young, who highlighted the importance of seeing individuals as socially situated. The second, is a contribution to the still largely underdeveloped question of how structural injustice works (McKeown, 2021). Reciprocity offers a paradigmatic case of how norms can contribute to structurally unjust outcomes, thus illuminating the need to think carefully at social policies, and which values they are reproducing.

Keywords: Reciprocity; Structural Injustice; Domination; Network; Work.

8 | SYSTEMIC VERSUS INTERFERENTIAL DOMINATION IN REPUBLICAN THEORY

Lucas Rijana | Universitat Pompeu Fabra

In recent decades, the neorepublican theory of freedom as non-domination has gained prominence. Philip Pettit's formulation defines freedom as the condition of being equally protected against domination within a locally defined realm of choice. Domination is understood as a social relationship in which one or more agents can arbitrarily interfere with another, with background social conditions playing a crucial role in enabling or mitigating it.

This definition has been criticized for being both too narrow and too broad. On one hand, it is faulted for prioritizing interpersonal over impersonal influences, making it inadequate for addressing "systemic" forms of domination. On the other, defining domination as the capacity for arbitrary interference makes it ubiquitous, hence descriptively licentious and prescriptively ineradicable. The "cheap domination" and micro-domination objections question the moral seriousness and institutional remedy of otherwise innocuous cases, such as caring relationships and psychiatric inpatients, while the overgeneralization objection points to instances where having a capacity to interfere at will should not amount to domination, like the "gentle giant" or "coalition" examples.

A promising solution to this dilemma is Dorothea Gädeke's conception of domination as structurally-constituted power. Seeking to preserve the status-based character of republicanism while differentiating it from non-interference, the author excludes interactional forms of power, like that of an armed mugger, and focuses on socially-legitimated power, like that of husbands over wives in patriarchal societies. This allows for the classification of unintended structural disparities as systemic domination, and keeps domination morally serious by excluding merely episodic power asymmetries.

However, this approach can also be seen as both too narrow and too broad. It excludes cases that desperately merit the state's attention and resemble the master-slave relationship (an anachronic but intuitively powerful image of domination) in everything but social legitimacy, like scenarios of a prolonged kidnap, a warlord governing by force, manipulation, extortion, or indeed, raw coercion. It also subsumes too many phenomena, including microaggressions and unintended inequalities that happen to be "structurally disempowering". Given its scope, it is also quite unfeasible.

A potential route out of this recurring dilemma is viewing domination as a particularly pernicious form of interference. Contrary to popular belief, it could be argued that domination already involves interference, not merely its potential. Mutual awareness of inferiority relationships modifies behavior, expectations and choice-situations before any clash of wills. This means that there cannot be a slave with a non-interfering master any more than there can be a prisoner with a non-interfering jail cell (they do not need to run into the jail walls before being limited by it).

This theoretical shift avoids the charge of ubiquity, keeping domination both analytically precise and morally serious while also incorporating interactional yet injurious exercises of power. However, it deliberately "bites the bullet" in other fronts. Contra Gädeke, it trades the "normative distinctiveness" of republicanism for a pluralistic, non-monist approach. It also sees unintended structural disparities as politically relevant, but not as domination. Alas, if our primary concern is with descriptive accuracy and prescriptive utility, we should ultimately welcome this conclusion.

Keywords: Systemic domination; republicanism; freedom; interference.

9 | SOCIAL NORMS AND SOCIAL HIERARCHY

Han van Wietmarschen | University College London

Social hierarchy centrally involves relations between individuals. There is no military hierarchy without individual privates being subject to the command of individual sergeants; capitalism involves individual workers being exploited or dominated by individual capitalists; there is no patriarchy without individual women being oppressed by individual men. Yet, in these cases we do not relate to one another as isolated individuals: we are commanded, dominated, or oppressed (or we command, dominate, and oppress) in virtue of our positions in a social structure. I argue that recent advances in our thinking about social norms can help clarify the relationship between individualised and structural components of social hierarchy.

Social norms are patterns or concatenations of individual attitudes. The content of those attitudes, however, makes reference to the attitudes of other individuals. What these attitudes are is subject to debate: some see them as conditionalised preferences, others as normative attitudes grounded in a social practice, yet others as shared planning states. However this debate shakes out, this kind of conception of social norms allows for a moderate reductivism about certain parts of social structure. These ultimately consist in individual attitudes, the nature and content of which we can specify, but they consist in patterns of such attitudes, where the content of those attitudes makes reference to that pattern.

Social norms are often used to explain features of the law, and to explain cooperative behaviour. I argue that social norms can also be used to explain a variety of stratified and hierarchical social structures. This involves populations in which there are different norms for different subpopulations, and populations in which a single norm specifies different requirements for different individuals. In this way, we can hold together in one picture the way in which social hierarchy involves individuals relating to one another in characteristic ways, and the sense in which those individuals interact as occupants of distinctive roles in a social structure.

Keywords: Social Hierarchy; Social Norms; Power; Domination; Authority.

PANEL 7
SESSION 4
ROOM: 0.20

10 | STRUCTURAL INJUSTICE AND
THE STRUCTURE/AGENCY PROBLEM

Hochan Kim | University of Oxford

This paper examines an overlooked but important social theoretical problem for the political philosophy of structural injustice: the structure/agency problem. In essence, the problem is that it is difficult to assert the reality of social structures as significant causal forces in the social world (hence the possibility of genuinely structural injustice) while maintaining that individuals are really agents that have the power to deliberately reshape the social world (hence the possibility and aptness of their responsibility to address structural injustice). The structure/agency problem lurks beneath a deep and recurring ambivalence in the philosophical discussion of responsibility for structural injustice, mirroring the dichotomy between voluntarism and determinism in social theory: do individuals have the agency to change unjust social structures, or are they structurally constrained to act as they currently do? Much of the ongoing puzzlement surrounding the normative issue of individuals' blameworthiness or moral responsibility for structural injustice, I argue, has its origins in this social theoretical problem.

To substantiate this diagnosis, I begin by returning to Iris Marion Young's (2011) pioneering account of structural injustice and her use of Anthony Giddens' (1984) theory of structuration. Drawing on critics of Giddens, I argue that structuration theory does not resolve the structure/agency problem as Young claims, and then show how the issue manifests in her account of responsibility for structural injustice. Next, I show how the problem lives on in subsequent accounts of structural injustice, including Maeve McKeown's (2024) recent account. As I read her account, individuals effectively have no structurally transformative power, which belongs solely to collective agents like the state and multinational corporations. I argue that this view has implausible implications: that individuals have no agency to meaningfully address structural injustice short of taking over the existing levers of institutionalized power, and that collective agents are always in a position to solve structural injustice if they only exercised their power in the right way. Both claims are vulnerable to counter-examples.

Having demonstrated the problem and its significance, the rest of the paper considers the implications for the political philosophy of structural injustice going forward. As some recent views on the structure/agency problem have argued, there is very little to say at an abstract level about the interaction of structural constraints and individual agency in the production of social outcomes; such interactions can only be understood through careful analysis of particular social contexts. The upshot for political philosophy is that there is no correct theoretical generalization about individuals' moral responsibility for structural injustice; the question does not admit of a categorical "yes or no" answer. In some ways, this is good news: it reinforces Young's political argument against playing "the blame game" for structural injustice: we simply cannot conduct such fine-grained social analysis for every agent's input to every structural injustice; even if we could, that would

be a significant waste of time and effort next to the forward-looking political task of establishing more just social structures.

Keywords: Structural injustice; moral and political responsibility; structure/agency problem; social theory.

11 | BUREAUCRATIC DOMINATION: A SYSTEMIC ACCOUNT

Yi Yang | McGill University

Classic social and political theorists, such as Hannah Arendt, have long expressed concern that modern bureaucracy may be a source of impersonal, structural, or agentless domination. However, not only modern bureaucracy has been consistently fallen from view in mainstream political theory, but the substantive meaning of bureaucratic domination also remains a subject of controversy and ambiguity.

This article addresses this puzzle by developing a republican view of bureaucratic domination. The republican perspective, by virtue of its focus on agential power, directs our attention to the agents involved in bureaucratic domination and therefore avoids mystifying the bureaucratic structure. However, the existing republican account of domination is ill-suited for the present inquiry. The current republican framework is concerned exclusively with the dominator's uncontrolled capacity to directly interfere with the subject. Moreover, it posits that the subject can only be dominated by a single agent or a group agent.

To refine the existing account, I defend the notion of systemic arbitrary power, which refers to the dominator's uncontrolled power-over-structure to indirectly interfere with the subject. Power-over-structure denotes the capacity of agents to control—through generation, perpetuation, transformation, or termination—components of a social structure, such as laws, rules, and norms. Additionally, I introduce the concept of coalition domination, which suggests that the subject can be dominated by a coalition—multiple agents acting in coordination without forming a single group agent. I support these theoretical arguments with an empirical case study of the hukou reform in China.

Applying this refined republican framework to the analysis of bureaucratic power, I develop a systemic view of bureaucratic domination. Bureaucratic domination occurs when the dominator possesses systemic arbitrary power to interfere with the subject's choices through the operation of a modern bureaucracy. The dominator in bureaucratic domination can control laws, rules, procedures, objectives and so on, that are impartially implemented by bureaucratic agents and cannot be effectively countered by the subject.

According to this systemic view of bureaucratic domination, the impersonal character of bureaucratic domination does not imply agentless domination. In this case, it is still agents who dominate the subject. However, this character two stems from two sources: First, the subject is dominated by systemic arbitrary power. The dominator can interfere the subject indirectly by controlling the background structure that is peripheral to the dyadic relationship between the subject and the bureaucrat they interact. From the perspective of the subject who is not aware that dominating power can manifest at the systemic level, they seem to be dominated by the structure itself. Second, the dominator often does not unilaterally control the structure. Instead, the dominator is likely a coalition of agents who jointly control the structure through coordination. Moreover, the dominator also forms a certain coordination with lower-level officials responsible for

implementation. As a result, the subject cannot identify a single agent or a group agent who can unilaterally control the structure. This again leads to the illusion of impersonal domination or domination by structures.

Keywords: Non-domination; Bureaucracy; Republicanism; Power.

12 | IS BYUNG-CHUL HAN RIGHT IN HIS CRITIQUE OF FOUCAULT?

Necdet Yildiz | Anadolu University

Michel Foucault's genealogy provides a critical apparatus for understanding how subjectivity is shaped through mechanisms of discipline, biopolitics, and governmentality. However, Byung-Chul Han, particularly in *Psychopolitics* and *Infocracy*, argues that Foucault's paradigm is insufficient to grasp the contemporary neoliberal configuration of power, which is no longer primarily disciplinary but operates through digital surveillance, self-exploitation of the individuals, and algorithmic manipulation of behavior. Han's critique of Foucault focuses on several key dimensions: the disappearance of negation, the rise of the "performance subject," the domination of information, the transparency imperative, and the dissolution of the subject into a mere profile. This paper explores whether Han is justified in asserting that Foucault's framework must be revised—or even replaced—by a new understanding of neoliberal psychopolitics.

A central claim in Han's work is that neoliberal power does not operate through repression but through seduction and self-optimizing, rendering Foucault's model of resistance through negation obsolete. Unlike the disciplinary society Foucault described, where power functioned through outward normalization (i.e., the formation of docile and utile bodies), the neoliberal subject internalizes power through constant self-optimization, viewing freedom as an obligation to perform rather than an act of resistance. Han argues that the shift from negativity to positivity creates a society of overexposure, where individuals are compelled to communicate, perform, and share without resistance.

This transformation is reinforced by digital surveillance, which can be called "psychopolitical control," where power does not operate through physical coercion but through algorithmic manipulation of desires and behaviors. While Foucault analyzed panopticism as a model of surveillance predicated on the visibility of the subject to an external observer, Han argues that the "digital panopticon" is internalized and self-imposed. Social media platforms, data collection, and predictive analytics transform individuals into transparent subjects who willingly disclose every aspect of their lives, making traditional Foucauldian resistance strategies slightly outdated.

The subject in the digital era is not merely surveilled but transformed into a profile, a data-driven construct optimized for predictive control. Han's critique resonates with concerns about the loss of agency in an era where the subject is not an autonomous decision-maker but a modulated consumer. Unlike Foucault's vision of power as dispersed and resisted, Han sees power as fully integrated into the networked logic of capitalism, where resistance becomes nearly impossible because domination is flawless and even pleasurable. However, while Han is right to argue that the dominant functioning of power has shifted toward psychopolitics, this does not mean that disciplinary power, biopower, and governmentality have disappeared. Instead, they remain in play, operating alongside

psychopolitics much like how sovereign power continued to function in the background during the dominance of disciplinary and biopolitical regimes in the Foucauldian theory. Thus, rather than replacing Foucault's framework, this paper claims that Han's insights expand it, revealing the layered and evolving nature of power in contemporary society. We conclude that understanding this complexity is crucial for engaging with the psychic, digital, and political dimensions of neoliberal domination today.

Keywords: Psychopolitics; Governmentality; Neoliberalism; Contemporary Philosophy; Political Philosophy.

PANEL 8 — PARTIALITY AND IMPARTIALITY IN ETHICS AND POLITICS

Convenors: João da Rocha Rodrigues and José Colen (CEPS, University of Minho)

A growing body of work has sought to bridge the gap between impartiality in ethics and politics and the irreducibly subjective aspects of human experience. These subjective aspects involve, to a great extent, the inescapable worth of our own ground projects, as well as “special” relationships we have with others—such as family, friends, or countrymen. In short, we cannot but act “partially” toward ourselves or to those close to us.

Thomas Nagel has been at the forefront of this effort, exploring how we can reconcile the demands of impartiality with the personal bonds, loyalties, and individual projects that shape our perspectives, but others such as Liam Murphy, Samuel Scheffler, and Susan Wolf, also wrote extensively on the question.

In stark contrast to this movement, many contemporary ethical and political theories, such as utilitarianism and Rawlsian liberalism, continue to insist on impartial ethics. Despite their differences, both frameworks require us to step back from our personal “biases” when deciding on the central principles of ethics or politics. This impartial stance is in direct opposition to the cultural trends that prioritize subjective, community-based perspectives and often dismiss impartial reasons as irrelevant to our deeply held beliefs. This form of “subjectivism” suggests that reason seems hindered in challenging ingrained opinions, habits, and societal norms, making rational dialogue increasingly difficult.

Some, such as Richard Rorty have gone further, calling for the abandonment of all moral theories in favor of pragmatic narratives that reject objective truths altogether.

The tension between partiality and impartiality continues unsolved, and all the different kinds of theories—fully impartial, mixed, or fully partial or subjective—have both problems and important contributions.

We are interested in communications on a wide range of topics related to these themes, such as, but not limited to, the following:

- Can “subjectivism” and “partiality” be justified?
- What constitutes ethically acceptable partiality?
- What is the importance of special relationships to ethics and politics?
- Which problems face moral theories that uphold full impartiality?
- What limits partiality and impartiality?
- Practical problems and solutions allow us to reconcile partiality and impartiality.

We especially favor abstracts around the philosophical contributions of Thomas Nagel in all fields of research.

PANEL 8
SESSION 1
ROOM: 0.15

1 | IDEOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AS A MEAN
TO ACHIEVE IMPARTIALITY

Pedro Moreira | Texas Christian University

Why are there so few conservatives in academia and what steps should universities take to correct this imbalance? This question has spilled much ink in recent years, but discussions on this topic often share a common issue: they take for granted that universities should be concerned with the number of conservatives in academia. Indeed, discussions on this subject tend to assume that greater ideological diversity will reduce biases and increase impartiality. However, as Elizabeth Corey notes in a recent issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, “some left-leaning readers might not consider this imbalance a problem at all.”

Underpinning these discussions of ideological diversity, there are two different ideals of what academia should be, each encapsulating opposed views of the relation between ideological diversity and impartiality: an instrumental view that argues the university should pursue knowledge in light of the goal of social justice, and an intrinsic view that the university should pursue knowledge for its own sake. For proponents of the intrinsic view, ideological diversity is a mean to promote the impartial pursuit of knowledge since scholars with different viewpoints critically engage with each other, and are more likely to scrutinize assumptions and refine arguments. On the reverse, they see the pursuit of knowledge with the goal of advancing social justice as narrow and biased. It cannot be impartial since it explicitly adopts a political goal and since it rejects viewpoints opposing these political goals.

However, for the proponents of the instrumental view, universities are embedded in a wider political, social, and economic context, and the intrinsic view of the university is naïve since universities have always used it as a justification for their practices, all the while they continued to produce knowledge that reinforced the status quo. According to this view, we should look at universities within their wider institutional context where they strive to survive and expand. Impartiality does not arise from an abstract commitment to open inquiry but from a conscious effort to correct structural imbalances in knowledge production. Sciences that are explicitly goal-oriented are less prone to bias since their pursuit of knowledge does not assume that universities exist outside of a context.

An argument is missing, one that would convince our progressive proponents of the instrumental view to engage with conservative voices on the progressive’s own terms. This is the case that I am going to make. To convince our progressive, I will propose a way to reconcile the instrumental and the intrinsic ideals of the university, a third term between these two conceptions of impartiality where it will be possible to pursue social justice, but in a way that does not sacrifice engagement with a variety of ideological perspectives.

Keywords: Ideology; ideological diversity.

2 | CONCEALMENT, PRIVACY AND EXPOSURE: INTIMACY AS AN IRREDUCIBLY PARTIAL VALUE

Blondine Desbiolles | Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale

Intimacy is a complex moral and psychological compound, that concerns both the personal and impersonal standpoints. What is intimate is what I hold as private and extremely personal, but it is also what I expect others to respect, whether they know, understand or share my conception of intimacy or not. Intimacy is very versatile, in friendship, family bonds, hygiene and aesthetic appearance, sexuality, intense discussions, food, etc., and it varies with each person, through contexts and time.

This subtle and sometimes blurry concept of intimacy is close to other notions like privacy, moral respect, civility, personal rights. But these social and political notions support more impartial claims, like necessary protections of the personal space against public exposure, as Thomas Nagel defends (Nagel, Thomas, « La valeur de l'inviolabilité », trad. François Calori, *Revue de Métaphysique et de morale*, 99e année, n°2, La Philosophie morale de langue anglais, Paris, Puf, avril-juin 1994, pp. 149-166 ; *Moral Feelings, Moral Reality, and Moral Progress*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2023). Our intimate preferences and desires are essential to our conceptions of ourselves, and make us especially vulnerable. That is why, according to Nagel, they should first be dealt with as interpersonal relations and matters (even when expressed in a creepy, clumsy, even offensive way), in the private area, and protected from the actual, repressive tendency to expose and treat them as political and social objects.

I would first discuss Thomas Nagel's conception of intimacy, and how it is consistent with his search for a form of impartiality that would accommodate the plurality of legitimate partialities and values. I will offer some criticisms of his reductive focus on desires and interests, and of his paradoxical defence of private vulnerability and concealment. Though, I agree with him that intimacy is irreducibly partial, and that a satisfying impartial ethics should preserve it. I will therefore develop another approach to intimacy, one that does not reduce it to interpersonal and private relationships (Inness, Julie, *Privacy, Intimacy, and Isolation*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1992), to prior moral duties to respect others (Fix, Jeremy David, "The Morality in Intimacy", in Uriah Kriegel (ed.), *Oxford studies in philosophy of mind*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2021), or to intimate zones (Gunkel, Jasmine, "What Is Intimacy?", *Journal of Philosophy*, 121 (8), 2024, pp. 425-456). Intimacy might rather be a sort of axiological indexical: an indexical fact, that attributes an independent and perspectival value to certain features. I will defend how this hypothesis could prove satisfying in accommodating the various very partial features of intimacy (including its violations). I will finally discuss some difficulties this axiological conception might raise, especially the risk that it might allow an "all-justifying" use of intimacy, in the name of the agent's private conception of what has value or not. I will tap into the recent intimacy literature to select some conditions that are both necessary, and consistent with my axiological account.

Keywords: Public and private; partiality; values; indexicals.

PANEL 8
SESSION 2
ROOM: 0.15

3 | ON THE PARTIALITY AND IMPARTIALITY OF THE
POLITICAL SUBJECT IN THE LIGHT OF EXISTENTIAL
ANTHROPOLOGY

Andrzej Slowikowski | University of Warmia and Mazury

My paper will attempt to look at the problem of partiality and impartiality in socio-political life through the lens of an existential anthropology growing out of the reflections of Kierkegaard, Levinas and Ricoeur. My task will be to show by reference to their thought, firstly, that political reality is based on certain underlying immanent ideals that play a normative role with regard to what the individual considers to be rightful actions in the public sphere. Secondly, I will argue that these ideals can be enacted in different ways related to the adoption of different existential attitudes. The two most relevant attitudes are the attitude oriented towards being right (the aesthetic attitude) and the attitude oriented towards building consensus (the ethical attitude). Thirdly, I will attempt to show on this basis that, whereas the aesthetic attitude is inherently partial and in principle there is no possibility of an impartial position in it, the ethical attitude, even if it cannot ultimately avoid partiality, nevertheless offers the possibility in certain circumstances of at least appealing to some impartiality with the aim of understanding the argument of the other. In other words, the reference point of the aesthetic attitude is conflict, while the reference point of the ethical attitude is dialogue. Fourthly, I will argue that an aesthetic attitude as inherently partial and excluding the arguments of the other side is socially dangerous on the grounds of any immanent ideal and ultimately leads to the degradation of any political position. It is an attitude exclusively oriented towards the interests of a particular subject or the social group or political party of which that subject is a part. An ethical attitude, on the other hand, as an attitude that seeks consensus, is socially creative because it is oriented towards the development of the (however understood) common good, rather than towards the interest of the subject or the group they represent. In this sense, an ethical attitude creates a space for discussion of each side's arguments, where one does not make a preconceived assumption about one's rightness, but the imperative becomes to listen to and understand the other's point. Fifthly, I will want to show that an ethical attitude is only possible if the subject accepts that there is a certain higher value that does not allow the subject to absolutize their position, thus relativizing the need to have a sole and infallible truth about the world. Recognising that political activity means serving such a higher value is an unconditional starting point for talking about the possibility of any impartiality in the socio-political world. While full impartiality in itself is a difficult ideal to achieve, the pursuit of it is the only proper goal and duty of political activity within an ethical attitude, as Kant already pointed out in his political writings.

Keywords: Existential anthropology; partiality; impartiality; aesthetic attitude; ethical attitude.

4 | DOING WHAT ANOTHER WOULD WANT

Russell McIntosh | UC Berkeley

It is often valuable to do what another would want you to do. We often relate in this way to the dead, as when we continue their traditions or memorialize their accomplishments. But it resists understanding, for three reasons.

First, to understand doing what another would want, we must identify the relevant counterfactual. Second, doing what another would want is distinct from the more thoroughly explored phenomena of doing what is good for another, respecting another's preferences, and acting for another. Third, the reasons to do what another would want are opaque, especially if it is distinct from these phenomena.

I defend a conception of doing what others would want as acting from empathetic concern. Acting from empathetic concern requires two separate decisions: first, the decision to take on another's point of view and, second, the decision to act in light of how things seem from that point of view. Corresponding to these decisions are two sets of reasons: reasons to adopt an empathetic stance and reasons that appear from within the empathetic stance.

From within the empathetic stance, we can appreciate the agent-neutral reasons that already applied to us. But, the closer our relationship to the target, the more access we gain to their agent-relative reasons by empathizing with them. A craftsman may preserve a cathedral because it is his beautiful cathedral, not only because it is a beautiful cathedral. By acting out of empathetic concern for the craftsman, a friend might preserve the cathedral because it is his friend's beautiful cathedral.

One reason to take the empathetic stance is that doing so can help us see agent-neutral reasons, like those I mention above, that we otherwise would be blind to.

But the less obvious reason to take the empathetic stance is that doing so affirms the value of one's relationship with one's target. This is especially clear in intimate relationships like friendships. We are drawn to see the world from our friends' points of view, and we want our friends to be drawn to see the world from our points of view. Empathizing with a friend is a way of affirming the value of one's friendship. Affirming the value of a relationship is in part a response to existing value and in part a decision to confer value on the relationship. Doing what another would want thus exhibits distinctively relational value.

Keywords: Desire; empathy; relationships.

5 | FRIENDSHIP, RECIPROCITY AND RELATIONAL SUFFICIENCY

Sanjar Akayev | Central European University

In recent years, many proponents of relational (or social) egalitarianism have suggested that personal friendship should be seen as a paradigmatically egalitarian relationship that embodies and illuminates the ideal of equality (e.g., Viehoff 2014, 2019; Scheffler 2015; Kolodny 2014, p. 315; Wilson 2019). On their view, the way in which the demands of equality play out within friendship may inform our understanding of what it means to relate as equals on a far larger scale, making friendship consequential for our normative theorizing. This relational-egalitarian view has been recently criticised by Joseph Chan (2021),

who forcefully argues that friendship is not governed by the relevant norms of equality and cannot serve as a model for social and political relationship between citizens.

While Chan's critique of relational egalitarians is largely persuasive, it may lead one to conclude that friendship has nothing to offer to political theory. However, as I argue in this paper, such a conclusion would be too hasty. In fact, friendship can inspire a different approach to relational justice: relational sufficientarianism (Bengtson and Nielsen 2023; Lippert-Rasmussen 2021). Relational sufficientarians hold that individuals in the social world should relate as "sufficients" rather than equals, e.g., by treating and regarding each other as having sufficiently high status or providing each other with a sufficiently high level of care and concern.

My central claim is that (good) personal friendship embodies the ideal of relational sufficiency (rather than relational equality). This is because friendship is guided by several norms and demands, the key of which is the norm of reciprocity that requires friends to reciprocate the care, concern, and support received from one another (Helm 2023). Crucially, while reciprocity requires that we "answer in kind", it certainly does not require that we return the relational benefits received from our friend in the exact same amount or with the exact same intensity. The norm of reciprocity is not rigid, and this is good for friendship: if we were to interpret it in a stricter way, we would spend much of our time tracking every exchange with our friends and caring about meaningless miniscule discrepancies between us.

These considerations show that the principle of reciprocity fundamental to friendship is hardly an egalitarian one: it is not fueled by the desire to achieve a perfect equality of benefits within friendship. Rather, it is fueled by the desire to make sure that our friendships are not lopsided, and that our friends reliably receive enough care, attention, support, etc. from us. Good friends effectively relate as "sufficients" by not allowing each other to fall below the minimal threshold of relational benefits. Falling below the threshold for a small amount of time hurts friendship; falling below the threshold consistently destroys it. Of course, friends have a strong reason to reduce certain stark inequalities between each other, but this is because such inequalities often signal that the relationship is too one-sided, and that one party does not receive enough care from the other. Friendship demands relational sufficiency, not equality.

Keywords: Friendship; relational justice; reciprocity; equality; special obligations.

PANEL 8
SESSION 3
ROOM: 0.15

6 | PARTIALITY FOR IMPARTIAL GOOD: ETHICAL TENSIONS
IN THE IMITATION GAME AND SCHINDLER'S LIST

Javiera Arias | Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile

The tension between partiality and impartiality occupies a central place in ethical and political philosophy, as seen in debates about subjective and objective perspectives in practical reasoning. This tension is reflected in works such as Nagel's *The View from Nowhere*, Rawls' "veil of ignorance," Gigilligan's ethics of care, and Wolf's concept of meaningfulness, to name a few. Using two cinematic examples—*The Imitation Game* and *Schindler's List*—I analyze how subjective attachments and impartial reasoning interact, arguing for the significance of integrating partiality in ethics.

In *The Imitation Game*, the team faces a moral dilemma: decoding German messages requires withholding information to avoid alerting the enemy. Tension grows when one member learns of an attack on his brother, but Turing stresses prioritizing strategy over personal concerns,

highlighting the conflict between attachment and duty. In contrast, *Schindler's List* shows how empathy drives ethical action. The death of a girl, symbolized by her red coat, deeply moves Schindler, illustrating the power of personal connections over the abstraction of large-scale atrocities.

Nagel's perspective that morality incorporates both partial and impartial elements is particularly illuminating: in *Schindler's List*, the emotional reaction towards the girl in the red coat underscores the power of subjective identification to give moral urgency to otherwise impersonal realities. *The Imitation Game* illustrates the tension between personal obligations to loved ones and universal commitments to the greater good, reflecting Nagel's view of the tension between subjective and objective perspectives.

Amelie Rorty's taxonomy of love—distinguishing between personal and non-personal—offers an approach for the integration of partiality. Schindler's initial, emotionally driven response to the girl in the red coat evolves into a broader focus on saving as many lives as possible, and his growing connection to those he saves exemplifies how personal love reshapes ethical priorities. The team in *The Imitation Game* embodies non-personal love, where a commitment to their mission transcends individual relationships. Both cases challenge the assumption that love is purely personal and partial, showing its capacity to motivate impartial moral actions aimed at helping people beyond one's immediate circle.

Wolf's concept of meaningfulness enriches this analysis by offering a way to reconcile partiality and impartiality, stating that meaningfulness arises from integrating subjective engagement with objective value, a balance evident in both films. In *The Imitation Game*, the team's goal may reflect a rejection of partiality, yet their personal commitment to saving lives adds meaning to their actions. Similarly, in *Schindler's List*, Schindler's transformation from personal involvement with individual suffering to a broader moral cause creates a sense of meaningfulness that transcends initial motives. This integration of personal commitment and objective justification provides a path to ethical coherence in complex situations.

These examples demonstrate that partiality, rather than being an ethical limitation, emerges as a driving force for moral reasoning, capable of generating impartial outcomes. Far from undermining ethical decision-making, it is essential to moral coherence. By grounding partiality in objective value, we can balance it with impartial considerations, showing how their interplay shapes meaningful, ethically coherent actions.

Keywords: Partiality; impartiality; meaningfulness; practical reasoning; ethical decision-making.

7 | FROM THE LAST LIFE-JACKET TO THE LAST ÉCLAIR: THE ROLE OF MORAL DIVISION OF LABOUR

Rex Lee | York University

Facing the inevitable tension between our impartial egalitarian ideals and our partial personal goals, Thomas Nagel argues that we must resort to what he calls the moral division of labour – the attempt to externalize the claims made by impartiality through social institutions, leaving room for individuals to pursue their personal aims within that framework. Yet the incoherence between the two viewpoints within our motivations makes any kind of strongly egalitarian society appear utopian. I argue that this view of moral division of labour is mistaken, instead it should be understood as the institutional attempt to transform the “objects of contention” into something where reasonable solutions are both plausible and desirable.

Consider first an extreme case where impartiality cannot and (controversially) ought not to prevail – if you and I are fighting over the last life-jacket needed to save our respective children, impartial concerns would be, as Williams put it, “one thought too many”. There seems to be no reasonable solution here since the decision of whether to save your own child lies well beyond the limit of morality. Yet this conundrum clearly does not apply if we are fighting over the last éclair. The distinction between the two cases cannot be attributed to our special obligations to our loved ones or some agent-relative reasons – the partial demand is easily inhibited by impartial claims even if we are fighting over the dessert for our children. Instead, the difference has to be explained by the importance of the objects of contention: reasonable solutions become plausible only when the stakes of contention are sufficiently low.

The moral division of labour, then, should not only be understood as carving out public and private spheres as Rawls and Nagel suggested, nor as lifting the moral burden from individuals as Murphy argued, but rather as the institutional attempt to lower the stakes of contention such that it is possible for us to reach reasonable solutions.

Let us now consider the two options regarding inequality that Nagel suggests we have as a society: we can either give up on strong egalitarian ideals, instead aim for a guaranteed socioeconomic minimum for everyone by, for example, relying on our distaste for severe poverty (or in other words, adhere to sufficientarian ideals); or we can aim for a strongly egalitarian society where inequality due to class or talent is eliminated. The former is plausible, Nagel argues, but moving from that to the latter is utopian due to the psychological transformation needed.

Indeed, a radical transformation of the way we value our projects and loved ones seems both impossible and undesirable (and so the demands of partiality cannot be readily eliminated), but I argue that our new understanding of the moral division of labour

renders such transformation unnecessary. If our social institutions can be arranged to provide a sufficiently high minimum, the social primary goods under contention would become closer to éclairs than life-jackets, and the transition from sufficientarianism to egalitarianism would be much more plausible than Nagel realized.

Keywords: Partiality; egalitarianism; sufficientarianism; moral division of labour.

PANEL 9 — POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY AS PUBLIC PHILOSOPHY

Convenors: João Cardoso Rosas and Daniele Santoro (CEPS, University of Minho)

Political philosophy has long grappled with foundational questions about justice, power, freedom, and authority. However, these questions are not only of theoretical interest; they directly inform public life and the decisions made by governments, institutions, and individuals. The increasing polarization of politics at both national and international levels calls for political philosophers to take a more engaged role in defending the public value of rational discourse. Yet this polarization itself threatens their capacity to perform such an enlightening role effectively.

This panel will examine the role of political philosophy as a form of public philosophy, encouraging contributions that address questions such as:

- How can political philosophy be made more accessible and relevant to the general public? In what ways can political philosophers influence public policy and political debates?
- What are the challenges and opportunities in applying abstract philosophical concepts to concrete social and political issues?
- How can the tools and methods of political philosophy help navigate the tensions between democracy, pluralism, and the public interest?
- What responsibilities do political philosophers have in shaping public discourse and civic education?

We invite papers that explore these and other themes from various perspectives, including but not limited to:

- The role of political philosophers as public intellectuals and their engagement with media, activism, and political advocacy.
- Case studies where political philosophy has directly influenced public policy or political movements.
- The relevance of the tradition of political philosophy to contemporary political and social challenges.
- The impact of political philosophy on public education, civic engagement, and political literacy.
- Ethical questions surrounding the public role of political philosophers in democratic and non-democratic societies.

PANEL 9
SESSION 1
ROOM: 0.16

1 | PANEL PRESENTATION: WHY PUBLIC PHILOSOPHY?

João Cardoso Rosas & Daniele Santoro | CEPS UMinho

2 | POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY AS PUBLIC PHILOSOPHY:
A HABERMASIAN APPROACH TO THE ROLE OF THE
POLITICAL PHILOSOPHER

José María Moreno Soriano | Universidad Complutense de Madrid

Ever since he began his intellectual life in the 1950s, Jürgen Habermas has devoted himself with remarkable constancy to the goal of developing a theory of society with a markedly practical intention. This aim is the guiding thread that allows us to follow the evolution and multiple ramifications of his thought. From his studies on speech acts to those on the democratic rule of law, he has tried to lay new foundations for such a theory with a view to what has always been his main ambition: to contribute to the achievement of the emancipatory goals of enlightened modernity.

Unlike his Frankfurt masters - with the marked exception of Marcuse - Habermas does not stop at the negative moment of critique, but adopts a 'positive', propositional intellectual strategy that makes it possible to put forward constructive proposals that are not reduced to voluntarism. In this way, from his perspective, social theory must proceed to identify in the normative structures of societies - particularly in political practices and institutions - elements of an 'existing reason', in order to be able to reconstruct them reflexively with the aim of appealing to them for their emancipatory potential. It is not for nothing that Habermas's strategy can be regarded as transcendental, insofar as it attempts to analyse what is rationally necessary within actual political structures.

Habermas considers that the current constitutional institutions reflect, at least partially, the normative demands of his political model, i.e. the linking of democracy and rationality through the idea of a dialogically elaborated autonomy. But this does not mean that he renounces the design of political action that satisfies the criteria of rationality and democratic autonomy: his aim is still to elaborate a theoretical framework that can serve as a guideline for the establishment of a radically democratic political model. However, he is convinced that only through the institutions of the democratic rule of law, in its dialectic with a communicatively organised civil society, can a rational formation of political opinion and will take place. And it is only through an understanding of how this works that we can achieve greater levels of communicative freedom.

In this sense, the work that Habermas attributes to the political philosopher is that of offering 'conceptual clarification'. Imbued with the Hegelian spirit of 'raising the present to a concept', Habermas understands that the greatest contribution he can offer to an emancipating citizenry is a proper understanding of the functioning of existing normative structures. The aim of this paper is to offer a critical overview of Habermas's vision of the

political philosopher, paying attention both to his many foundational works and to his contributions to public debate. With this perspective we intend to explore the inherent tension between these two roles.

Keywords: Political Philosophy; Public Philosophy; Democracy; Communicative action; Rule of law.

3 | TWENTY-ONE STATEMENTS ABOUT POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY: AN INTRODUCTION AND COMMENTARY ON THE STATE OF THE PROFESSION

Mark R. Reiff | University of California Davis

I cannot be alone in thinking that we are now re-living the 1930s. Policies that we know will work from prior experience are being ignored or outright rejected with a contempt that is hard to reconcile with rational thought, while ideas that have proved not only wrong but dangerous time and time again seem to have a death-grip on those who are supposed to be guiding our response to the problems of the present. The net result being that there is a populist pox arising on both established houses of political morality (the moderate left and the moderate right) and there is a real possibility that our lives are about to be handed over to a set of clowns and demagogues unrivaled in political history.

Of course, while the 1930s did not end well, history does not have to repeat itself. It is within our power to step back from the brink and restore some degree of sanity to the world. There are many things that people of good faith can and should be doing now, of course, but I intend to talk about only one: what we as political philosophers should be doing if we are to contribute to the effort to ensure that things do not get any further out of hand. Not because I think that the political philosopher has a uniquely important role to play here (it is important but not uniquely important), but because it is the role I have spent the most time thinking about, and because a shockingly large percentage of contemporary political philosophers seem to be utterly unwilling and perhaps even unable to attend to the role that society has assigned to them. Indeed, we could not have reached the precipice on which we now stand if the profession were not failing in some very serious ways to provide people with the tools to think critically about choices currently being presented to them.

What follows then is a set of statements about how I believe that we, as political philosophers, should approach what we do, both within the academy and without. It contains my view as to what political philosophy should be about, how political philosophy should be done, and how courses in political philosophy should be taught. But it is also designed to be more than that—to be a commentary on the state of the profession. Useful introductory material of the “What is Political Philosophy?” variety is surprisingly thin on the ground, and commentary on the profession is non-existent, so there is a gap here to be filled. In any event, I hope this piece will be of use not only to students who are just getting acquainted with political philosophy, but also to those who see themselves in the vanguard of the profession but fear they may have lost their way as well.

Keywords: Political science; legal philosophy; moral philosophy; ideal versus non-Ideal philosophy; continental versus analytical philosophy; hyperspecialization in philosophy; factionalization; the Powell memo; political philosophy and the right.

PANEL 9
SESSION 2
ROOM: 0.16

4 | JUDITH NISSE SHKLAR FOR THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD:
PUTTING PUBLIC CRUELTY FIRST

Chiara Invernizzi | Independent

Judith Nisse Shklar was a Latvian-born political philosopher who fled to North America at eleven due to Nazism. A Harvard professor, her contributions often go unrecognized. This presentation explores the relevance of her philosophical insights in today's socio-political context. To do this, the discussion will revolve around two main concepts: public cruelty and the importance of putting ourselves in the victims' shoes. The first concept can be found in her essay *The Liberalism of Fear* (1989) and collaterally linked to the work *Ordinary Vices* (1984): but what is meant by public cruelty? Cruelty is defined by Shklar as the "deliberate infliction of physical, and secondarily emotional, pain upon a weaker person or group by stronger ones to achieve some end, tangible or intangible, of the latter" (1989). The philosopher's primary interest lies in examining the impact of vice on the public life of citizens, momentarily setting aside the notion of cruelty as a purely personal or private inclination. Shklar aims to highlight the forms of cruelty facilitated by existing inequalities within public power, which manifest in an arbitrary, pervasive, unauthorised, and wholly unnecessary manner. To elucidate this concept, one might consider the abuse of power by police, a state institution that is ostensibly tasked with ensuring public safety, as a salient example of public cruelty. Within the framework of Shklar's liberal theory, public cruelty is the most condemned transgression; it engenders a pervasive atmosphere of fear that significantly undermines the exercise of personal freedom—a value that must be upheld within a liberal state. If we thought nothing worse than the two world wars could be faced, contemporaneity and its countless conflicts would contradict us. February 24, 2022 and the escalation of deaths that occurred after October 7, 2023 are just two of the dates that remind us of the importance of placing cruelty in first place among all the vices to be fought. Even the continuous development of phenomena such as immigration and exploitation must remind us that the society we live in today is anything but fair: it seems to follow the distinction between the weak and the powerful as a rule rather than as something to fight. However, the concept of public cruelty is not strong enough to address contemporary injustices: to combat cruelty, we must put ourselves in the shoes of its victims. Shklar does not forget the importance of this passage; indeed, in *The Faces of Injustice* (1990), the philosopher theorizes what she calls passive injustice. But who is the unjustly passive citizen? He is the one who "turn away from actual and potential victims contribute their share to the sum of iniquity" (1990), who does not care about the injustices and violence that happen around him, forgetting the victims and turning a blind eye to the abuse to which another citizen has been subjected. Therefore, Shklar's thought not only helps to identify a vice that still needs to be fought in our societies today but also suggests something more: it indicates to the community that to do this, we must not close our eyes to the abuses and injustices that happen to subjects outside of ourselves. Shklar invites us to a moral and political commitment to creating at least better societies.

Keywords: Social and political philosophy; Judith Shklar; Public cruelty; Passive injustice; Liberalism.

5 | PUBLIC COMMITMENT AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY: THE CASE OF THE ENCYCLOPÉDIE AND POLITICAL ECONOMY IN THE 18TH CENTURY

Nais Sabatier | Université Clermont Auvergne

Contemporary political challenges – whether democratic, environmental, or economic – confront philosophers with a fundamental question: “What role am I called to play?” Two risks emerge. The first is the risk of “falling” – in the Christian sense – by losing axiological neutrality when engaging in public debate. This is the risk of having “les mains sales” as J.P Sartre phrased it, of being accused of activism, and of the political instrumentalization of scientific discourse. The second risk is that of failing to contribute effectively to political debate because philosophical material might be too abstract, “too pure” to adapt to the concrete situations of individuals.

Should philosophers seek to navigate these dangers and take responsibility in public debate? To reassure them and to clarify the nature of their engagement, we should examine whether this question has been faced before in the history of political thought. It appears that this was indeed the case in France in the mid-18th century, during a period of political authority reconfiguration and growing demands for social and fiscal justice against an administrative and centralized monarchy. This challenge was partly that of political economy, which engaged Enlightenment philosophers, who had to articulate their discourse in response to monarchical and religious powers.

Within this context, the *Encyclopédie* appeared to offer a response: by aiming to “change the common way of thinking,” Diderot was a philosopher of engagement. His commitment was public – at least in part – not only because it took place in an official work (breaking with the libertine tradition of philosophical books) but also because he sought to unveil and liberate “the sciences, arts, and crafts”. The social philosophy embedded within the *Encyclopédie* (by Diderot, Jaucourt, Rousseau among others contributors) reveals a form of public philosophy that I propose to examine as a case study of philosophical engagement. What philosophical justifications did the contributors of the *Encyclopédie* provide to legitimize their stance?

Furthermore, since the *Encyclopédie* was a public work, it is necessary to examine the subjects of public philosophy: to whom should political philosophers address themselves? Political philosophy cannot avoid reflecting on the public itself. Once again, the case of political economy in the 18th century provides an opportunity to explore how philosophy defines the public, which can, in turn, become an actor in the political challenges that concern it.

By pursuing these two lines of inquiry – both on philosophers and their public – through the lens of the *Encyclopédie* and political economy, this study aims to contribute to the contemporary debate on the “risky” political engagement of the humanities and social sciences researchers.

Keywords: Philosophy of commitment; Public sphere; French Enlightenment; Imperialism; Colonialism.

6 | DECOLONIAL POLITICAL SCHOLARSHIP AS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT: REVISITING PRAXIS-ORIENTATED CRITIQUE, LIBERATION, AND JUSTICE

Tamlyn February | Stellenbosch University

What comes to mind when we think of a “political philosopher”? Figures such as Thomas Hobbes, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, John Locke, John Rawls, Robert Nozick, or Martha Nussbaum might spring to mind. In this presentation, I will argue that the chasm between political philosophy on the one hand, and the public on the other, arises from the practices of these traditional or canonical figures of political philosophy. The chasm arises from the understanding of political philosophy as a kind of exercise in abstract reasoning about the concepts of justice, freedom, equality, authority, power, and the like. If political philosophy is restricted or reduced to this understanding, it cannot adequately engage with reality as it is, and it cannot speak to the public. It remains trapped within the ivory tower of the academy. If the “political” in political philosophy is taken seriously, then it must be able to seriously engage with the public. I do not intend to disparage the canon of political philosophy, but I do think that there is an already-existing opportunity for political philosophy to be able to do more and overcome this chasm.

Unlike traditional or canonical understandings of political philosophy, I argue that for decolonial political scholarship, political philosophy has always been public philosophy. Decolonial political scholarship transgresses the boundaries of conventional scholarship because critique, liberation, and justice are always bound with praxis. As an interrogation of the “political” as social power relations on a local and global scale, decolonial political scholarship is more attuned to the realities of the public. In doing so, this somewhat unconventional form of political philosophy goes beyond the “enlightening role” that more canonical and traditional political philosophers strive toward and instead opt for a kind of philosophy that can do something for us—particularly, political philosophy aimed at liberation. The erasure or dismissal of decolonial political scholarship in favour of the traditional and canonical political philosophies contributes to the inability of political philosophy to speak to the public.

To demonstrate how decolonial political philosophy has always been public philosophy, I draw upon two South African scholar-activists that would not generally be recognised as political philosophers proper: (i) Steve Biko (South African anti-apartheid activist most commonly associated with the movement of Black Consciousness), and (ii) Neville Alexander (another South African anti-apartheid activist dedicated to the abolition of racial capitalism). What becomes evident in these two examples is that their political philosophies transgress the limits of the ivory tower by being inextricably tied to the realities, needs, and concerns of the public. Decolonial political scholarship’s concern with critique, liberation, and justice provides the public with the tools and courage to think and do otherwise. Public engagement, and public concern, is foundational to this school of thought, and so decolonial political scholarship serves as an example of political philosophy as public philosophy.

Keywords: Decolonial political scholarship; public engagement; liberation; justice; critique.

PANEL 9
SESSION 3
ROOM: 0.16

7 | AFRICANA PHILOSOPHY AS A MODEL
FOR PUBLIC PHILOSOPHY?

Andrew Pierce | Saint Mary's College

Africana philosophy - philosophy produced on the African continent and/or by persons of African descent - is, like Western philosophy, a broad and diverse philosophical tradition. Still, it is fair to say that despite its breadth and diversity, practical questions of justice are central to the tradition, perhaps even more so than in other traditions. This is likely because, as Africana philosopher Lewis Gordon puts it, “there was no reason for the people of the African continent to have considered themselves African until that identity was imposed upon them through conquest and colonization.” Thus the social injustices that have shaped the continent in modern times, along with various forms of response and resistance, have helped to delineate a distinct philosophical tradition. Correspondingly, some of the most important philosophers in this tradition practiced philosophy not as isolated, professional intellectuals, but as activists, organizers, political leaders, and in other publicly-engaged, justice-seeking roles. Because of this, I believe that the Africana philosophical tradition can be a model for the growing discipline of public philosophy, which has emerged to challenge professional philosophy’s comfortable detachment from everyday life and from the struggles of everyday people. Drawing on key examples, including the negritude movement, the work of Julius Nyerere, Kwame Nkrumah, and South African philosophers of education, I will argue that Africana philosophy provides a model from which Western philosophers can learn a great deal.

The guiding principle that, I argue, binds all of these theorists together, is the idea that the humanist task of defining the human being is not just a matter of philosophical or anthropological analysis, but of what the Jamaican philosopher Sylvia Wynter calls “praxis” – the ways in which theory gives rise to concrete political action. Wynter uses this notion to argue that one of the distinctive contributions of Black thinkers and activists is to challenge exclusive and racist notions of the human not only through theory, but through concrete socio-political activity. From anti-colonialism to the U.S. Civil Rights Movement to the global Movement for Black Lives, Black humanism has developed as much in the streets as in scholarly forums. If political philosophy is to have any real effect in the world, this sort of praxis must become widely modeled. Reflection must not only be offered as a guide to practical action, but it must also be open to being shaped by that action reciprocally. This is, again, a key insight of both public and Africana philosophy, one that has yet to be fully explored, and that I hope to explore as part of your exciting panel on “Political Philosophy as Public Philosophy.”

Keywords: Africana philosophy; public philosophy; humanism; praxis; negritude.

8 | SHARED SOCIAL PRACTICES AS PUBLIC GOODS: LIBRARY, THEATRE, PARKY

Barbara Reiter | Graz University

Soon more than half of the people on this planet will live in cities. Ways of living together will change and ethical, decent behavior will be brought to a test. It is about time, so I shall argue, that we reconsider the shared social practices that guarantee a good and civil society. Different and arguably in some ways new practices need to be established to make living together worthwhile. Libraries, gardens, and theatres, traditional spaces that have been around for millenia in almost every civilization, might be helpful when we look for good shared social practices. Defining a horizon I suggest that shared social practices are based on good shared experiences and can be a starting point for improving democratic inclusive actions. Consummatory experiences as described by John Dewey can be a guiding line, good in themselves they are both valuable to make and something to build on. I am part of these practices and experience my activity as a part of the whole society, I also want to be part of this and am ready to do it, because it feels good. Building on good experience enables cultivating rounded selves. They offer third spaces (first and second spaces, families and schools), enabling relationships and thus connectedness. I see three realms in which this might work: Libraries, theatres, and parks. Libraries feed the cognitive self. They are intergenerational as far as they bridge and offer the knowledge of centuries; but I am also alone with myself, a place for individual growth; discussing with others from different times, backgrounds, and contexts. Theatres foster the community, they offer opportunities to show yourself, test your identities, and play. They provide a safe space for trying out roles and models. Identities can be multi-faceted and refer to many different identities in a society. Putting on a play together fosters collaborative action, both for the players and the audience. Gardens, being in nature, enable to experience oneself as a part of nature and in physical activity. Parks in cities are adapted nature -- In these city gardens, used by many and maintained by civic authorities, are my third example for shared social practices that enable us to make and have consummatory experiences. They are understood as public goods, spaces for everyone. It can be an important goal of public philosophy to demonstrate the central importance to re-invent, re-establish and keep these three spaces and also to empower individuals to use them meaningfully from an early age on.

Keywords: Public space; shared social practices; third space; public good; consummatory experience.

9 | RAWLS ON TAXATION: HIS GREAT LACK

Edoardo Vignocchi | University of Pavia

This paper explores the dual role of taxation in political justice, proposing that it functions not only as an instrumental mechanism to achieve normative goals but also as a constitutive element essential for establishing and maintaining justice. Taxation is a fundamental mechanism through which the state acquires resources to function. While it has instrumental value, its structural necessity makes it constitutive (Green 1984; Holmes & Sunstein 2000). A distinction between constitutive and regulative rules helps clarify

this point (Searle 1995; Conte 2002). Drawing on Amedeo Conte's framework of constitutive rules, taxation is identified as a constitutive tool because it underpins justice and is essential for institutional functionality (Conte 2002). It achieves this through key goals (Green 1984; Holmes & Sunstein 2000; Avi-Yonah 2006):

- **Structural necessity:** Taxation provides the resources necessary for state existence and its functions.
- **Guarantee of Liberties and Rights:** Taxation levies resources to guarantee liberties and rights and the possibility to exercise them.
- **Economic Redistribution:** Taxation reduces inequality and promotes fairness by structuring and reallocating resources among citizens.
- **Behavioral Influence:** Taxation inherently modifies behaviors, aligning them with normative goals.

These goals align with normative principles. Thus, taxation not only sustains the instrumental goals of justice but also serves as a constitutive framework that enables political systems to function.

These goals align with normative principles. Thus, taxation not only sustains the instrumental goals of justice but also serves as a constitutive framework that enables political systems to function.

The second part of my paper critiques Rawls's account of taxation on two levels: first, by examining how he addresses it; and second, by proposing modifications to recognize Taxation's constitutive role. Rawls does not consider taxation a constitutive element of justice. Central to this view is the constraint of public reason, which guides citizens in deliberating on the core elements of justice and establishes the foundation for a just political regime (Rawls 1999: 246, 2001: 160-161). Public reason serves as the foundation for evaluating and formulating laws and institutional constitutions necessary for a cooperative society. Thus, it seeks to define the basic structure of just societies, focusing on constitutional essentials (Rawls 2005: 230). These essentials primarily include political liberties and rights, alongside an economic social minimum.

Rawls also argues that a proportional expenditure tax is preferable to an income tax, as it reflects consumption rather than contribution (Rawls 1999: 246, 2001: 160-161). Furthermore, he holds that unfair taxation does not justify civil disobedience, which should be reserved for preserving and defending constitutional essentials (Rawls 1999: 327; Sugin 2004). Hence, in Rawls's framework, taxation supports the principles of justice but is not considered a constitutive element of political justice.

To address this gap, the paper proposes revising Rawls' framework to incorporate taxation as a constitutive element of political justice. Taxation must be recognized as integral to realizing the principles of justice, particularly in supporting egalitarian frameworks that prioritize the least advantaged. By acknowledging its constitutive role, taxation can be better understood as not only a redistributive tool but a foundational mechanism that sustains justice, fosters political cooperation, and ensures the fair distribution of burdens and resources.

Keywords: Taxation; Justice; Constitutive Rule; Rawls; Normativity.

PANEL 10 — PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES ON BEHAVIORAL PUBLIC POLICY IN THE AGE OF TECHNOLOGY

Convenors: Stefano Calboli (CEPS, University of Minho) and Alejandro Hortal (UNC Greensboro)

As technology—primarily AI—continues to evolve at a rapid pace and becomes integrated into the framework of behavioral public policy (BPP), the impacts of technology-mediated behavioral influences (tools, interventions, policies?) are becoming increasingly significant.

This panel seeks to address the philosophical challenges posed by these developments, with a focus on the ontological dimensions, epistemic limits, and ethical challenges involved in using technologies to shape public behaviors. Central to this inquiry is the possibility—yet to be fully substantiated—that

the infusion of

advanced technologies raises fundamentally new ethical questions, epistemological challenges, and ontological categories. Alternatively, are we merely witnessing familiar issues applied within novel contexts?

Key topics and questions include, but are not limited to:

- What qualifies as a technology-driven BPP within behavioral policy? What specific criteria must choice architectures meet to be considered legitimate BPP?
- In what ways do AI and digital tools interact with human cognition and emotion to guide behavior? Do these technology-mediated nudges exploit specific psychological mechanisms, potentially leading to new forms of manipulation?
- Does AI-based behavioral influence introduce ethical concerns distinct from those associated with more traditional forms of BPP? Are there unique ethical considerations for technologies such as the Internet of Things, wearable technology, and machine learning?
- At what point do technology-based nudges infringe on individual autonomy and the possibility of public scrutiny? Can they actually promote autonomy and facilitate public oversight? Do innovative forms of BPP threaten to compromise or, alternatively, promise to support these two pivotal values in ways that differ from traditional BPP tools?
- Does the personalization enabled by AI exacerbate concerns regarding privacy, control, and autonomy, or could AI offer beneficial customization that respects individual values and enhances user experience?
- Beyond autonomy, public scrutiny, and privacy, which values should inform technology-mediated nudging? How might we infuse values into the development and application of these technologies? In what ways should value-sensitive design guide the ethical development and deployment of behavioral technologies?
- What ethical responsibilities do designers, policymakers, and corporations bear in ensuring the ethical deployment of technology? What aspects may be appropriately left to the responsibility of users and citizens?

- What political implications and questions of justice arise from the private control of behavioral technologies? Is “surveillance capitalism” an inevitable outcome, or can we envision alternative frameworks that empower users rather than constrain them? What are the best policy tools to prevent dystopian scenarios?

This panel aims to foster a nuanced discussion on these topics, offering a critical examination of current practices and exploring pathways toward developing ethically grounded and philosophically informed behavioral policies.

PANEL 10
SESSION 1
ROOM: 0.16

1 | VIRTUAL EXPERIENCES, REAL CHANGES: IMMERSIVE TECHNOLOGY IN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Simone Iaffaldano | Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele

Despite growing public awareness of climate change (CC) and its consequences, there are still significant barriers preventing people from engaging in pro-environmental behavior (PBE). From a public policy perspective, various interventions aim to bridge the gap between intentions and actions. The most common strategy is based on explicit communication of the environmental consequences of certain non-environmentally friendly behaviors. However, this type of strategy does not take into account the mechanisms of our decision-making and the biases that hinder the adoption of PBE. In particular, present bias, temporal distance and future self-disconnection are some of the key features to consider when designing interventions from a behavioral perspective (Gifford, 2011; Hardisty & Weber, 2009; Hershfield, 2011). Since the publication of Nudge (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008), choice architecture interventions have also been applied to the environmental context. Although green nudges (GN) have been shown to be an effective way to increase various pro-environmental behaviours (e.g. recycling, energy consumption, etc.), they do not specifically target the psychological barriers that prevent people from easily engaging in PBE (Schubert, 2017; Carlsson et al., 2021; Singh et al., 2024). The use of immersive virtual reality (IVR) could be an effective tool for overcoming present bias, enhancing future self vividness, and increasing pro-environmental behaviour and intentions. Indeed, IVR can increase the psychological proximity of climate change by vividly simulating future environmental scenarios, thus enhancing our ability to imagine ourselves in a transformed environment. This first-hand experience addresses the visceral influences on behaviour (Loewenstein, 1996) as well as the emotional aspects of decision-making processes (Schwartz & Loewenstein, 2017). Moreover, the embodied experience created by IVR could foster a connection with our future selves and with posterity. Empirical evidence suggests that seeing our face through advanced representations of the future self can increase saving behavior (Hersfield et al., 2011). In addition, empirical results suggest that the virtual experience of climate change has a positive effect on engagement with nature (Ahn et al., 2016), learning about climate change (Markowitz et al., 2018) and the adoption of PBE (Thoma et al., 2023). Thus, after a theoretical analysis of the main psychological barriers to pro-environmental behavior, I focus on the use of Immersive Virtual Reality in behavioral public policy interventions. I then discuss the mechanism of effectiveness of IVR by reviewing key empirical studies. Finally, I consider ethical concerns regarding the use of IVR technologies in public interventions.

Keywords: Immersive Virtual Reality; Behavioral Economics; Green Nudges; Psychological Biases; Environmental Policy.

2 | NEWS VOUCHERS AS MULTIDIRECTIONAL NUDGES

Rubén Marciel | University of Geneva

Since mid-19th century, the institutions in charge of providing citizens with the information they needed to understand public issues have been, mostly, commercial news media. Commercial media made their business by offering (supposedly) quality journalism, which attracted citizens' attention, and then selling citizens' attention to advertisers. However, with the digital revolution new sources proliferated, audiences fragmented, and consequently advertisers fled towards new, non-journalistic but more profitable formats, such as social media. As a result, the funds democratic societies invest in journalism are plummeting: traditional news media are cutting production costs, hence offering worse informative services, while digital news media impose paywalls, which makes it difficult for low-income citizens to get properly informed. These symptoms suggest that the commercial model of the press is collapsing, and that contemporary democracies face the challenge of finding new ways to ensure that quality news are produced and equally available to all. In recent years, driven by the crisis in the media system, some scholars have explored how to ensure that quality journalism is both well-funded and easily accessible to all. Proposals within this blossoming debate share three basic elements: public funding, private news media, and a (somewhat) democratic system to distribute public funds among private media. These proposals include: stimulating the proliferation of non-profit media through special fiscal policies, implementing a system through which citizens may directly commission journalistic projects to teams of investigative reporters, rewarding news media with democratically allocated prizes, and implementing a news voucher system that would enable citizens to allocate a certain amount of funds among various news outlets.

This article assesses these proposals by considering the incentives each one generates, and how capable they seem to stimulate high-quality and accessible journalism. The assessment is guided by two desiderata: the first is a specific account of media pluralism as 'twofold pluralism', and the second is quality journalism, which I conceive as the deliberative ideal of journalism. Based on how well or poorly these proposals align with these two desiderata, I propose a framework of intermediate principles intended to guide future proposals. Finally, I outline a specific news voucher scheme—inspired by, but distinct from those analyzed—that appears to offer better incentives for citizens, journalists, and legislators.

Keywords: News media; public policy; journalism; nudges; applied ethics.

3 | AI FOR A SOCIAL WORLD – A SOCIAL WORLD FOR AI

Christian J. Feldbacher-Escamilla | University of Cologne

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly utilised not only in commercial settings but also in policy-making and various social sectors like the legal domain, the health sector, environmental research, and the like. This growing integration has raised concerns about transparency, leading to demands for explanation. A common response is the development of explainable AI, which aims to create systems that are transparent and interpretable. The spectrum ranges from black-box models that lack these qualities to newer AI systems that can readily provide explanations.

The case of explainable AI illustrates the importance of adapting such systems to our specific needs. In this talk, we want to argue, however, that it is also important to look in the opposite direction, namely to ask how our knowledge of the social world, its structural features, and possibly also ways to adapt can help us to approach problems of AI. As we will argue, in particular, taking in a social perspective on problems of epistemic justification helps us to address long-lasting epistemic problems with the help of machine learning.

Keywords: Machine learning; explanation; justification; transparency; necessary conditions.

PANEL 11 — THE QUESTION FOR DESIRE AND CONTEMPORARY SUBJECTIVITIES FROM MICHEL FOUCAULT'S PERSPECTIVE

Convenors: Senda Sferco, Roberto Merrill and António Baião (CEPS, University of Minho)

Michel Foucault's philosophical perspective constructs its critical apparatus based on a historicization of the field of power relations that give rise to and sustain the link between knowledge, power and truth. Throughout his extensive work, but especially in the studies of the 1980s, his interest focuses on an analysis of the relations of subordination in which we, as subjects, elaborate our subjectivity. Desire emerges as one of the privileged notions when it comes to "giving veridiction" to the interiority of the subject. In his 1980-1981 course at the Collège de France, *Subjectivité et Vérité*, Foucault identifies desire as a kind of trans-historical category, a kind of entelechy that no one questions, and yet which is decisive for the modes of relation through which we interrogate our relation to truth. In the lesson of 7 January 1981, he states: 'what experience can we have of ourselves, what kind of subjectivity is linked to the fact that we are always faced with the possibility and the right to say: "Yes, it is true, I desire"?' (2014, p. 26). Foucault undertakes a genealogy of the subject that has the history of Western morality and its juridical form as its counterpart. The importance of Christianity in the *omnes et singulatim* mode of conducts of the subject's behaviors provides the groundwork for a relation of subjection that has desire as a key malleable piece in shaping our subjectivity. We are 'beasts of confession', he will say in 1976: we are obliged to give an account of our interiority, to externalize and discursively objectify our 'identity' in terms of desire. As 'subjects of desire', we have become the herd of a market where desire provides the field of needs for a 'second nature', which asks us to obey a logic of reproduction and market-technical consumption that is increasingly poor in terms of experience.

Foucault's historical analysis, in a relatively solitary way in his time, seeks to critique the naturalization of the desiring relationship between subjectivity and truth in our present in order to open up the question of a different ethical and political elaboration in the present, one that enables other fields of experience for life with others. From the recovery of this historical-critical gesture as a key to the reading of our present, communications capable of problematizing will be welcome:

- The validity of the Foucauldian genealogical approach to the western subject of desire: the relationship between beast of confession and ideological animal, the role of Christianity, the critique of psi discourses, the confrontation with Freud-Marxisms, the dialogue on Oedipus with Deleuze.
- The discussion between desire, truth and subjectivity in the face of the identity claim of contemporary subjectivities.
- The problematization of desire in relation to neoliberal capitalism: a modeler of subjective needs and a normalizing agent of the subject.
- The formation and management of times, spaces and desiring subjectivities in today's market: data, networks, platforms. The anthropological 'relay' (or return?) of artificial intelligence in the future.

- The intersection between the history of veridictions and the history of juridical discourse.
- The triangle of power: games of veridiction, procedures of governmentality and techniques of the self.

PANEL 11
SESSION 1
ROOM: 1.10

1 FROM VOLUNTARY SERVITUDE TO VOLUNTARY
INSERVITUDE. ABOUT LIFE STORIES IN MILITANT
CIRCLES: WHEN TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT ONESELF
PRODUCES RESISTANCE

Maxime Mariette | Grenoble-Alpes University

In nineteenth-century activist circles, at the height of the European revolts, public self-discourse was rare, even forbidden, as it was hardly considered a strategic and useful element in the struggle. As a result, it remained mostly infra-political, untamed and occasional, in favour of more theoretical and universalist forms of discourse. From the 1920s onwards, however, several forms of discourse emerged in Europe that combined political considerations with personal narratives - discourses with very different intentions and effects, but which all relied on autobiographical practice to make visible lives that had been absorbed by systems of class, gender or racial oppression. Whether within European communist parties or in the emerging field practices of the social sciences, the use of self-narration gradually became widespread and, from the 2000s onwards, an almost inevitable form of self-presentation in contemporary activist circles.

We will show that, over the course of a century, activist discourse has become more intimate, thus justifying the question: does this transformation of activist discourse - into one that interweaves truth about oneself and truth about a problematic political situation - produce individuals more capable of resisting and countering technologies of domination? In other words, can speaking about oneself produce subversion?

This question aligns with the horizon of Michel Foucault's later work, in which he sought to understand what is at stake when we tell the truth about ourselves, both in terms of the effects of power and the concrete ethical implications for the individuals involved. In Foucault's view, wherever there is truth, there are power relations that establish it. Wherever there is power, there are discourses of truth that legitimise it. And it is the historical intertwining of these elements that constitutes part of our subjectivity. Nevertheless, Foucault identifies the practice of truth-telling about oneself as one of the most significant matrices of modern subjectivity. In his eyes, it shapes how we think about ourselves, how we relate to ourselves - in short, how we define ourselves as subjects to be governed by others. Following this logic, we will conduct a genealogical analysis of the historical role of life narratives in activist circles throughout the 20th century. This will allow us to observe the different technologies of power that have shaped and reshaped truth-telling about oneself.

We will do this by analysing different historical junctures at key moments in the emergence of social science action research methodologies, critical sociology and the emergence of new forms of activism, as well as their transformations throughout the twentieth century. From Znaniecki and Thomas's *The Polish Peasant* to Pierre Bourdieu's *La Misère du monde*, we will look at what has made it so common today to speak in the first person about the relations of domination that run through us, and we will question the real ethical and political effects of these discourses on our subjectivities.

Keywords: Critique; truth telling; Subjectivation; Life stories.

2 | SUBJECTIVITY, FREEDOM AND DESIRE IN HISTORY OF SEXUALITY

Tuillang Yuing | Universidad Academia de Humanismo Cristiano

The proposal makes an analytical itinerary of the question of subjectivity as a key to the reading of History of sexuality. It attempts to contribute to the understanding of the notion of sexuality in Foucault from the course it has had in rupture and continuity with other conceptual developments such as “body”, “soul”, “subjectivity” and “flesh”, among others. Assuming a genealogical perspective, we highlight the relationship between these notions and the question of freedom, a key concept to project this discussion into the context of contemporary societies that make individual freedoms one of the foundations of the political order. Thus, in a first moment we review the emergence of subjectivity in Foucault as a result of the encounter of the body and forces, which implies a folding of interiority. Indeed, it will be the notion of the body, as affected by power and force, which allows a link with the notion of flesh and with the problematic of desire.

As a second point, it deals with the particular form of forces in the context of ancient Greece composed of free men. From this point, the question of freedom becomes a depositary dimension of different ways of conceiving the human as well as the political. In this context, it is the body that, in the face of the technologies of power, gives shape to a dimension that is simultaneously individual and social.

Finally, the notion of the body is examined as a place that allows a reading of subjectivity as a discursive inscription before which the truth of the subjects appears in the face of the demand for the use of freedom.

Keywords: Foucault, Liberty, Body, Flesh, Desire.

3 | DESIRE AND IDEOLOGY

Senda Inés Sferco | Universidad Nacional del Litoral

In the critical “diagnosis” that Foucault, emulating the Nietzschean gesture, effects on the present, it is that we, “subjects of desire”, are “beasts of confession” (“bête d’aveu”, Foucault 1976, 1981, 1984). We have naturalized this relation of obedience. Desire provides a dynamic of driving and subordinating the subject which, as Foucault’s studies show, has been codified first by the Church, then by the Reason of State, later by the juridical, psychiatric and psychoanalytic disciplines, then by market capitalism.

The main hypothesis is that desire is a guiding category of a type of relationship between subjectivity and truth that, taken by the pastoral dynamics of government that the author characterizes in terms of “omnes et singulatim” (1979), today enables an inner and imaginary mechanism of conduction of the subject, whose ethical and political incidence can be traced at three discursive levels: of action, of affections and of imagination.

The closeness between the mode of functioning of desire as a mechanism of subjective capture of the subject in governmentality and the classical notion of “ideology”, critically revisited by Louis Althusser, Foucault’s teacher, is remarkable. We will deal with their closeness and points of inflection, trying to shed light on the conceptual elaborations that allow us to understand the complex plot in which subjection and subjectivation are related and our possibilities of action today.

Keywords: Subjectivity; desire; power; Foucault; Althusser; Nietzsche.

PANEL 11
SESSION 2
ROOM: 1.10

4 | THE CANCELLATION OF DESIRE,
THE CONSUMING-SUBJECT - AN EROTIC OF RESISTANCE

Marcio Tavares d' Amaral | Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro

The objective of this communication is to flesh out some hypotheses about the possible modes of subjectivation and its imbrication with the nature of desire in our times. If we qualify desire as what power produces in the order of relations between what we are (which power determines as a positivity) with what we are not but want (power conditioning determined historical ways of wanting), perhaps we should investigate whether, after sovereignty, discipline, control and surveillance, we would not be experiencing a new mode of desiring subjectivation.

The hypothesis is that the exercises of power today (neoliberal market globalization) block the possibilities of wanting to do the *travail de soi sur soi* (ethical dimension of the modes of subjectivation), which comes to produce, from the outside, the consuming-subject, who, under the power of a simulacrum of desire, (the will-to-consume), is no longer capable of experiencing oneself in connection with real desire.

The “bubbles” of sociotechnical networks make this impossibility clear, as they are built on fixed identities, excluding any difference. In the absence of difference, therefore of relationship, desire is excluded as a vital force. Dystopian futures of excluded desire are built, governed by pure technological efficiency, mainly AI, capable of simulating, but not experiencing, feelings and emotions. For present societies, these futures determine hate as the dominant emotion and polarizations as socio-political-cultural forms of organization.

An erotica may be what remains for a critical reflection on desire in the context of its virtual disappearance. Through this erotica one can perhaps positively experience a suffering of thought and life, capable of producing new modes of subjectivation and regimes of truth.

There is a dialogue here with Nietzsche, around the dionysian, madness and death. Nietzsche's idea of the return of the dionysian carries, at its extremes, madness and death. Our time seems to be perversely apollonian, equally bringing madness and death through the substitution of desire by the will-to-consume. The consuming-subject, in the post-truth regime, is the un-desire to be worked on by a possible erotica, in the dynamics of self-care and the use of pleasures.

The problems that such a hypothesis leave open are:

- a) What ways can an “erotics of resistance” find to touch a subject emptied of desire?
- b) In what territories can an “erotics of resistance” touch the power that emptied the subject of desire?
- c) Who maintains conditions for the *travail de soi sur soi* with an erotic-desiring quality?
- d) How does erotica, which only works if it brings into play the power of bodies, encounter the disempowering disembodiment promoted by high technologies, especially AI?
- e) How, in this context, can we find space for the ethical-political action capable of, working on the present, propose an aesthetics of desiring existence in the countercurrent of the elimination of desire through the will-to-consume?

f) What critical and vital confrontation is still possible in the context of planetarized neoliberalism?

Keywords: Consuming-subject; will-to-consume; cancellation of desire; erotics of resistance; technological efficacy.

5 | FOUCAULT AND THE QUESTION OF DESIRE IN THE “HISTORY OF SEXUALITY” PROJECT

Marcelo Raffin | University of Buenos Aires/National Scientific and Technical Research Council of Argentina

The references to the question of desire in Foucault's work are numerous and concern different issues, such as knowledge (*savoir*), truth, power and of course, subjectivity, psychoanalysis and psychology, sexuality, sex and pleasure and politics. In each of these problems, the implications and connotations of desire are different and are combined with other elements that specify and allow to better understand the function that desire fulfills in relation to them. However, the most important references and developments on desire appear in the “History of Sexuality” project, which had the objective of carrying out a genealogy of sexuality and an archaeology of the subject of desire in the modern West. It is here that desire plays a fundamental role in the formation and production of modern subjectivity. And it does so with respect to a series of elements that, in a strong sense, clearly define Foucault's work as a whole and his interests and research objectives. Thus, this operation of desire is inextricably linked to the production of veridictions and the exercise of power and government, within the framework of Foucault's ideas on biopolitics and governmentality. Now, how do these elements appear in relation to desire in the “History of Sexuality” project?

The answer to this question is the subject of this paper. In my analysis, I will focus on the “History of Sexuality” project integrally, i.e. I will consider the four volumes composing it, as well as the courses on sexuality that Foucault gave in the 1960s. At the same time, I will combine these ideas with other developments from those years, which Foucault presents in his courses and in articles and conferences. Therefore, I will structure my work around three fundamental moments of the “History of Sexuality”:

1 – The antecedents of the “History of Sexuality” project, i.e. the courses on sexuality of the 1960s.

2 – Volume I of History of Sexuality, as the first chapter of a genealogy of sexuality and of the subject of desire in the modern West and of the studies on biopolitics and governmentality.

3 – the second block of the “History of Sexuality” project, volumes II to IV, in which Foucault proposes a genealogy of the ancient and late-ancient, pagan and Christian, subject of desire.

In these three moments, I will develop some conceptual cores related to desire, such as the sexuality apparatus, the strategic model of power, government, the relationship between sex and sexuality, the notion of pleasures, the relationship between the subject of desire, truth and confession, and the practices of subjectification. Finally, I will propose some brief conclusions on the analyzed ideas.

Keywords: Foucault; desire; sexuality; biopolitics; subjectification.

6 | DESIRE AND INTEREST IN THE PARADOX OF HOMO Oeconomicus. AN ARGUMENT AROUND ADAPTATION AS A TECHNOLOGY OF THE SELF.

Guillermo Carazo Diez-Aja | Complutense University of Madrid

Based on Foucault's approaches in the last courses at the Collège de France, the contribution will attempt to reflect on the problem of the contradictions inherent to desire under liberal governmentality. Although many of the critiques of neoliberalism have repeatedly addressed the tension of desire in a life colonised by economic logic, what could be called a fundamental impossibility of modern individualism was examined in *Birth of Biopolitics* in the paradox of homo oeconomicus: it is the being who must be 'left to do', but it is equally the being who 'accepts reality' and 'the most governable' subject. Our aim is to show how this paradox is embodied in the experience of the subject by which he is forced to adapt in order to become compatible with his social environment. The extent of this experience is due to the fact that the processes of neoliberal subjectivation shape a subjectivity prone to postpone pleasure, to adapt continuously to a changing social environment and, in short, to 'manage uncertainty'. However, these essential features are already to be found in the matrix of classical liberal thought and its critique, so that perhaps a strategic re-examination of traditional political economy can shed light on the historical structure of some contemporary logics of subjectivation.

In the first part, we will consider how and why Foucault is concerned with desire in the context of a history of governmentality. Whereas in the course *Les anormaux* desire constitutes the principle of a 'moral physiology of the flesh', at the end of the 1970s, desire reappears as an aspect in which the naturalness of the population manifests itself, namely as a universal motor of action. Thus, the techniques of power have to relate to desire by admitting its positive reality, but imposing certain environmental conditions on it so that, by letting it act freely, it produces a collective interest. Hence, Foucault sees interest as a factor in the government of others (promotion and guidance of desires by admitting their free play and presupposing their mutual reinforcement) and, according from Constant to Weber (via Marx and Tönnies), as the basic mode of will in civil society.

However, this desire through which government is exercised is not immediately interest, but has to undergo a rationalisation by which a series of renunciations are demanded of it that enable the individual to successfully inscribe himself in 'second nature'. This brings us to our second section: the problem of how passions are worked into private interests, and how a collective interest is then extracted from them. If interest is the model of maximal rationality defined in the market, its self-consciousness and pursuit always demands for the individual a certain degree of socially determined sacrifice of the passions (asceticism). We will explore the necessity of this internal unfolding of desire through Malthus, Adam Smith and Hegel.

Finally, we will return to Foucault to explore how the socialisation of desire driven by the need to adapt opens up a domain of experience and intervention on oneself that, as we will try to suggest, requires a series of techniques of the self that can be interpreted under a specific economy of truth.

Keywords: Liberal governmentality; economic rationality; techniques of the self; desire adaptation.

PANEL 11
SESSION 3
ROOM: 1.10

7 | NETWORKS OF POWER: DIGITAL SUBJECTIVATION AND SURVEILLANCE IN FOUCAULT'S PERSPECTIVE

Silvia Capodivacca and Gabriele Giacomini | Pegaso University, University of Udine

This paper examines the contemporary dynamics of disciplinary power in the digital age through a Foucauldian lens, reflecting on the convergence of surveillance, datafication, and algorithmic control. Building on Foucault's analysis of biopolitics and the *dispositif*, we trace how mechanisms of power have evolved from institutional control to a more diffuse but pervasive form of subjectivation through digital networks.

The study focuses on the shift from classical disciplinary institutions—such as prisons and schools—to digital ecosystems where personal data is mined and leveraged to shape behavior and influence decisions. We explore how Foucault's insights into the panopticon, confession, and normalization find renewed relevance in understanding the architectures of digital surveillance capitalism, where human actions are not only observed but pre-emptively shaped by predictive algorithms. This evolution echoes Foucault's assertion that power operates not through repression alone but by configuring fields of visibility and modes of self-relation.

By analyzing recent examples of digital surveillance practices—including psychographic profiling, predictive policing, and behavioral microtargeting—we highlight how neoliberal societies foster forms of digital governance that intensify the management of individual subjectivities. These practices illustrate the emergence of what could be termed “algorithmic discipline,” where the subject is rendered both transparent and governable through their digital traces. The implications are profound: while Foucault envisioned disciplinary societies as enclosed and institutional, digital infrastructures transcend these spatial limitations, creating an environment where surveillance is embedded into everyday interactions.

Furthermore, this paper interrogates how data-centric mechanisms shape subjectivities through a regime of “veridiction,” compelling individuals to produce “truths” about themselves through digital interfaces. Drawing connections with Foucault's critique of power/knowledge relations, we discuss how truth-production is increasingly outsourced to algorithmic systems, raising concerns about autonomy, opacity, and the ethical boundaries of digital governance.

Lastly, we address how resistance can be conceptualized within such an environment. While Foucault emphasized that resistance is immanent to power, the paper considers the potential for subversion through digital literacy, collective mobilization, and the reclamation of data sovereignty. These strategies call for a renewed focus on ethical subjectivation, where individuals and communities reclaim their agency against the reductive frameworks of data commodification.

By historicizing the current digital regime, we aim to contribute to the broader conference inquiry into the intersections of power, subjectivity, and technology, fostering a critical dialogue on the socio-political stakes of life in the digital age. We identify at least

two key aspects that resonate with the conference's inquiry into the relationship between power, subjectivity, and truth:

1. Neoliberalism and the normalization of desire: Neoliberal capitalism functions as a regulator of desire by harnessing behavioral data, fostering marketable desires, and encouraging a "second nature" that aligns personal needs with consumption patterns. Digital technologies act as normative forces, steering subjectivities through algorithmic feedback loops and intensifying forms of self-surveillance and identity commodification.
2. Technologies of self and AI's role in the reconfiguration of subjectivity: We reflect on the transformation of Foucault's power triangles—veridiction, governmentality, and self-techniques—within the era of data and platforms. How do artificial intelligence and psychographic microtargeting reshape ethical possibilities for self-relation and collectivity?

Keywords: Algorithmic Discipline; Digital Surveillance; Biopolitics and Subjectivity; Power/Knowledge and Veridiction.

8 | THE GOVERNMENT AND THE WILL TO KNOWLEDGE: A FOUCAULDIAN PERSPECTIVE FOR MEASURING AND PREDICTING THE POPULATION'S POLITICAL DESIRES

Aymeric Leroy | Sciences Po – CEVIPOF

Drawing on the French case, this presentation argues that contemporary state power, increasingly concerned with popular dissent, is striving to implement new strategies to better understand and predict the desires of the population. It builds upon the work of Michel Foucault, who recognized that the notion of desire, which emerged with Christianity and came to define individuals almost entirely, would always be accompanied by deep anxieties on the part of those who govern. For if we accept the idea that individuals are fundamentally defined by their inner desires, how can we be certain that the desires they express are truly their own? In other words, how can power be sure that individuals are not misrepresenting or concealing their true desires? As Foucault emphasized, particularly in *The History of Sexuality*, this question is central to disciplinary power, which relentlessly seeks to establish reliable knowledge of people's desires. This is, of course, what he calls the "will to knowledge," exemplified by the institutionalization of mandatory confession in Christian pastoral practices.

However, contemporary interpretations of Foucault often emphasize a different aspect of his analysis: the idea that, in modern society, individuals actively take it upon themselves to disclose their "authentic" desires to the world. This reading aligns with numerous Foucauldian and post-Foucauldian critiques of identity politics (Butler, 1990; Brown, 1995; Sabot, 2022). Yet, while it is true that power relations shape individuals, and that they do tend to publicly express their own desires, this does not imply that those desires are fully transparent. On the contrary, power remains unable fully to grasp them. This inability becomes particularly evident in moments of social upheaval, such as the *Gilets Jaunes* (Yellow Vests) movement, which took the French government by surprise. In this case, while it initially appeared that the French population had lapsed into civic apathy following Emmanuel Macron's 2017 presidential victory – seemingly confirmed by a record-high abstention rate of 51.29% in the subsequent legislative elections – the sudden

eruption of the *Gilets Jaunes* movement revealed that many French citizens were, in fact, not indifferent but profoundly discontented.

Through this case study, I seek to demonstrate that the French government's surprise at the emergence of the *Gilets Jaunes* led it to adopt new techniques aimed at uncovering the true desires of the population. The Service d'information du gouvernement (SIG), which conducts public opinion research for the government through polling and social media trend analysis, has seen a significant budget increase in recent years, despite a broader context of public spending cuts. Moreover, recent institutional reforms aimed at introducing more participatory democracy into the Fifth Republic – such as the creation of *Conventions citoyennes* or the reform of the CESE – were designed to allow individuals to express (or perhaps confess?) their anger and resentment (Gourges & Mazeaud, 2022; Gourges, 2023). From a Foucauldian perspective, I will thus argue that these developments are a response to the government's enduring and renewed preoccupation with the desires of those it governs.

Keywords: Michel Foucault; government; political desires; public opinion.

9 | SUBJECTIFICATION PROCESSES BETWEEN ALGORITHMIC GOVERNMENTALITY AND PLATFORMS

Pablo Manolo Rodríguez | Universidad de Buenos Aires-Conicet

A little over a decade ago more than a decade ago that the thesis of algorithmic governmentality (hereinafter “GA”) became one of the main interpretative keys of a Foucauldian framework of analysis focused on the contemporary processes of subjectivation.

In its literalness, the proposal of Antoinette Rouvroy and Thomas Berns, even with its later corrections, argues that the governmentality analyzed by Foucault is today deployed by technological means, fundamentally artificial intelligence (hereinafter AI). It is a three-step process: data mining, algorithmic processing of that data, and anticipation of behaviors based on this processing. The profile, as the result of the process, reflects not only a new way of governing of behaviors, but also a “rarefaction” of the processes of subjectification. The profile in the supraindividual and the data in the infraindividual would avoid the possibilities of “individuation” (thus summoning another theoretical framework, that of Gilbert Simondon).

In my exposition I will attempt to analyze the GA thesis through three axes: a Foucauldian one, associated with the relationship between governmentality, technology and subjectification; another of a technological critique, associated with current conceptions of AI; and a third axis that frames the GA within the scheme of data analysis, algorithms, platforms and that has become preponderant in recent years for the study of the constitution of digital platforms.

In the interweaving of these three axes, AI emerges as a questioning of what Foucault called “the figure of man” within realm of the modern episteme. Does AI signal a relevant transformation of this figure? Is it an “anthropological return” to the crisis of this figure in the 1960s and 1970s? Or is it the consequence of the unfolding of a self-proclaimed “post-humanist” epoch that would have followed those years? In short, what can be said about contemporary processes of subjectification when, due to the crisis of the “figure of man” and the rise of “anthropomorphic” technologies, they seem to be woven by digital platforms, themselves woven by an apparently new diagram of power?

PANEL 11
SESSION 4
ROOM: 1.10

10 | FOUCAULDIAN DIALECTICS BETWEEN POWER
RELATIONS AND THEIR RESISTANCES

Juana Polo Lopez | Universidade de Lisboa, Université de Lille

This paper will explore the possibility of a dialectical dynamic between resistance and power in Michel Foucault's analysis. I aim to illustrate how a systematic exercise of power can eliminate opposition and update the elements of its strategies through appropriation of creative resistance practices. As early as 1966, Foucault posited that the episteme, as the dispositive of redundancy of contents for knowledge, establishes its own «points of heresy» (Foucault, 1966: 115). Again in 1984, he cautioned that when new cultural creations resistant against power organize around an economy of collective identity and desire—excluded and exclusive—«we can be sure» that their practices will be exploited and integrated into the prevailing system. Foucault does not dare labeling this countereffect of resistance as “dialectics”, although it «comes rather close to it» (Foucault, 1997: 167).

Judith Butler's critique of Foucault's analytics of power offers a compelling point from where to start exploring a possible dialectic in power-resistance. Butler describes the operation of a regulatory regime and its necessity to reattach any emergent desire that escapes its law. They argue that «the instrument of suppression becomes the new structure and aim of desire, at least when subjection proves effective». However, they highlight the importance of the «attachment that a regulatory regime requires», since there it lies both its «constitutive failure and the potential site of resistance» (Butler, 1997: 60–62). This detachment practice and consequential reorganization of the regulatory regime is what happened in the transformation of sexuality by Playboy, as analyzed by Paul B. Preciado. Foucault writes that «against the dispositive of sexuality, the supporting point of the counterattack must not to be sex-desire, but bodies and pleasures» (Foucault, 1976: 208). In surprising continuation, Preciado's historical analysis of Playboy illustrates how «Hefner devised the perfect sexual heterotopia [...]: a sort of virtual pleasure produced by the connection of the body to a set of information techniques» (Preciado, 2010, 142). By appropriating and redefining practices that initially emerged as forms of resistance, Playboy reinforced dominant systems while appearing to challenge traditional norms, hence reorganizing elements of resistance inside the updated regulatory system.

In this article, therefore, I aim to explore the dialectic dynamic between power relations and their resistances. Power is conserved or reproduced by this dynamic as a means of updating the redundancy of its dominant system. Using Butler's critique and Preciado's work, I would like to reread the Foucauldian analytics of power, looking for the point of connection between an updating dialectic and identity and desire as a kind of political economy in practices of resistance. Finally, considering the cultural creation that Foucault foresaw would be phagocytized—lesbian sadomasochism—I will analyze how a practice that attempts to resist creatively can “also” incorporate elements of the powers it contests. However, this kind of reappropriation, following Balzer's work in “Ethik der Appropriation” (2022), does not seek to catalyze an update, but rather to dissolve its effects and experiment with new ways of resisting and politically existing, always on the move.

Keywords: Dialectics of power; re/appropriation; practices of resistance; update.

11 | A LACK OF A LACK: ASEXUALITY FROM A FOUCAULDIAN PERSPECTIVE

Maura Ceci | University of Lisbon

This paper is an attempt to analyse the newly emerged category of asexuality within the LGBTQIA+ movement from a Foucauldian lens. My contention is that the category of asexuality openly manifests some inner contradictions already at work within the queer movements leading to an open paradox: the will to categorize not a desire or sexual preferences but 'a lack' of such desire.

This paper will be divided in two sections: in the first one, I will briefly expose a critique of the LGBTQIA+ movements through a Foucauldian framework. It will touch mostly on three points, interconnected among themselves. First, by proliferating new labels and identities, they do not openly tackle the nexus power-knowledge that characterizes the *scientia sexualis*, but they re-insert themselves within the already existing power machine by reinforcing modes of subjectification implement through bio and pastoral power. Consequently, second point, there is an undiscussed reliance on the 'pastoral power' as a way to determine and discover who we really are by interrogating our sexual preferences and identified ourselves within the most fitting category, or creating new labels when there is a mismatch between our desires and the theoretical queer framework of recognition. As a third point, this multiplication of identity-labels based on sexuality does not only co-exist but foster the governmental power typical of neoliberal society, making individuals and groups even more subjected to guidance in an economy-based society on the basis of their group of affiliation and identification. In short, whereas it is undeniable that LGBTQIA+ movements have proved to be a valuable instrument for protection and rebellion for all those who fall outside the mono-heterosexual schema of patriarchal families, it has also foster and exacerbate identities politics, polarized opinions and it augments market rationalities of neoliberal governments based on the autonomy and free will of the individuals.

In the second section, I wish to focus particularly on the category of asexuality, which is usually defined as a wide spectrum which cover different manifestation of a lack of sexual desire or sexual orientation. When encapsuled within Foucauldian framework of sexuality, we can see how we reach a paradoxical situation. Foucault has stated, in dialogue with Deleuze, that he had an allergy towards the notion of desire and that he would think of it either in terms of 'repression' a là Freud or as 'a lack' a là Lacan. We find then ourselves in the paradoxical situation of self-subjectification through pastoral power not based on our own desires but on the lack of it. Moreover, sexual abstinence was considered, during the Victorian age of sexual repression or during the campaign against child masturbation, a morally praised and healthy behaviour. We have then reach a *coincidentia oppositorum*, for which asexual persons are at the same time a minority in needs of definition and protection for progressive politics, while they still represent a moral standard for the virtuous individual within conservatory politics.

Keywords: Foucault; desire; subjectivity; identity politics; LGBTQIA+; Asexuality.

12 | DESIRE, INTEREST, SUBJECT

João Marado Fernandes | University of Minho

Desire traverses the subject as a promise of truth, even as it long has spoken the language of subjection. This paper adopts a genealogical approach to interrogate how desire, far from being an intrinsic or natural force, is historically constituted as a function of governmentality. Drawing on Michel Foucault's analyses of biopolitics and governmentality, especially in *The Birth of Biopolitics*, this inquiry offers a critical reading of how the grid of intelligibility established by *homo oeconomicus* enables the modulation and management of desire. The focus lies on how desire is shaped by political, economic, and discursive dispositifs that render it a technology of subjectivation.

Foucault distinguishes between German neoliberalism, which generalizes the model of the enterprise into a normative form of life, and American neoliberalism, which extends market rationality to all spheres of existence. Within this shift, *homo oeconomicus* emerges not as the liberal subject whose freedom consisted in being untouched by government, but as a governable subject whose conduct is intelligible, calculable, and manipulable. No longer resistant to government, the subject is constituted by it: responsive, adaptable, and strategically oriented. This reconfiguration brings desire into the domain of economic rationality: if desire can be made systematic, it can be governed. In this light, governing desire proves more effective and productive than governing interest, precisely because desire engages the subject more intimately and with greater intensity.

The desire for freedom, self-expression, or personal fulfilment is thus recoded as a form of human capital to be optimized, whether in the guise of the consumer, the productive agent, or the networked identity subjected to continuous validation. Freedom becomes the capacity to choose among commodities; expression becomes the inscription of consumer preference; and fulfilment is measured in productivity, efficiency, and profitability.

In this configuration, the neoliberal subject is constituted as an "entrepreneur of the self", tasked with the management of its own desires, decisions, and competencies. Through the grid of intelligibility associated with *homo oeconomicus*, the relation to the self is recoded by market rationality, transforming the four dimensions of ethics that Foucault delineates. The "ethical substance", the material upon which the subject works, is now desire, understood as capital. The mode of subjection takes the form of voluntary submission to competitive market norms. "Practices of the self" become techniques of continual self-optimization, enacted through self-vigilant investment in one's human capital. Finally, the telos, the form of being one aspires to, is no longer "self-mastery" or "purity", but the endless maximization of one's own market value. This telos of neoliberal ethics is indistinguishable from its operative technique: the practice of the self becomes a desire for subjection, misrecognized as freedom.

Keywords: Michel Foucault; desire; neoliberalism; governmentality; *homo oeconomicus*.

PANEL 13 — JUSTICE OF SUPRANATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Convenors: Pedro Silva and João Cruz Ribeiro (CEPS, University of Minho)

This panel will focus on the political morality of supra-national and regional institutions, such as the European Union, the African Union, Mercosur and ASEAN. It is interested on the question of the principles of justice that should govern these institutions. Should they commit to promoting maximally just institutions within domestic states or should they merely favour the creation or maintenance of domestic institutions that satisfy a given threshold of justice? What implications does the answer to this question have for the kind of welfare state regimes and types of political economy that states should maintain? European countries differ substantially with respect to social insurance systems and labour market legislation, for example. These issues prompt the question of how regional integration may be carried out legitimately.

This Panel welcomes discussions on the legitimacy of the current shape of supranational institutions as well as proposals on the reforms it should undertake if it is to promote social justice in a more thorough manner. This Panel also welcomes contributions that seek to answer the following kinds of questions:

- How should supranational institutions share power between its centre and domestic states?
- Under what circumstances can supranational institutions legitimately supervise the respect for the rule of law, human rights and other urgent claims in its member states?
- Is democratic backsliding within some EU Member States a real phenomenon? If so, what can the EU do to tackle it?
- Are regional and supranational institutions a stepping stone to the fulfilment of principles of justice with a global scope?

PANEL 13
SESSION 1
ROOM: 0.14

1 | RETHINKING EU JUSTICE: FROM NORMATIVE IDEALS TO INJUSTICE-CENTERED CRITIQUE

Sara Amighetti, Siba Harb & Pietro Intropi | University of Zurich, Tilburg University
& Université Catholique de Louvain

The normative debate about the European Union has long been shaped by the global justice literature, asking questions such as: should the principles of justice and legitimacy that apply within states apply also at the EU level? If not, what makes the EU different? Are there distinctive principles of EU justice? This approach has deepened our understanding of how the EU could be made more just and democratic—particularly regarding the distribution of obligations between member states and the EU as a whole. However, this justice-centered perspective risks overlooking two pressing issues: (1) the need to justify the EU project to outsiders and (2) the extent to which the EU itself functions as an agent of injustice. In this paper, we argue that shifting from a justice-centered approach to an injustice-centered one provides a crucial corrective to normative theorising about the EU. By foregrounding injustice, we uncover neglected normative questions and illuminate structural features of the EU that may entrench rather than alleviate inequality and exclusion. We argue that by moving from an idealized justice framework to an injustice-centered approach allows for a more critical and normatively grounded assessment of the EU's legitimacy and its role in structuring economic and political inequalities. In the paper, we outline this alternative framework, contrast it with justice-based approaches, and explore how the two can be integrated to yield a more grounded and critically attuned normative outlook for the EU.

Keywords: European Union; normative theorising; injustice centred-approach.

2 | ISA AND THE ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE FOR THE DEEP SEABED GLOBAL COMMONS

Petra Gümplöva | Friedrich Schiller University

The paper outlines the concept of ecological justice for the deep seabed on the basis of the recent developments in the field of global justice and current contestations against impending seabed mining. First, the paper overviews the history of the deep seabed as a distinct global commons. It highlights the unique vision of international distributive justice involved in the CHM principle and traces the attempts to translate it into the institutional regime erected for the seabed and embodied in the International Seabed Authority – a unique international organization tasked to implement just governance of a global public property. The paper traces the gradual weakening of redistributive aspirations through the series of compromises, legal developments, and pressures to allow

profitable commercial exploitation of seabed minerals and the role the ISA has played in the process. Second, the paper discusses current conflict over the deep sea mining (DSM) – the pressures to start mining and create a facilitating mining regime with substantially weakened benefit-sharing elements on the one hand and the contestations against seabed mining on the other hand. Two main strands of the contestation against DSM are in focus: the indigenous calls for the ban on mining activities and calls to adopt precautionary moratoria proposed by some countries and corporations. The paper argues that given the current environmental crisis (climate change, biodiversity loss, marine pollution and overexploitation), a different justice vision for the ocean is appropriate – that of ecological justice. Building on existing critical narratives and the recent work in the field of ecological justice, I outline contours of this vision of ecological justice for the deep seabed and consider the possibility for the ISA to give up its main agenda to manage the extractive activities in this global commons and become the steward of the deep seabed.

Keywords: Global commons; seabed mining; International Seabed authority; distributive justice; ecological justice.

3 | LIBERAL EGALITARIAN EU: HOW EGALITARIAN?

Pedro Silva | University of Minho

The European Union should require that its Member States pursue a domestic liberal egalitarian theory of justice rather than just encourage them to do so. This includes the maintenance of a critical threshold of sufficiency, the fair value of political liberties and a degree of fair equality of opportunity, particularly in education and training. The EU should also allow for the possibility of principles of distributive justice between individuals of different Member states in some scenarios. The paper maintains that there are both (1) relational and (2) non-relational grounds for doing all of this. The paper will subsequently argue that this is consistent with plausible views in the domain of global justice. This is because the liberal egalitarianism that the paper advances concerns principles of justice within Member states of the European Union, predominantly, and it would be too costly to deny that it is permissible for states to do so. The view advanced in this paper, however, says that principles of justice across individuals from different member states of the EU should be partly constrained by a global sufficiency principle. The extent to which the EU may prioritise distribution across individuals from different states before it attends to a global threshold of advantage depends on how important the former is from the standpoint of a well-functioning EU. The paper will argue that this is unlikely to amount to very big and constant transfers across the EU, but it is plausible that it will be a modest form of egalitarianism.

PANEL 13
SESSION 2
ROOM: 0.14

4 | THE LEGITIMACY OF THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON
HUMAN RIGHTS REGIME: AN ANALYSIS FROM THE
PERSPECTIVE OF SERVICE CONCEPTION

Gürkan Çapar | Maynooth University

What makes international human rights authorities (IHRA) different from others responsible for governing international trade, climate change, and pandemics. One way of addressing this problem is to engage in an investigation into the sort of services that an international authority is expected to deliver. What are those services that IHRAs are tasked with delivering? In addressing this question, one needs to define a problem that domestic authorities cannot solve by themselves, and that motivates them to enlist the support of international authorities. In other words, domestic authorities often establish international authorities in response to some common problems and for some normative reasons. Hence, the type of services IHRAs are supposed to deliver depends partly on how the problem is identified and framed.

I will argue that states create international authorities to solve two main problems: i) the problem of international coordination and ii) the problem of domestic akrasia. For instance, the WHO is a typical example of an international coordinative authority designed to settle disagreements among states as regards the norms governing international trade. In contrast, the IHRA such as the ECHR regime is not created to solve international/regional coordination problems on human rights, rather it is created to solve the problem of domestic akrasia. Akrasia is often linked to the failure of rationality or practical reasoning because individuals knowingly act against what they recognize as a more compelling reason, yielding to a weaker conflicting reason. Akrasia also manifests certain deficiencies in one's character traits in the sense that an individual who fails to act for the right reasons is like an immature child who succumbs to desires and temptations. In this sense, akrasia points to the practical problem that states encounter when implementing some of their decisions and commitments such as respecting human rights. I argue that the ECHR is created to assist domestic authorities in remaining faithful to their human rights commitments and transforming themselves into democratic (and human rights respecting) authorities.

Based on this classification, the paper seeks to assess the legitimacy of the ECHR from a non-ideal perspective by paying due regard to its evolutionary history and the different political conditions it has been operating. This non-ideal perspective allows us to see that international authorities may change their identity and purpose in particular when they are assigned to solve new problems and functions. For instance, the ECHR is transformed from a coordinative to non-coordinative authority when it is tasked with helping ex-Soviet bloc countries democratize themselves. This non-ideal perspective brings up the question of whether an international authority can be legitimate for different constituencies for different reasons. Put differently, because the original democratic members of the

ECHR regime do not suffer from the problem of respecting human rights at the domestic level, then it gets challenging to justify its authority given the ambiguity of service that it delivers to democratic states. The article concludes by a discussion on the coordinative services of the ECHR regime to democratic states and explaining why its differentiated treatment to democratic and non-democratic states is warranted.

Keywords: Normative Legitimacy; International Organizations; The European Convention on Human Rights Regime; Non-Ideal Theory; Service Conception.

5 | DEMOCRATISING INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS: A PLACE FOR INDIVIDUALS?

Maximillian Afnan | London School of Economics

It is widely held that one key source of injustice in the existing international order is the insufficiently democratic character of supranational organisations. This has given rise to a range of proposals for how to ‘democratise’ international institutions. This paper is about one puzzling feature of many of these existing proposals.

An influential tradition within democratic theory holds that the legitimacy of institutions requires not only that citizens have the right to vote but also that they have a voice: the opportunity, in other words, to participate in public deliberation regarding the conduct of those institutions. For those who hold this view, democratic legitimacy requires the participation and representation of individual citizens in both electoral processes, and in the formation of collective opinion in the public sphere.

Surprisingly, however, when we turn to accounts of international institutions ought to be structured, even among those who believe that supranational institutions ought to be democratised, we find a number of prominent theorists who reject the core assumption from domestic democratic theory that individuals should be considered participants in processes of deliberation aimed at scrutinising the actions of public institutions. In this paper I argue that these prominent perspectives are wrong to reject this axiom of domestic democratic theory.

The argument proceeds in three parts. The first asks whether it is meaningful to speak about public spheres at the supranational level, and whether they ought to exist. The paper argues that supranational public spheres are critical for legitimizing decisions that transcend national boundaries, ensuring that those affected by international institutions have opportunities for deliberative input. The second section considers the view, developed most prominently by John Dryzek, that we should emphasise deliberation not between individuals but between “discourses” in scrutinising the conduct of supranational organisations. While this “discursive model” attempts to accommodate diverse perspectives in a way that is feasible at international scale, it neglects key epistemic and normative functions of the public sphere. These functions include holding institutions to account, and realising the principles of autonomy and democratic equality. The third addresses an alternative family of arguments, associated with Jürgen Habermas, which suggest that there is insufficient convergence on values across different national or cultural “lifeworlds” at the global level for meaningful deliberation between individuals to be possible, and that such deliberation is best left to intergovernmental representatives. Against Habermas’ view, the paper uses empirical tests to demonstrate that value diversity across

the global population does not significantly exceed domestic heterogeneity in many existing democratic states. Further, even if one is unconvinced by this empirical evidence, the argument for incommensurable “lifeworlds” rests on an assumption of cross-national non-convergence that cannot be proved a priori. In the absence of such proof, the only way to investigate the truth of this claim is to instantiate cross-national deliberation between individuals, which is precisely what supranational public spheres seek to facilitate.

Keywords: Democracy; public sphere; deliberation; international order; accountability.

6 | DEMOICRACY, UNION CITIZENSHIP AND MUTUAL RECOGNITION: THREE UNEASY BEDFELLOWS

João Cruz Ribeiro | University of Minho

The concept of demoicracy has been presented as an alternative to the traditional dichotomy between federalism and intergovernmentalism in European integration studies. Literature on demoicracy has grown fast and it has been focused on the major topics of the political theory of the European Union: the democratic deficit and the institutional form of the EU. It has, however, paid little attention to European Union law.

This is a relevant gap. European integration has produced an important body of law, with the European Court of Justice performing a well-known pivotal role. It is necessary to verify whether the fundamental features of the idea of demoicracy are compatible with some of the fundamental principles of Union law. This is the purpose of the present article.

The scope of this article is clearly delimited. First, the concept of demoicracy that will be used finds its core normative tenets in neo-republicanism. It is thus a concept normatively influenced by the value of freedom as non-domination. Other uses of the concept of demoicracy have been put forward but the idea has been most interestingly explored by authors of the republican inspiration. The second delimitation concerns the range of analysis of the legal regime. The article focuses on Union citizenship and mutual recognition. These are the two most relevant legal topics in the political theory debate.

PANEL 14 — NEW DIRECTIONS IN THE ETHICS OF WAR AND PEACE

Convenors: Sara Cruz (CEPS, University of Minho) and Isaac Taylor (Stockholm University)

The pace and extent to which warfare has changed in the last two decades is unprecedented. With its beginnings in the War on Terror, the prevalence of cutting-edge technologies and AI on the battlefield soon became the hallmark of this military revolution, a development often justified by the heightened capabilities of the former. Inevitably, these changes reverberated into the political, legal and academic domains, which are now trying to adapt to the ever-changing complexities of contemporary warfare. First and foremost, the ubiquity of these technologies allows conflicts to migrate from once well establish borders in ways that would be impossible otherwise. Likewise, they've contributed to the erosion between the military and civilian distinction at the heart of the war convention. This became particularly evident in contexts of urban warfare such as Syria, Ukraine and Gaza. Other worries arise once we delve into AI applicability in the context of cyberwarfare and the information domain, particularly in the age of extreme polarization where controlling narratives is the ultimate military advantage. In Ukraine, fear and empathy led many citizens to mobilize, either by crowdfunding for and developing their own drones, or engaging more directly through apps that signal suspected enemy presence to their military. Here again, the blurring between civilian and military has proved convenient for leaders attempting to sanitize their misdeeds, who now place the onus either upon civilians – for their alleged complicity – or the enemy – for using civilians as human shields. But the use of new technologies is not the only aspect of contemporary warfare that warrants examination by philosophers. The Russian invasion of Ukraine paved the way for highly militarized narratives that emphasize the need to invest in and reform defense sector. An obvious example is the resurgence of debates about a hypothetical return to conscription models of recruitment which, despite the difficulties that it entails, was able to gain some traction as the prospects of escalation became more tangible. Yet, as the war continues and combatants' morale subdues, a growing number of males – both Ukrainian and Russian – desperately try to evade the draft. For the privileged who can afford it, outsourcing emerges as the logical alternative although debates on the morality of resorting to private militaries remain equally controversial. Moreover, current conflicts expose a paradox at the core of contemporary warfare: while the advent of technology and automation could (hypothetically) obviate the need for human soldiering, the truth is that humans are still, in fact, in high demand. But are there alternative ways of resisting aggression that might serve us better?

In light of all these trends, this panel will provide the opportunity for under-researched topics in the ethics of war and peace to be discussed. We welcome papers on a wide variety of subjects, including, but not limited to, the ethical issues surrounding new ways of fighting war, the moral permissibility of recruitment strategies, and a reconsideration of alternative ethical theories of warfare to the dominant just war paradigm.

Possible topics include:

- Civilian complicity and noncombatant immunity
- AI, UAV's and cyberwarfare
- The ethics of recruitment: conscription and the resort to private military contractors
- Alternatives to War
- Pacifism and nonviolent resistance

PANEL 14
SESSION 1
ROOM: 0.14

1 | CALL OF DUTY? ASSESSING THE MORAL
FEASIBILITY OF MANDATORY MILITARY SERVICE
IN LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES

Sara Cruz | University of Minho

Following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, debates about a hypothetical return of mandatory military service (MMS) have resurfaced in the political discourse of countries where it has long been abolished (Portugal, UK, USA among others). While consistent with more authoritarian forms of government, MMS poses a serious dilemma for countries who consider themselves members of the liberal democratic order. Given how pivotal national defence is for ensuring the safety required to live minimally decent lives—hence one of the most important public goods a state must provide—it seemingly meets the criteria usually consider generating a political obligation for citizens (qua beneficiaries) to contribute towards—namely, through a system of taxation in line with the principle of fairness. Yet, insofar as past experiences of conscription point towards an unequal distribution of the burdens of fighting, I am skeptical that a similar enforceable obligation to serve could ever be established. Drawing on literature on ethics and political philosophy, I contend that the kind of contribution required through MMS is too demanding to enact a duty to serve vis-a-vis a duty to pay. Since MMS requires individuals to surrender a significant part of their lives (if not their very lives) to engage in an activity they have not freely chosen and exposes them to harms they cannot be required to bear, MMS not only exceeds the threshold of what states can legitimately demand from its citizenry but is also incompatible with liberalism itself. By exploring the differences between peacetime and wartime conscription I aim to demonstrate that citizens do not have a moral duty to fight even in paradigmatic just wars of self-defence, therefore military service is ultimately supererogatory. Diving into past experiences of conscription I question the egalitarian arguments of those who advocate for conscription as a panacea for the pervasive moral exploitation of the military class (Robillard 2023; Robillard & Strawser 2016) and who argue that this constitutes an overall morally preferable form of military recruitment (Sagdahl 2018). On the contrary, I posit MMS is not only inefficient in addressing the issue but actually exacerbates existing inequalities. I conclude by discussing whether highly exceptional circumstances could nonetheless license states to resort to conscription on lesser evil grounds and delve into the relevance of conscription for ad bellum proportionality. Given the detrimental effects of military service in individual lives and the negative impact of MMS policies on the legitimacy of states that opt for it as a form of military recruitment, there is a pro tanto reason for liberal democracies now debating its (re)enforcement to abstain from doing so.

2 | EPISTEMIC MONOPOLIES

Jesse Hamilton | Oxford University

Military ethicists and legal scholars typically treat proportionality, distinction, and necessity as fixed moral and legal constraints—principles that differentiate permissible harm from excessive harm, distinguish combatants from civilians, and justify military action. However, this view overlooks their epistemic dimensions: proportionality involves assessing harm and risk under uncertainty, distinction depends on both the criteria used to classify individuals as combatants or civilians and the evidentiary limitations of intelligence gathering, and necessity often hinges on predictive judgments regarding the effectiveness of military action given incomplete or ambiguous information. Because these principles involve evidentiary thresholds for justification, their epistemic and normative dimensions are entangled: the moral and legal constraints on wartime decision-making depend on how knowledge is generated and evaluated. This raises a foundational question: Who has the authority to determine the evidentiary burden for these principles that justify the use of lethal force? In practice, national security institutions control these evidentiary burdens in use-of-force decisions. However, unlike more open forms of knowledge production, such as science, secrecy is essential to their proper functioning—meaning that the methods of collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and applying evidence, as well as the reasoning behind decisions, cannot be transparent. In many areas of scientific inquiry, evidentiary standards are subject to external review and debate among scientists, ensuring that knowledge claims can be publicly challenged, refined, and corrected in response to scrutiny. This process not only improves the reliability of conclusions but also grounds their legitimacy, as standards are shaped through open critique rather than imposed by a single authority. National security institutions, however, function as what I call epistemic monopolies—controlling both the production of knowledge and the standards for its evaluation while restricting external verification. This raises a question of legitimacy: if the evidentiary burden for lethal force is determined entirely within an epistemic monopoly, on what basis can its knowledge claims be considered justified in a democratic society that ordinarily demands transparency and accountability? This talk examines the legitimacy problem posed by epistemic monopolies in national security, using the 2011 Bin Laden raid as a case study. One response is the technocratic approach, which entrusts intelligence and military professionals with setting evidentiary burdens, but this lacks democratic legitimacy by eliminating external oversight. A democratic approach would impose public or legislative scrutiny, but meaningful transparency is impossible, as it would undermine the very function of national security institutions by exposing classified intelligence and decision-making processes to adversaries. Instead, I propose a Razian approach, drawing on Joseph Raz's service conception of authority, which holds that authority is legitimate only if it enables people to act on reasons they already have by guiding them toward better decisions than they would make on their own. Applied to epistemic monopolies in national security, this means that intelligence and military institutions must justify their authority not merely through expertise or secrecy, but by showing that their evidentiary standards actively enhance compliance.

Keywords: Ethics of war; proportionality; distinction, necessity; epistemology of military science.

3 | “WITH GREAT POWER...”: THE FIRST TAIWAN STRAIT CRISIS AND THE PROBLEM OF SELECTIVE INTERVENTION

Isaac Taylor & Elisabeth Forster | Stockholm University & University of Southampton

Many just war theorists hold that military interventions in foreign countries – either to prevent widespread human rights abuses or to protect allies against acts of aggression – are sometimes morally permissible. But powerful states cannot intervene whenever a *prima facie* justified case for an intervention arises. In practice, they are only likely to do so when it is in their interest. Many commentators have thought that such a policy of selective intervention is problematic, but it is surprisingly difficult to explain why. The only fully developed attempt to do this that we are aware of comes from Lea Brilmayer, who points towards the supposed consensual basis of international human rights law. Since countries cannot be understood to have consented to a policy of unilateral enforcement of this law on the part of others, Brilmayer suggests, such a policy cannot be justified. One can challenge Brilmayer’s account on a number of fronts. For one thing, even if the basis of human rights law has a (partly) consensual basis, it is unclear whether the ways of enforcing that law must also be limited to those that can be (tacitly) consented to. More significantly, however, we suggest that Brilmayer’s explanation cannot explain what is wrong in a broad array of cases of selective intervention. In particular, we present a case study of the First Taiwan Strait Crisis of 1954. Here, the Republic of China (Taiwan) requested assistance from the US to protect islands from the People’s Republic of China (China). Since this is not a standard case of humanitarian intervention, the non-consent of selective enforcement mechanisms cannot explain the problematic nature of the US’s discretionary power. This case, however, also points us towards a more general explanation of the wrong of selective intervention. We argue that selective intervention is a manifestation of background relations of domination in the international sphere. A normative order that permits selective intervention places some states under the arbitrary power of others. More generally, our investigation suggests that many mainstream normative theories of warfare suffer from an over-idealization: they abstract away from power relations between states, and consequently are unable to provide us with the theoretical resources to help us develop a more just international order.

PANEL 14
SESSION 2
ROOM: 0.14

4 | ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN JUST PEACE
AND JUST WAR THEORY

Lisa Tragbar | University of Vienna

The aim of this talk is to present two challenges to two recent developments of Just Peace Theory (JPT) that claim independence from Just War Theory (JWT). I examine two accounts of Just Peace: an ethical account and an ecumenical account that both explicitly distinguish themselves from JWT. The ethical account frames a discursive approach to peace negotiations, aiming to achieve just peace as a contractual outcome between negotiating parties through a fair process. The ecumenical account seeks to redirect the questions posed by JWT regarding the legitimacy of violence toward preventing wars through constructive ecumenical peacebuilding and nonviolence as a rejection of military violence. The first challenge raises the question of independence from JWT, whether the accounts can effectively distinguish themselves from existing content and construct an independent philosophical framework for Just Peace that does not overlap with Just War Theory (JWT). The goals of Just Peace—restoring peace and justice after conflict—are already addressed by the principles of JWT. By analyzing the two accounts of Just Peace, I suggest that they could be integrated into JWT rather than standing as separate theories, as the ethical account aligns with the *ex bello* and the ecumenical account corresponds to the *ad bellum* or *post bellum*. The second challenge critiques the discursive approach of the ethical account for being more focused on form than on content, which leaves the possibility of mutual agreement resulting in an unjust, negative peace. Drawing on Galtung's distinction between negative and positive peace, I argue that negative peace does not constitute a form of Just Peace, as any conception of peace that goes beyond the negative must inherently include justice. I suggest that because the outcome of the ethical account's discursive approach to negotiations prioritizes form over principles, it cannot exclude the risk of resulting in negative peace, which does not justify the addition of "just" to their explanations. Although it is possible to develop a clear and distinct Just Peace Theory, I show that the ethical and ecumenical accounts on Just Peace do not successfully distinguish themselves from Just War Theory (JWT). Ultimately, their distinction from JWT is challenged by the following factors: 1. overlap with JWT issues, and 2. the ethical account's inability to exclude the possibility of an unjust peace. However, they could either work as an extension of JWT or as part of a broader framework of the ethics of international relations.

Keywords: Just Peace; Just War Theory; Jus Post Bellum; Peace Ethics, Justice.

5 | REVOLUTION, SELF-RESPECT AND ANTI-COLONIAL VIOLENCE

Xintong Wei | University College Dublin

What role, if any, should violence play in revolutionary politics? In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon famously asserts that decolonization is necessarily a violent phenomenon. By analyzing the effects of colonial domination on the psychic formation of the colonized individual, he argues that violence can profoundly transform those who wield it against colonialism from passive objects of oppression into revolutionary agents. For Fanon, this transformation is essential: it not only facilitates decolonization but also restores the dignity and self-respect of those who have suffered under colonial rule. Despite a growing interest in the ethics of armed revolution, Fanon's defence of violence in the context of decolonization has received relatively little attention from philosophers working in the analytic tradition. This neglect is unfortunate given the significant influence of Fanon's ideas on debates about violence, both within academia and beyond. The secondary literature on Fanon's defence of anti-colonial violence in critical and political theory is marked by a wide range of interpretations. Much of the critical discussion has focused on clarifying Fanon's arguments in light of the historically influential readings by Sartre and Arendt. Yet, there remains a striking lack of critical engagement with the strengths and weaknesses of Fanon's philosophical arguments. Notably, key issues, such as the moral cost of revolutionary war and the extent to which that cost may undermine the justification of violence, are left largely unaddressed. Without grappling with these problems, Fanon's defence remains, at best, underdeveloped. The aim of this paper is to assess and suggest ways to develop Fanon's defence of violence in view of these challenges. I will distinguish between two lines of argument: (a) the Argument from Decolonization and (b) the Argument from Self-respect. I will show that, while the Argument from Decolonization faces significant difficulties, the Argument from Self-respect holds promise. The paper proceeds as follows. In Section 2, I clarify Fanon's notion of anti-colonial violence and outline his analysis of its transformative effects. In Section 3, I show that the Argument from Decolonization is unsuccessful in view of the risks and moral costs of anti-colonial violence. I consider a way of revising the argument on a Just War Theory framework and argue that this move ultimately fails because the consequences of anti-colonial violence remain deeply uncertain. In Section 4, I discuss the notion of self-respect, its moral significance and what it entails under colonialism, drawing on recent work on the moral obligation of self-respect to resist oppression. I argue that when oppressive colonial conditions leave little alternative for the colonized to reclaim their self-respect, anti-colonial violence remains a morally justifiable recourse.

Keywords: Violence; Revolution; Resistance; Self-respect; Colonialism.

6 | HOSTILE AFFECTIVE SCAFFOLDING IN THE DISCOURSE OF WAR

Olena Komar | University of Osnabrück, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

Hostile affective scaffolding (Timms & Spurrett, 2023) in the discourse of war is created and maintained by the use of specific linguistic means. Environmental scaffolding as an external structure can support or amplify an agent's cognitive abilities, but it can also exploit them for the benefit of other actors (Spurrett, Colombetti, Sutton 2025). In the wars of the last decade, information influence, the spread of disinformation, and polarizing propaganda are not only one of the elements of confrontation, but no less important than military actions, confirming the thesis that war is nothing but the continuation of policy with other means (Clausewitz, 1993). Both aspects of the informational frontline - soft power and propaganda - have a common epistemic feature, exploiting the thesis that 'trust is the most scarce resource' (J. Nye). In particular, by waging a cyber war of disinformation, Russia is using methods in its war against Ukraine that have been successfully tested in past political campaigns, where emotional polarisation has prevailed through the targeting of content, the creation of epistemic bubbles in which only a specific set of information is selected, and the establishment of an echo chamber effect, whereby information that is incompatible with preferences, even if it breaks through the information curtain, is rejected by the participants themselves if it does not conform to their expectations. For my research, I analyze the echo chambers of social networks and propaganda media as material. I argue that the language of echo chambers on social media is not neutral and it weaponizes the discourse of war. Although war is primarily seen as physical destruction, I want to raise the issue of moral character, when being irresponsible can kill, and examine why military propaganda is effective. In the military conflicts of centuries gone by, very little use was made of the discourse of war outside the confines of the belligerents' own countries, so propaganda was primarily directed at internal audiences and the population and army of the enemy (the Axis Sally effect). Today's wars go global immediately due to AI technologies. The key role in shaping the detrimental effect of the echo chamber is played by meticulously selected language tools that not only shape narratives but deliberately reinforce and strengthen false beliefs. Hence, the question of the ethics of beliefs arises: are those who believe military propaganda victims or should they be held accountable for the beliefs that formed within them under its influence? Also, is it possible to counteract affective hostile technologies efficiently while maintaining the values of democracy? One of the vulnerabilities of democracy, well-known ever since the time of Plato's state, is that it gives its mortal enemies the weapons to fight it (Stanley 2018), by using the idea of rights and freedoms. The dilemma of tolerance becomes particularly challenging in times of war, as hate speech, genocidal language and loaded language engage audiences in a process whereby they are made affectively complicit.

Keywords: Hostile affective scaffolding; echo chamber; language of war; propaganda; loaded language.

PANEL 15 — JUSTICE IN THE WORKPLACE: LABOR, EXPLOITATION, AND THE FUTURE OF WORK

Convenors: Hugo Rajão, António Baptista and Alexandre Carvalho (CEPS, University of Minho)

Contemporary studies are trying to address the implications of technological development in the workplace under the influence of capitalism and its relations of exploitation and domination. The industrial and French revolutions shaped labor and political relations to this day, laying the groundwork for Western capitalist societies. However, the growth of unprotected informal work, automation and AI, primarily replacing jobs held by low-skilled workers, remain persistent challenges. Western democracies struggle to grapple with these transformations, echoing, at least in some respects, the 19th century. However, what happens in the workplace should be regarded as a matter of Justice as much as what happens in society as a whole and, therefore, as a fundamental topic of Political Philosophy that raises a host of difficult questions.

Is labor exploitation a necessary element of capitalism and the predominant contemporary form of internal organization displayed by companies? In what way is exploitation compatible or not with the republican ideal of freedom as non-domination? Also, in what way does exploitation relate to, or may be affected by, the internal workings of the workplace? In what way is it related to the growth and perpetuation of social inequalities? If exploitation is, indeed, intrinsic to capitalism and to specific forms of internal organization of the workplace, and if it is so deeply intertwined with the perpetuation of objectionable forms of inequality, how should we address these problems? By enhancing workers' exit options (UBI, for example) or by implementing new and fundamentally different forms of work organization? Can forms of "laborconstitutionalism" and legal regulation – within a capitalist economic framework – be an alternative or a complementary device to the former? Or should we rather look for some more holistic reform of socioeconomic conditions, as the liberal-democratic form of socialism advocated by authors such as William Edmundson (2017)? Is active worker participation in companies a necessary and sufficient condition to mitigate the negative effects of automation and AI? Are there alternative models of the enterprise, including non-capitalist ones, which better satisfy the requirements of a Just Society (co-opts, wage-earned funds, co-determination, bicameral systems, etc.)?

In light of this, this panel seeks to discuss the role and impact of workplace justice on the overall problem of Justice in a society and therefore invites contributions relating to, among others, the following topics:

- The future of Work
- Workplace Democracy
- Commodification, domination, and exploitation at the workplace.
- Exit options (Unconditional Basic Income, for instance)
- The role of labor law and regulation
- Self-Employment
- The right to Strike and Unionize
- Property-Labor relations
- Alternatives to capitalism for dealing with the challenges of AI and automation

PANEL 15
SESSION 1
ROOM: 1.09

1 | ALIENATION, EMANCIPATION, AND WORK IN
CONTEMPORARY TIMES

Alice Positano | Sapienza University of Rome

The history of alienation is commonly addressed as a relevant subject to the historical conceptual reconstructions of Rousseau's thought, followed by Hegel's, and culminating in Marx's reflections. More plausibly, the history of the concept traces its roots through the Middle Ages back to antiquity, emerging as a cross-temporal and cross-cultural idea. My aim is to analyse, with a brief focus on the ideas of Rousseau, Feuerbach, Hegel, and Marx, how contemporary theories of alienation, such as those proposed by Rahel Jaeggi and Christophe Dejours, have evolved. These interpretations offer innovative insights and applications to today challenges. In this essay I will analyse (1) how contemporary alienation still affects our lives and (2) the explanation Rahel Jaeggi gives of it. I will further (3) apply the subject of alienation to the sphere of work, and (4) examine potential ways of emancipation through Cristophe Dejours' Psychodynamics of Work.

Contemporary developments of the concept will be examined. Notably, the focus will be on how Jaeggi develops the concept of alienation in terms of self-determination and the quality of social life, while Dejours emphasises alienation in the work sphere, investigating the psychological and relational harm caused by alienating working conditions under contemporary neoliberalism. Both, however, share a view of alienation as a detachment from the experience of the self and the realisation of one's potential.

The two philosophers centre their analyses on the conditions of work or life that generate suffering and can be identified as pathologies (of society or of work), arising from the difficulty of self-identifying with what one does. From the reading of their major works, it emerges that a critique of contemporary alienation can rekindle the question of the good (free) life and good work, understood as situations and experiences that restore a successful relationship of appropriation. On the one hand, Jaeggi focuses on how – despite the vast availability of existing material on analyses of alienation – many classical interpretations of the concept, such as reification, anomie, and inauthenticity, can be set aside to focus on a precise definition: the alienated relationship is a deficient relationship with oneself, the world, and others. Thus, emancipation comes along with a form of resistance which is closely related to our forms of life.

On the other hand, Dejours highlights that work serves as an essential pillar in shaping personal and social identity: through work, individuals strive to fulfil their potential and gain recognition from others. Alienation arises when this relationship is disrupted, leading to a loss of meaning and negatively affecting psychological well-being. However, since it essentially depends on individual responsibility, emancipation remains an always attainable goal. Preserving the space for collective discussion within organisations requires the formation of a collective will, which, however, depends entirely on politics, as a common will never arises spontaneously. Through the notions of “relationship of fairness” and “risky listening,” Dejours outlines an emancipatory perspective based on the thesis of the centrality of work, characterized by the inseparable link between emancipation and work.

Keywords: Alienation; labour; Jaeggi; Dejours; emancipation.

2 | WAGE LABOR, CITIZENSHIP, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE: REFORMIST PERSPECTIVES FROM THE GILDED AGE

François Robinet | Université Savoie Mont Blanc

In the aftermath of the American Civil War, the United States entered the period known as the Gilded Age, a phase of unprecedented economic development driven by the rise of industrial and financial capitalism. The Gilded Age was also marked by multiple crises that weakened the most precarious social groups, while the economy remained dominated by trusts and “robber barons”, whose unchecked power was only slightly constrained by appropriate legislation. The expansion of wage labor and factory work thus became increasingly significant realities. However, industrial workers faced harsh working conditions and had limited agency—low unionization rates, recent immigration, and a lack of labor protections. Moreover, strikes were strongly repressed by public authorities or private militias.

In this context, a wave of dissent emerged within reform movements — including labor and agrarian organizations as well as third parties—supported by reformist politicians and thinkers who engaged with the social question. In this paper, we seek to revisit the reflections of several intellectuals who shared common struggles at the end of the century: the leaders of the Populist movement (i.e., the People’s Party), Henry George (author of several works, including *Progress and Poverty* [1879]), and Edward Bellamy (known for his utopian novel *Looking Backward, 2000-1887* [1888]). All of them examined the condition of wage labor from both a social and political perspective, particularly in terms of the power relations. According to them, economic domination within the workplace was compounded by a broader political domination affecting society as a whole, leading to the formation of an “oligarchy”.

In this regard, they approached the question of “justice in the workplace” through the lens of citizenship, developing ideas that diverged from socialism as they remained “within a capitalist economic framework”. Their thought was shaped by the republican tradition— sometimes referred to as labor republicanism—which analyzed social conditions through the prism of citizenship. In other words, they questioned how the citizenship of individuals subjected to wage labor might be undermined by their social condition. The solutions they proposed, which partly relied on “legal regulation”, aimed not only to improve workers’ conditions but also to rebuild a “Just Society” by restoring their full citizenship.

As we talk about the advent of a “second Gilded Age” in the 21st century, 19th-century reformist political thought may offer valuable perspectives on the issues raised by this panel.

Keywords: Reform; radical republicanism; Populism; USA.

3 | THE ODD COUPLE: WORK AND FREEDOM (FROM WORK) AS GROUNDS FOR RESPECT

Jesús Mora | University of Valencia

Elizabeth Anderson identifies three dimensions of individual functioning as necessary to secure equal respect for all: “as a human being, as a participant in a system of cooperative production, and as a citizen of a democratic state” (Anderson, 1999, pp. 317–318). The second element in that list demands that citizens “regard the economy as a system of cooperative, joint production” (p. 321). Irrespective of their talent and skill, everyone’s contributions are necessary to make other people’s work possible: astronauts, engineers or philosophers should not command more social appraisal than other workers, as they could not work efficiently without adequate nourishment, transportation or workplace (and household) hygiene (see, p. 321). Anderson’s account considers respect for workers as emerging from their direct or indirect contributions to production, and requires securing their “effective access to the means of production, access to the education needed to develop one’s talents, freedom of occupational choice, the right to make contracts and enter into cooperative agreements with others, the right to receive fair value for one’s labour, and recognition by others of one’s productive contributions” (pp. 317–318). Noticeably, in Anderson’s framework respect for workers derives entirely from their ability to act as producers. Only in passing does she acknowledge that each worker also merits respect because she is “an agent for the people who consume their products” (p. 322).

Yet, this component of our value as producers is far from anecdotal. Consumption, after all, secures something more important than simply using goods: our freedom. In *Capital’s* Volume III, Marx identifies work with “the realm of necessity” and contends that “the true realm of freedom” begins where work ends, which means that “the shortening of the working-day is [the] basic prerequisite” (Marx, 1863, p. 564) for real freedom to flourish. Through Marx, work and freedom form an odd couple. On the one hand, production helps us better satisfy our needs (p. 564) but, on the other, the compulsion to devote time to securing our functional existence is a toll humans need to pay to achieve their goals. How does this paradox affect the requirements of respect and consideration for people as producers? If work is the price we pay to enlarge our freedom, but never freedom itself, our dedication to production should never dramatically hinder our functioning as human beings and as citizens. This demands that working time does not expand to the point of leading workers to the perception that their life plans are worthless. If, following Rawls’s framework, self-respect includes our “secure conviction” that our plan of life is “worth carrying out” (Rawls, 1999, p. 386), then no worker can feel respected if her participation in production frustrates the very ends that make production valuable. This presentation addresses the importance of work as a means for equal respect and its connection with the reduction of working time. Especially in a world of growing automation (see Benanav, 2020), relational-egalitarian conceptions of justice should incorporate the view that we have a respect-based reason to reduce working time.

Keywords: Relational egalitarianism; respect; working time; freedom; citizenship.

PANEL 15
SESSION 2
ROOM: 1.09

4 | OWNERSHIP IN LABOR-MANAGED FIRMS

Iñigo González-Ricoy | Universitat de Barcelona

In this presentation, I will seek to contribute to recent normative analyses of workplace democracy by seeking to pin down and assess the reasons for and against the various existing models in which workers' control rights over the firm's governance are not contingent on their sharing in the ownership of the firm, including codetermination, and those in which they are, including worker cooperatives and broad-based employee stock ownership plans

I will first distinguish the possible separation of ownership and control rights, as in codetermined firms, from the traditional issue of the separation of ownership (by shareholders) and control (by management), which is distinct yet not entirely orthogonal to the issue at hand. How board members are elected, and how tightly they can monitor management, partly hinges on whether those with ultimate control rights over the board contribute capital and labor, capital but not labor, or labor but not capital—with differing interests, risk-bearing, and knowledge in each instance. Next, I will argue that, in assessing the various forms in which workers may or may not supply capital, we have reason to prioritize considerations of productive efficiency. These considerations, I will also argue, are grounded not just on principles of overall distributive justice or on firms' fiduciary duty to create wealth, but on principles of relational equality, too.

With such efficiency and relational considerations in hand, I will first turn to the recent empirical work on the effects of codetermination, whose modest benefits some have traced, *inter alia*, to limitations in workers' formal and real power over companies' governance. Such effects and their determinants might offer reason to favor rendering workers' control rights conditional on their supplying capital. Yet much depends on the specific forms in which workers may do so, whose diverse effects on risk-bearing, decision-making costs, investment in firm-specific human capital, information sharing, effort, and voluntary and involuntary separations I will inspect in the remainder of the presentation leaning on the recent empirical literature.

Keywords: Workplace democracy; ownership; efficiency; relational equality.

5 | THE FEEDBACK LOOP OF EXPLOITATION:
DOES DOMINATION SUSTAIN ITSELF?

Alexandre Carvalho | CEPS, University of Minho

This paper explores the relationship between exploitation and domination in capitalist systems, focusing on how exploitation not only sustains but fuels domination. Drawing on Marxist theory, I argue that the extraction of surplus value from workers (exploitation)

is not merely a form of economic extraction, but the central mechanism that enables and amplifies social and political domination. In contrast to republican theories of workplace democracy, which often separate exploitation from domination, I propose that domination exists primarily to sustain exploitation, creating a feedback loop where the concentration of capital and power reinforces both the economic exploitation and the social control of workers. While domination may appear to function as an independent phenomenon, I argue that it is a necessary component of maintaining the exploitative system. The paper also critiques the republican view that democracy within the workplace can eliminate domination without addressing exploitation. By emphasizing the critical role of exploitation in perpetuating domination, this paper invites a rethinking of strategies to challenge both inequality and power structures in capitalist societies.

6 | ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY: WORKPLACE AND OTHERWISE

Caleb Althorpe | Utrecht University

In recent years an explosion of writings in political philosophy have appeared on the topic of workplace democracy, with arguments being developed to defend its importance to justice on the basis of: a firm-state analogy (Landemore and Ferreras 2016), nondomination and relational equality (Anderson 2017; Tsuruda 2020), the connection between democratic workplaces and civic virtue (Cohen 1989; O'Neill 2008), and meaningful work (Yeoman 2014; Althorpe 2022), just to give a few examples. This focus on the internal dynamics of the workplace is an important corrective to the 'distributive paradigm' in political philosophy which, by equating justice to a fair distribution of the benefits of social cooperation, has mostly stayed silent on how those benefits are produced in the first place.

However, by focusing on the workplace itself as a site of justice such accounts of workplace democracy are at risk of underplaying the justice-relevance of the larger economic structures in which work is situated, and how they affect what justice in the workplace actually entails. Indeed, arguments for workplace democracy have been criticized in a number of ways for failing to take this wider context adequately into account, say because firm-state analogies make a category mistake by failing to recognize how the work association is embedded in state institutions (Frega 2020), because workplace democrats fail to appreciate the implications of their arguments for democratizing economic institutions more widely (Vrousalis 2019), or because they miss the potential justifications for managerial authority that may be located in work's wider social context (Kim 2024).

Against this background, in this paper I develop a normative defense of a system of economic democracy based on the value of political community. By economic democracy I mean a set of institutions such that decisions regarding the operation of productive capital in society is accountable not to individuals as capital holders but to individuals as citizens. In this system, democratic workplaces would be just one of a broader range of democratic interventions that operate across three different 'levels' of the economy: micro (individual workplaces), meso (economic sectors), and macro (overarching economic direction).

What political community requires is for individuals across society to achieve, and intend to achieve, shared goals together (in the economic context see Schwarzenbach 1996; Brudney 2013). I argue the above system of economic democracy can bring such a situation about because, by putting control of economic decisions in the hands of citizens

generally, it allows individuals to act as co-participants in the systems of production on which each and all depend, thereby enabling individuals to work together in achieving shared goals based on their mutual interdependencies.

The account put forward provides a mechanism to discriminate which economic decisions ought to be left to employees of individual firms and which ought to involve individuals across society more widely (and how these interact). In so doing, the paper provides a more convincing defence of workplace democracy by situating it in a larger concern about democratic accountability in economic life.

Keywords: Workplace democracy; economic democracy; political community; capital; shared agency.

PANEL 15
SESSION 3
ROOM: 1.09

7 | THE ALGORITHMIC OVERSEER:
A NEW AGE OF WORKER DOMINATION IN FIRMS

Elena Icardi & Catarina Neves | CEPS / Utrecht University

New forms of control are experienced by workers such as Uber drivers and Amazon warehouse employees due to digital developments. To grasp this emergent injustice, scholars are turning to the neo-republican concept of domination. Specifically, the concept of structural domination (Hickson, 2024; Hoeksema; 2023) as it has been developed to address features of capitalism (Gourevitch 2013; 2024; Vrousalis 2020; 2021), but also of racial and sexist societies (Gädeke 2020; Laborde 2024). In this context, the concept of algorithmic domination, defined as the subjugation of an individual to a dominating power determined by an algorithm, arises (Muldoon & Raekstad 2023). Despite its novelty, the emergent literature on algorithmic domination seems to argue that digital technologies exacerbate and increase worker domination, rather than create new forms of domination within labor markets.

Therefore, our paper explores the concept of algorithmic domination, asking what is distinctive about it. While we agree with existing literature that most forms of algorithmic domination entail a difference in degree, we will show that some differences in kind are worth considering, which further justify the case for specifying domination mediated by algorithms. By exploring several labour relations mediated in different ways by algorithms, we argue that the concept's distinctiveness, and hence why it differs in kind to other forms of domination, is explained by two mechanisms, both of which are related to the significant amount of (personal) information that can be gathered and immediately incorporated thanks to algorithm technology. The first, is the role of personalization, both in how the algorithm is trained with external data, but also how the algorithm continues to learn by collecting data from the workers' behaviour. This creates a lock-in effect, where workers' behavior is both predicted and influenced by what the algorithm has learnt to be a good performance, from the point of view of maximized efficiency. The second is the role of users. Through users reviews and feedback, workers' autonomy is further reduced, and their behavior controlled, promoting a double lock-in effect.

Both the role of users and the personalization provided by algorithms, help to weave a new form of power and of power relations, which are made up not only by 'pure sets' (i.e., Dominator and dominated), but also by mixed sets (e.g., dominated who are also Dominator). To illustrate this point, consider the way in which users wield arbitrary power over workers through their reviews, while at the same time they are constrained in their choices, often failing to escape platform services in their day to day given how platform economy businesses function. Thus, they are both Dominator and dominated. Our paper will flesh out these different relationships, particularly the mixed cases, and explain why this offers a new conceptualization of algorithmic domination.

Keywords: AI; structural domination; capitalism; economic justice; the future of work.

8 | DEMOCRACY IN THE NEWSROOM: A REPUBLICAN ARGUMENT FOR DEMOCRATIZING NEWS MEDIA

Rubén Marciel | University of Geneva

This article offers a republican argument for democratizing the news media. Of course, being a workplace, the newsroom is in principle as receptive to arguments in favor of workplace democracy as any other workplace. However, here I offer a *sui generis* line of argumentation that builds upon the uniqueness of news media, particularly upon their power to influence public opinion. In so doing, I am to articulate the long-lasting demand that the news media should be democratized.

The kind of association I refer to as ‘news media’ exhibits three key traits. First, news media organizations generate (rather than merely curate) content by exercising editorial authority. Second, news media make a voluntary commitment (a kind of promise) to regularly provide truthful and informative news. Third, news media have a pervasive presence and wide reach, as they are regularly read, watched, or listened to by large audiences. These traits grant news media a specific kind of power, which I call media power. Media power entails, basically, an extraordinary capacity to influence public debate and, therefore, public opinion. This, in turn, entails that news media have also a large power over the kind of leaders and political decisions citizens end up favoring.

From a republican standpoint, such an uncontrolled power involves two objectionable forms of domination. The first is a kind of subjective (or epistemic) domination, as it occurs due to the uncontrolled power of news media to alter the “subjective resources” (Pettit 2012) that citizens need to understand the options they have. The second is the subsequent, objective (yet indirect) domination news media exercise over the whole citizenry. For having the power to manipulate electoral processes enables the news media to affect the actual lives (i.e., welfare, rights, freedoms) of all citizens.

One way to tackle media power is to increase the number of news media. Although necessary, pro-media-pluralism policies leave unchallenged the power that each ‘press baron’ or corporation has over their share of the press, and thus the subjective domination they exercise over their audiences. (It is unrealistic to assume that citizens will check many different outlets, nor is checking many outlets the best way to protect oneself against media power when those outlets are all controlled by corporate interests). The punitive measures traditionally implemented to tackle misinformation promise to be ineffective too.

The best way to ensure that editorial decisions do not respond to the uncontrolled whim of media owners seems to be, simply, to end with media owners’ unchallenged control over the news media. Two complementary strategies are especially promising here. One consists in ensuring that the workforce is minimally representative of the population it serves, so that all the interests in society are present within the news media. The other consists in granting that workforce a say in the ruling of the news media, so that those interests are factored in when making editorial decisions.

Keywords: Workplace democracy; news media; domination; republicanism.

9 | THE MARKET AS A TRANSMISSION BELT: SELF-EMPLOYMENT, NON-STANDARD WORK, AND DOMINATION

Adrián Herranz | Universidad de Zaragoza

This presentation analyses why self-employment and other non-standard work can involve workers' domination. Self-employment has traditionally been considered autonomous and independent work. Autonomous in the sense of not involving a boss. Independent because, according to the received image, the worker has her own means, adequate to carry out her labour. However, this point is too hasty, provided self-employees may suffer bossless forms of domination. This paper discusses two: first, a self-employee can suffer interpersonal domination when she depends on the uncontrollable power of another agent, i.e., when there is economic dependency on a few important clients, providers or contractors. Second, a self-employee suffers structural domination when she is prone to reproduce the conditions of the labour market, and her lack of power compromises her agency vis-à-vis a series of agents. Interpersonal domination is due to the contingent renewal of the contract, whereby the powerful party can threaten without directly intervening in the labour process. Structural domination can emerge without personal dependence due to each agent's bargaining power and the effects of market forces. I will elaborate on the latter idea.

There is evidence of the negative impact on labour relations of self-employment and non-standard work in general —also including casual work, part-time, agency work, sub-contracted and gig work. Self-employment and non-standard work have facilitated an institutional context in which fragmented and unprotected labour relations increase the asymmetry of power experienced by workers. By changing the socio-economic environment, these jobs promote a higher level of structural domination. For example, non-standard workers do not have the same collective networks or organisations as wage workers and have more transient interactions, so it is more difficult for them to act together in favour of the interests they share with other workers. Non-standard jobs allow for replacing former jobs through discontinuous and flexible contracts, resulting in a downward competition between workers that devalues their working conditions. At the same time, path dependence may make it hard to introduce future reforms because workers lose the coordination and commitment mechanisms needed to implement these political changes. Hence, it could be that expanding self-employment and other non-standard jobs involves expanding rules that facilitate workers' domination.

In short, the labour market acts as a transmission belt that lowers workers' prospects: if more jobs have poor remuneration or adverse working schedules, then the business model may exert downward pressure on the labour market in general. This underlying structural change is a primary source of workers' domination. Nevertheless, it is less visible because it constitutes a structural change that erodes workers' conditions and bargaining power over time. Accordingly, this presentation highlights that policies should prioritise this problem and find resources to protect workers' bargaining power.

Keywords: Precarious work; atypical work; self-employment; domination; labour relations.

PANEL 15
SESSION 4
ROOM: 1.09

10 | WHY FRUITFUL WORK MATTERS

Juan Olano | UCLouvain

John Rawls argues that “society must make sure that opportunities for fruitful work are generally available” (Rawls, 2001, p. 179), underscoring the significance of fruitful work in a just society. However, philosophical discussions have largely centred on meaningful work, leaving the concept of fruitful work mostly unexplored. This paper addresses this gap by examining the conceptual foundations and normative importance of fruitful work, contrasting it with the more widely discussed idea of meaningful work.

A standard conception of meaningful work is that it has a non-domination and a self-realisation component: “no one need be servilely dependent on others and made to choose between monotonous and routine occupations which are deadening to human thought and sensibility” (Rawls, 1999, p. 464). In political philosophy, meaningful work is typically defined as the development and exercise of one’s capacities with sufficient autonomy.

By contrast, fruitful work is characterised by its contribution to the satisfaction of needs or desires. Specifically, socially fruitful work must benefit society. This means that socially fruitful work has collective value, making it a pillar of social cooperation. While meaningful work is centred on the benefits it provides to the worker, socially fruitful work focuses on its contributions to society.

These concepts are distinct. For example, sweatshop labour may be fruitful in that it produces goods or services, but it lacks meaning, as it violates the non-domination and self-realisation criteria. Conversely, some work may be meaningful without being fruitful. “Bullshit jobs” (Graeber, 2018), for instance, are the exact opposite of fruitful work—they fail to be fruitful because they do not serve the needs or desires of their supposed beneficiaries, yet they may still provide meaning to the worker. Moreover, socially fruitful work is incompatible with harmful work. A human trafficker or hitman may find their work meaningful, as it allows them to exercise skills and autonomy, but it lacks fruitfulness, since it does not contribute to society.

I argue that, although leisure activities can be meaningful, they lack the fundamental connection to fruitfulness that work provides. The distinctive value of work lies not so much in its meaning to the worker as in its role as a contribution to social production and reproduction. As a result, a society without work may still have many meaningful activities, but it would be deprived of many fruitful activities, since work is the fundamental way through which people make social contributions. Additionally, contributing to others and leaving an impact on the world is central to how humans find meaning in life. Thus, if a post-work society fails to provide opportunities for such contributions, it will undermine both individuals’ sense of purpose and their social bonds.

Therefore, societies have strong reasons to create, foster, and protect opportunities for fruitful work. This should guide decisions about automation: if automation eliminates opportunities for fruitful work without providing alternatives, its implementation would be, at least pro tanto, unjust.

Keywords: Fruitful Work; Meaningful Work; Labour Justice; Automation and Work; Philosophy of Work.

11 | MEANINGFUL WORK AS A JUSTIFICATION FOR DECENT WORK

Chikako Endo | Osaka University

Decent work is a public policy concept developed by the International Labor Organization (ILO) and involves the conditions of work regulated by labour law designed to protect workers in the unequal employment relationship. It includes provisions on matters such as working hours, wages, occupational health and safety, and the right to collective bargaining. Meanwhile, within the political theory literature, work quality has often been discussed in terms of 'meaningful work' (Schwartz 1982; Arneson 1987; Veltman 2016; van der Deijl 2024). While both have been motivated by concerns for the quality of work in industrial and post-industrial employment, for the most part, they have developed separately from each other. In addition, the demising quality of work in contemporary societies involve the discrepancy between the scope of 'decent work', which has generally been confined to the employment relationship, and the reality of work for many people today. In fact, much work which might be considered as 'meaningful' (e.g. badly paid care worker or non-tenured researcher, for example) are often not 'decent'. This paper brings together the debates on meaningful and decent work to argue that meaningful work merits decent work. In so doing, the paper seeks to offer normative insights for how to arrange social protection in relation to changing working arrangements.

The paper starts by developing an objective conception of meaningful work. Meaningful work involves two dimensions: 1) wellbeing concerns (benefits to the worker) and 2) usefulness concerns (social contribution, benefit to others) (van der Deijl, 2024). After rejecting subjective fulfilment as a reliable way to conceive of wellbeing concerns, I argue that meaningful work should be understood as work that meets 1) wellbeing concerns understood as opportunities for the development of workers' capabilities to function as democratic citizens and 2) usefulness concerns understood as making a social contribution. After showing that these two dimensions of meaningful work often have an inverse relationship with decent work in contemporary societies, I offer a justificatory argument for when and why the two should be combined. Specifically, I argue that it is exploitative to depend on others' labour to meet social needs without proper recognition and rewards. In addition, decent work is a condition for meaningful work, without which the latter could not be sustained. After considering objections, I conclude that while decent work has been designed to compensate workers who contribute to economic productivity, it fails appropriately to recognise the social and political contributions that work may have.

Keywords: Meaningful work; decent work; democratic equality.

12 | WORK, STRESS, AND BUREAUCRACY: NOTES FOR A PHENOMENOLOGY OF BUREAUCRATIZED WORK IN THE CONTEMPORARY ERA.

Aurora Escorihuela | Complutense University of Madrid

In this presentation, we aim to discuss the changes that the introduction of administrative tasks in all job positions entails for a philosophical-social analysis of work and the suffering associated with it. In recent decades, we have witnessed what Beatrice Hibou (2020) calls a neoliberal bureaucratization of the productive world. According to Hibou, this phenomenon is not limited to the objects and agents of professional-labor life but extends to how we inhabit, perceive our rights, obligations, functions, public goods, and social relationships. However, we believe that its application in the world of work opens an interesting field of reflection on recent transformations in labor.

The questions that arise and drive this presentation are: What is the greatest danger of this bureaucratization of work? The destruction of professional specificity? The suspension of autonomy and moral judgment under a guise of formality, rationality, and scientificity? A loss of the meaning of craftsmanship? Or of the craft itself? As time spent on administrative tasks significantly increases, it comes at the expense of actual work.

Our hypothesis is that bureaucracy, in its current form, is one of the concrete ways in which managerial dynamics penetrate the organization of all jobs and incorporate individuals into new productivity and performance standards. In this sense, bureaucracy is not just another form of labor exploitation but a primary instrument through which the imperatives of capitalist production are realized.

Starting from two major phenomena shaping contemporary bureaucracy—the virtualization of bureaucratic work and the intrusion of private sector principles and dynamics into bureaucratic criteria, formalities, procedures, and norms—we ask: How do these phenomena intensify and shape the exploitative aspects of bureaucracy in work environments? How do digitalization and managerialization influence the experience of detachment, depersonalization, automation, or disaffection characteristic of the classical bureaucratic ethos?

The idea is that recognizing uncertainty (Bauman, 2001) and precarization (Lorey, 2016) as governmental techniques of the new neoliberal regime forces us to rethink what sustains bureaucratic behavior today. It now seems insufficient to trace the inhibition of empathy toward the suffering of others solely to the traits and tendencies inherent to bureaucracy, as analyzed by classic authors like Weber or Arendt in the context of totalitarianism.

The convergence of all these dynamics in the context of work generates a type of experience, which, instead of being marked by indifference or apathy, is marked by stress and anxiety, caused by the isolation and environmental pressure the individual is subjected to.

Furthermore, we cannot overlook the social demands and expectations that, according to Hibou, bureaucratization connects with and from which it derives its (formal) legitimacy and justification. These include demands for transparency, justice, equality, modernity, security, etc. One might ask whether the principles contained within bureaucratic procedures for assigning occupational, economic, and social opportunities actually respond to these demands for democratization, equal access, etc., or to other interests.

Keywords: Neoliberal bureaucratization; Managerial dynamics; Digitalization of work, Exploitation; Alienation, Bureaucratic ethos.

PANEL 16 — IDENTITY, POLARIZATION, AND POLITICAL REPRESENTATION: A REASSESSMENT

Convenors: Giuseppe Ballacci (CEPS, University of Minho) and Pedro Magalhães (CICP, University of Minho)

The re-election of Donald Trump has reignited debate over the so-called culture wars and identity politics. Some pundits argue that the Democratic Party's focus on these issues contributed to its defeat. The moment thus provides an opportunity to reassess the discussion on these topics.

The debate over identity in politics has long been polarized between two opposing perspectives. On one side are those who critique the inadequacy of the liberal focus on impartiality, detachment, and universal rights, emphasizing instead the importance of lived experiences and attachments, particularly those shaped by membership in historically marginalized groups, as essential to understanding and addressing social and political injustices. On the other side are those who caution that privileging such experiential perspectives and partial attachments over broader political values and ideological frameworks not only risks limiting the ability to build coalition and reach compromises, but could also lead to the ossification of group identities and siloed politics.

Furthermore, these dynamics must also be understood within the context of the public sphere's profound transformation and the ongoing polarization driven by social media. Social platforms foster fragmentation, amplify emotional responses in discussions, and enable the spread of 'fake news', 'alternative facts' and conspiracy theories, thus stimulating polarization. Simultaneously, they reinforce the spectacularization and personalization of politics, reshaping the way political discourse and mobilization occur.

This panel aims to explore these issues from the privileged perspective of political representation—a topic closely tied to identity politics yet not often explicitly addressed in this context. Like other social demands, and perhaps even more so given the irreducibility of identities to material interests, representation plays a vital role in their politicization. The mediating role of representation has been emphasized by the constructivist turn that has shaped our understanding of political representation in recent years. This turn has highlighted the active, central role in constructing political subjectivities, so as the diffusion of representation across all areas of collective life, far beyond institutional spheres.

The panel welcomes contributions related (but not limited) to questions such as:

- To what extent can a constructivist turn bring new insights on how identity politics relates to political representation?
- How do different kinds of representation, such as descriptive, symbolic, liberal, etc., contribute to politicizing identities?
- How do social, political, and economic polarization intersect with identity politics from the perspective of political representation?
- How are the transformation of mechanisms of political affiliation and their evolution into identity-based elements reshaping representation?
- What can the history of political thought tell us about the dynamics currently affecting political representation?

PANEL 16
SESSION 1
ROOM: 0.16

1 | PROGRESS WAS MEANT TO UNITE US:
ON KANT'S PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY
AND POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

Giovanni Battista Soda | Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele

Identity politics is often explained as resulting from the crisis of the narrative structures that have long shaped modernity (Brown 2001). Both in the case of liberalism (Fukuyama 2018) and of the socialist Left (Lilla 2017) the growing attention toward grounding political actions and reactions in identitarian characteristics can be interpreted as the consequence of the loss of the “grand narratives” (Lyotard 1984) that have shaped the Western political consciousness for centuries.

The paper aims to interpret the rise of identity politics by stressing its connection to the weakening force of the philosophy of history. More specifically, I will focus on Kant's philosophy of history, as presented mainly in *Idea* (1784/2007: 107-120) and *Conflict of the Faculties* (1798/1996: 233-328) and bridge it with some recent literature on political representation.

Authors as diverse as Young (1986) and Ankersmit (1997) have contested the centrality of identity in political representation and have claimed that a fundamental part of it is the difference always separating the representative and the represented. In a similar vein, constructivist theorists (Urbinati 2006; Saward 2010; Disch 2015) have claimed that the process of representation favours the creation of social identities and fuels a dynamic process of mutual constitution between representatives and represented. From a historical perspective, Lefort claims that representation was created during modernity precisely to deal with the growing disembodiment and decentralization of power (2019: 104-117).

I advance two distinguished claims:

- 1) I contend that Kant's concept of progress, central to both his philosophy of history and political theory (Kain 1989), served to foster political representation by providing an ethically loaded normative framework for judgement. That ultimately allowed for thinking of the relationship between civil society and the State as encompassing the totality of society and directed toward emancipation and improvement;
- 2) The fall toward essentialist forms of identity politics that we witness today can be retrospectively understood as a side effect of the losing confidence in the concept of progress and therefore of its positive ‘alliance’ with representation.

Keywords: Kant; Philosophy of history; Progress; Identity; Constructivism.

2 | THE INJUSTICE LIES WITHIN: DECONSTRUCTING THE MYTHS OF IDENTITY AND REPRESENTATION WITH ROUSSEAU AND SHKLAR

Inês Pinheiro | FCSH, NOVA University Lisbon

We are living in times of a perilous social and political polarization, fuelled by an overarching narrative that privileges the experience of the “Self” above an empathic recognition of the “Other”. In this scenario, identity politics have come to surface as a predominant stream of political action and rhetoric, aiming for the safeguarding of a given constituency, which is viewed as marginalized within its larger context. This posture often enters in collision with contemporary representative practices, as it becomes growingly impossible to enact all the different identities in play. Thus, we are faced with a deeply rooted problem of social and political recognition, that results in disbelief and the further disintegration of societies. In this paper, we propose to question the very nature of identity politics, arguing how this approach is cementing the injustices that it seeks to tackle. To do so, we depart from the history of political thought, namely Rousseau’s contribution, which we pair with Shklar’s readings of the philosopher, and the latter’s further development of the notion of injustice, and the individual’s bonds with the political system. Indeed, among the modern philosophers who have shaped the world we inhabit, Rousseau can be seen as the one to whom we owe the idea that identity can be a source of normativity, both moral and political, and that an identity’s potential for playing such a role rests on its capacity for being authentic. Since, according to Rousseau, human beings do not initially possess self-consciousness, the formation of a “Self”, or personal identity, is part of a developmental process (seen, most fully, in the *Discourse on Inequality* and *Emile*), that accompanies the formation of our political lives. Through it, we come across some paradoxes, as: “how does a multitude will itself into the status of a sovereign people grounded on a ‘general will’, while presupposing the absence of any ultimate social grounds, and the contingency of identities and structures?”. For some, these presuppositions make Rousseau an unacknowledged precursor of Laclau’s post-structuralist politics, refuting the view that the former’s politics seeks a totally transparent and harmonious state beyond the questioning and ambiguity defining the political. On the contrary, however, in Shklar’s reading, it was precisely the undecidability of autonomy vs. heteronomy, representative vs. represented, and fiction vs. reality, highlighted by Rousseau’s legislator, that affirms the impossibility of political closure as the condition of freedom and change. The people’s incompleteness supports rather than jeopardises its sovereignty, allowing it to reconstitute itself in the open-ended quest for democracy. This, however, is out of sight in our climax of extreme polarization. Building on this intellectual landscape, our goal is to unravel the injustices that lie within practices of identity politics, that constitute pockets of segregation and leave no room for the developmental process outlined by Rousseau. As Shklar began to develop on her later writings, these tendencies put into question our already fragile sense of social and political obligation, instead of nurturing the necessary recognition of our fellow citizens.

Keywords: Identity; Injustice; Representation; J. J. Rousseau; Judith Shklar.

3 | IDENTITY POLITICS, POPULISM AND THE LOSS OF SELF-REPRESENTATION

Philippe Crignon | Nantes Université

The purpose of this paper is to study how identity politics has weakened political representation, by privileging the representation of experiences and perspectives (I.M. Young) over that of ideas and interests, with the effect of creating populist representation in response.

From a conceptual point of view, it is possible to distinguish between legal and constitutional representation, the function of which is to guarantee the unity of the people, and the representativeness of deliberative assemblies, which responds to demands in terms of political and social justice and democratic legitimacy, and which enables different groups to make themselves heard and to influence the decision-making process. Representation and representativeness complement each other and coordinate social unity and multiplicity. In an ideal situation, such a coordination is highly virtuous.

The shift from the representation of ideas and interests to the representation of experiences (Phillips) has introduced an imbalance in the relationship between the representation of unity and the representativeness of difference, to the advantage of the latter. The questioning of the legal representation of the people has weakened the capacity to debate in a common language, within a shared public space and according to the ethical requirements of deliberation, without being able to propose an alternative reconstruction of the people as a whole. I propose to understand the current populist moment as a reaction to the crisis of unitary representation and as an attempt to make up for this deficit. The populist leader also borrows from identity politics and makes a claim (M. Saward) to extra-institutional representation. In this representation of identity, the leader embodies the entire people. Its unity is no longer legal and abstract, but social and concrete. If the politics of difference represents diversity without unity, populism represents unity without diversity.

The twofold aporia should not lead us simply to endeavour to restore the previous system, which had not succeeded to preserve itself. Shortcomings of representation lie less in a failure to represent ideas and interests than in the evolution of the people represented, because it no longer has a sufficient understanding of itself. Class divisions have not been replaced by differences between the now most represented groups (race, culture, religion and gender), but by other, much more numerous and subtle social cleavages (metropolises and rural areas, cultural practices, forms of information consumption, etc.) (J. Fourquet). Society has lost the sense of its true diversity and unity, which can also be understood as a loss of another kind of representation, the one provided by self-knowledge. In the face of the crisis, the priority is thus to rebuild the social knowledge that people must have of itself, a prerequisite for overcoming the dual politics of identity and their aporias.

Keywords: Representation; Populism; Identity Politics; Social Knowledge.

PANEL 16
SESSION 2
ROOM: 0.16

4 | THE TURN BACK FROM THE TURN INWARD: POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY TO PSYCHOLOGY, IDENTITY POLITICS, AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND BACK AGAIN

Mark Reiff | University of California Davis

This paper digests some broad intellectual, social, and cultural trends over the last 100 years and discusses their effect on the promotion of the political theory broadly known as “liberalism.” While some of these trends have had a positive effect, I contend that they have mostly caused liberalism to turn in on itself, and this has made liberalism especially susceptible to attacks from the right. The turn inward has caused liberalism to become far too insular and utopian, distancing itself from the practical; to become far too close-minded, depriving itself of the intellectual energy and new ideas that it needs to move forward; to become far too factionalized, creating intellectual competition rather than intellectual cross-fertilization; and to become far too timid, alienating a large portion of its natural supporters by prizing caution and decorum over decisive action and not standing up sufficiently for its fundamental principles. As a result, liberalism is struggling today, and it cannot continue to be the operating system of a successful self-perpetuating pluralistic society unless it is prepared to turn outward once again. After describing the several facets of the turn inward was and what motivated these, I shall describe how this contributed to the rise of identity politics and an associated and almost exclusive focus on remedial powers of affirmative action. I shall argue that while fully morally justified as a deontological matter, this approach has proved more counterproductive than helpful. Finally, I shall describe some alternative remedial approaches that are likely to have better overall effects and suggest how liberalism might refocus its political energy outward to make its appeal more apparent again.

Keywords: Liberalism; Marxism; Freud; Feminism; Race theory; Queer theory, factionalization and the corporatization of the academy.

5 | TRAPPED IDENTITIES IN COMMUNITARIAN REPRESENTATION

Giovanni Damele | IFILNOVA, Nova University of Lisbon

The crisis of liberal democracies has been counterpointed in recent decades by a revival of a communitarian political dimension built around a notion of identity, which has presented itself as an alternative to the individualistic and atomistic representation characteristic of the liberal tradition. To a conception of representation as an individualized (“privatized,” Schmitt would have said) relationship between the represented and

the representative, there has been a re-proposal - already in the wake of the recovery of communitarianism in the last decades of the 20th century - of the model of communities built around a common and shared core of values, thus reframing the processes of political participation and representation. This is a transversal process, uniting “libertarian” and “traditionalist,” “left-wing” and “right-wing” communitarianisms, whose main difference lies in the characteristic of the membership - whether voluntary or not - in different communities. For conservative and “organicist” communitarianism, community membership cannot be the result of a voluntary choice, since it pre-exists - with its interpersonal ties and values - individual existences. But even in the case of a communitarianism that admits free membership in different communities, individual identity depends, to a large extent, on collective identity. The identitarian democracy - of Schmittian imprint -, still built on the dimensions of the nation and the people, is thus replaced by a fragmentation of the political body into homogeneous communities - or at least presumed as such -, gathered around a nucleus of common values which allow for an ethical objectivism, made impossible by the pluralism of values typical of modern multi-ethical societies. The incommensurability of the different scales of values favors polarization and frontal opposition, neutralizing one of the typical mechanisms of the liberal-democratic representative system: the production of compromises through continuous negotiation. The combination between identity politics and the community dimension thus leads to a rejection of the liberal democratic model on two interconnected levels: on the level of relativism of values (to which a sectorial, communitarian objectivism is preferred), and on that of the construction of society as a space of self-determination of the individual (regardless of his identities and membership). By retroacting on the individualistic construction of liberal representation - in order to overcome its social atomization - these dynamics thus favor a greater compression of the free self-determination of individuals, who lack a space for politically and socially plural action. It follows - and this is what we will try to demonstrate - that even when represented as a space for the individual to flourish or built around the free expression of individual identities, community-based political representation ultimately represents a compression of the sphere of individual freedoms and rights.

Keywords: Identity; communitarianism; political representation; liberalism.

6 | A DYNAMIC VIEW OF VALUE CONFLICT

Heng Ying | University of Hong Kong

In this paper, I propose a dynamic view of value conflict to reveal the human predicament obscured by group-based accounts of value and moral conflict and improve the condition of human life in contemporary society.

First, I challenge the standard story assumed in the discussions of value and moral conflict in contemporary moral and political philosophy. On this story, conflicts usually occur between groups; individuals stand for their groups and fight for group values. One example is Jonathan Haidt’s account of culture wars in the US. Due to the cultural influences people receive, different moral foundations—which exist as modules in people’s minds—are activated. This gives rise to the intransigent conflicts between the liberal and the conservative in the US. Similarly, in Elizabeth Anderson’s account of political polarization, it is the positional competition of social groups—their competition for group superiority—that lead to the hatred and distrust of people.

This standard story reinforces group conflicts by priming individuals' group identities and intergroup differences. What is neglected is individuals' creativity in developing their unique identities and experiences in contemporary society. Supported by the ethnographic studies of people with mixed racial identities in Latin America and the experiences of Dutch white women who convert to Islam out of personal convictions, not only do many people experience fluid identities, but their identities at any particular moment are never the mere aggregate of their group identities. Hence, group-level analysis is too limited to capture people's experiences, and we should shift to individuals' agential experiences—their first-person perspectives—to conceptualize value and moral conflict.

Next, I set out to develop the dynamic view of value conflict. Arguing that the modern world witnesses the clash between the ideals of authenticity and community, I will show that the conflict of values for many of us is not merely a decision-making scenario in which we make a choice and deal with the gains and losses of our choices. Instead, we experience the conflict as a psychological cycle, and we shift between the distress resulting from the guilt and shame of violating what our communities expect of us and the anxiety and frustration over not being able to live a life true to ourselves. In the end, this cycle entails a test of resilience—the ability to gain clarity over what we should be against all sorts of interpersonal and social pressures.

Based on the dynamic view of value conflict, I point out what is obscured by group-based accounts of value and moral conflict. First, Taylor proposes the *Malaise of Modernity*—lack of meaning of life due to the decline of religion—to be the human predicament of the modern world. The malaise, according to the dynamic view, should be expanded to include the psychological struggles experienced by people on everyday basis. Second, different from the group-based accounts that reinforce people's differences, the commonality of their agential experiences provides the new ground for building solidarity and developing an empathetic understanding of each other.

Keywords: Value conflict; identity; group polarization.

PANEL 16
SESSION 3
ROOM: 0.16

7 | HOW TO CULTIVATE CIVIC FRIENDSHIP
IN POLARIZED SOCIETIES

Cansu Hepcaglayan | Thomas Jefferson University

The events of January 6 underscored the growing threat of severe political polarization in the U.S., prompting efforts to combat its harmful effects and restore civic unity. In *Overdoing Democracy*, Robert B. Talisse proposes a solution to polarization: cultivating civic friendship through nonpolitical activities with members of one's political opposition. While this approach has merit, I argue that it is insufficient to re-establish genuine civic friendship. Instead, I suggest that systematic efforts to raise awareness of shared political goals are necessary to overcome polarization.

Civic friendship, according to Talisse, is the capacity to regard others as fellow citizens, which requires three sub-capacities: (1) reasonableness—the ability to present reasons for one's views and to respond to the reasoning of others, (2) sympathy—recognizing the sincerity of others' values and approaching them with fellow feeling, and (3) persistence—the ability to continue democratic engagement even after political losses. Talisse argues that polarization undermines these capacities by fostering echo chambers that amplify differences and promote caricature stereotypes of political opponents. This results in "civic enmity," where citizens view opponents as alien and unworthy of recognition as fellow citizens.

To address civic enmity, Talisse suggests participating in nonpolitical activities, such as volunteering, joining sports teams, or organizing trivia nights, with political opponents. These shared activities are meant to break down stereotypes and rehabilitate perceptions of political opponents, fostering a renewed sense of civic friendship.

However, I raise two objections to this approach. First is the "problem of generalization." Stereotypes are notoriously resistant to change, and encountering a few individuals who defy a stereotype may not lead to a broader shift in one's beliefs. Second is the "problem of motivation." People entrenched in polarization are unlikely to engage in activities with political opponents unless they already possess some degree of reasonableness and sympathy, which undermines Talisse's premise.

If Talisse's approach is insufficient, how can civic friendship be restored? I propose viewing civic friendship not as a capacity but as a joint practice characterized by mutual care and a shared goal. In civic friendship, the shared goal is the sustenance and healthy functioning of democratic institutions. Polarization erodes this sense of shared purpose, but this is an epistemic error: all citizens have a vital interest in preserving democracy.

To rebuild civic friendship, political and societal institutions—such as democratic bodies, political parties, NGOs, media, and education systems—must collaborate to emphasize citizens' shared political goals. By raising awareness of the common interest in sustaining democracy, these institutions can restore the mutual care and collaboration necessary for civic friendship.

Keywords: Polarization; civic friendship; identity.

8 | THE POLITICAL THEORY OF DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS: TOWARDS A PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH

Pedro Magalhães | CICP/U. Minho

In a well-known passage on «the revolutionary and unprecedented» nature of modern democracy, the most influential phenomenologist of the political noted in passing that, to apprehend said nature, there was «no need to dwell on the details of the institutional apparatus» of modern democracies (Lefort, 1988: 17). Arguably, for Lefort's purposes, i. e. the contrast between democracy and totalitarianism as two distinct political forms of modern society, such a general level of analysis sufficed to delineate the singularity of the democratic experience. Today, faced with the erosion of democracy without a distinct totalitarian threat on the horizon, duty compels the political theorist to drop down some steps in the ladder of abstraction and dwell on what once seemed hardly relevant. Indeed, a phenomenological analysis of the an sich of modern democratic practice – free and fair elections – is still lacking. This paper starts filling in the blanks.

There is no shortage of uses of the phenomenological method in recent political theory (see Loidolt, 2021). However, the contemporary wave of “critical phenomenology” has largely ignored the central institutions of modern constitutional democracy – including the electoral ones – as objects of analysis and reflection. By orientating the Husserlian rallying cry “Back to the things themselves!” almost exclusively to issues such as race, gender, political affects and emotions, displacement and rightlessness, political phenomenologists have left formal democratic institutions entirely to the incommensurable modes of seeing and knowing of either normative theory or empirical science.

In this paper, we propose an analysis of the modern democratic electoral experience that distinguishes five interrelated dimensions: temporality, impersonality, secrecy, plurality, and representation. As we shall demonstrate, neither a hierarchy nor a unidirectional flow bestows unity upon these dimensions. However, the fundamental notion is representation – democratic elections imply a conception and articulate a pursuit of representation. This approach allows us to interpret the electoral apparatus of modern democracies as more than a power-sharing mechanism that guarantees the peaceful transfer of political authority from one set of bearers to another – “ballots not bullets,” to use Lincoln's phrase – and a measure of individual freedoms. What is singular in democratic elections, from our perspective, is that they involve citizens and groups in multiple, simultaneous processes of identity-building and identity-questioning. Democratic elections form and consolidate political subjectivities (individual and collective) while at the same time fostering self-reflection and preventing the closure of identity onto itself.

To conclude, as we shall argue by rejoining Lefort, democratic elections are the quintessential expression of political modernity understood as the vanishing of all markers of certainty. From this perspective, opposition to electoral procedures as fragmentary and merely “formal,” juxtaposed to a purportedly homogeneous “will of the people,” should be understood not only as ideological or rhetorical moves but also as an expression of profound revolt against the perpetual unrest and everlasting self-reflexivity of the modern political condition. In its many guises, this revolt has nurtured various forms of autocracy across modern politics.

9 | ILLUSORY INTIMACY, AUTHENTIC REPRESENTATION: THE DUAL NATURE OF PARASOCIAL POLITICS

Miguel Egler | Tilburg University

In recent years, there has been a great deal of public discussion about the effect of the entertainment industry on politics, with growing focus on how celebrity involvement may undermine democracy. Political commentators suggest that social media influencers may be polarising the public by spreading online hate and misinformation (Pollett 2024), that celebrity politicians are elected for their abilities in media presentation rather than their ability to govern (Meyer 2002, 79), and that the epistemic power possessed by celebrity politicians undermines the ideals of democracy (Archer et al., 2020; Archer & Cawston 2022). We contend that we can gain insight into the potential ways celebrity involvement can challenge democracy by focusing on the parasocial relationships that they cultivate with constituents.

Parasocial relationships refer to the way in which media users relate to media performers as if they were friends or family members (Horton and Wohl 1956). Though largely overlooked by political theorists and political philosophers, this phenomenon increasingly features in public debates around democracy. For example, in an article for *Varsity* in 2024, Rosie Roberts (2024) called for an end to the “parasocial politics”, while another piece in the *Michigan Independent* attributed “Trump’s unique parasocial bond with the American public” as key to his popularity with voters (Insights 2025).

Drawing extensively on constructivist accounts of political representation, we argue that parasocial relationships with politicians, while potentially conflicting with democratic principles, are not inherently incompatible with democracy. In fact, we contend that such relationships may promote greater political legitimacy.

First, we explain that parasocial relationships predispose constituents to rely on political testimony of celebrity politicians, thereby increasing the chance that they accept representative claims made by that celebrity. We then leverage this discussion to explain that the danger of parasocial relationships lies in how this reliance on political testimony can threaten two core principles of democracy: i) reciprocity—the ideal that attempts to coerce free, autonomous, and rational agents must be justified in terms that those agents can themselves appreciate and endorse; and ii) equality—the principle that each and every citizen should have equal weight in determining the outcome of political decisions.

Second, we argue that despite these risks, parasocial relationships can generate greater levels of trust between celebrity politicians and their constituents. We contend that, as a result, the representative claims advanced by such politicians are better suited to serve as good representations of those constituents, potentially increasing political legitimacy. To illustrate, we show that celebrity politicians who cultivate parasocial relationships with marginalised groups are better positioned to establish effective political representative relations with these constituents compared to conventional politicians.

Keywords: Democracy; Parasocial Relationships; Constructivism; Political Representation; Political Testimony.

PANEL 17 — SCIENCE DENIALISM IN PUBLIC DEBATE: THE DELICATE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCIENCE AND DEMOCRACY

Convenors: Francesca Pongiglione and Greta Favara (University Vita-Salute San Raffaele)

Science denialism is not only a topic of purely epistemological interest – it is also, and perhaps primarily, a topic of ethical and political interest. The denial of scientific evidence (e.g. the spherical shape of the Earth, the existence of anthropogenic climate change) is often accompanied by fallacies in reasoning or in the belief-formation process, or by epistemic flaws.

The greatest problems, however, arise in the practical dimension. In liberal-democratic contexts, every voice has the dignity of expression in the public forum; it is thus urgent to reflect on what space can be given to the defense and dissemination of science denialism.

In fact, giving space in the public debate to those who, for example, deny anthropogenic climate change, or raise doubts about the effectiveness of vaccines as a tool to eradicate the spread of infectious diseases, presents some significant risks for contemporary democracies. First, it erodes trust in the institutions that have based important political decisions on the scientific evidence that deniers dispute. Second, it spreads uncertainty among the population on sensitive issues, which in turn generates paralysis or conflict.

While we might be tempted to argue that science denialism should simply be excluded from public debate, leaving no room for deniers to spread anti-scientific beliefs, this strategy raises numerous questions, given by the very nature of the scientific evidence that deniers dispute and by the principles that underpin liberal-democratic institutions. Democracy does not seem compatible with the proposal to silence certain voices, however unreasonable they may be.

We also need to reflect on what ordinary people expect from scientists. Science often expresses itself in statistical terms, estimating the probability that a certain event will occur as a consequence of other events or phenomena. The mere adoption of data of this type spreads the false belief that certain causal relationships are the subject of a debate among scientists, or in any case in need of further confirmation, and that they cannot be taken for granted. This contributes to generating a climate of doubt and uncertainty when it is necessary to make political decisions that enjoy broad consensus.

This panel therefore aims to delve into the delicate relationship between science and citizenship, examining, in particular, the public and political space that denialist theses can claim in liberal-democratic contexts.

PANEL 17
SESSION 1
ROOM: 0.15

1 | SCIENCE AND POLITICS. VALUE CHOICES BEFORE CLIMATE CHANGE

Letizia Konderak | Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele

The global emergencies of recent decades have highlighted the close relationship between scientific evidence and policy-making. However, there is ample debate on the terms within which scientific data should direct political action. The subject of controversy is the possibility of implementing coercive policies on the basis of science, whether these require justification, and whether scientific data should prevail over the consideration of other moral or political values.

For Rawls, scientific data can only ground coercive policies if they are not controversial (Rawls, 1996: 224-225). In the recent debate about the liberalism of public reason, some scholars have investigated the conditions of justifiability of policies based on scientific data. Badano and Bonotti observed that the subjects to whom public justification is due are idealized, and they cannot help but recognize the validity of science since they ideally have the possibility of dedicating a reason-able effort to the study and verification of scientific theses (Badano & Bonotti, 2019: 54). On the contrary, Zelic affirms the need to start from scientific dissent and articulate the reasons for such distrust. Zelic proposes to isolate pure scientific denialism from the political contestation of science-based policies: the latter, in fact, concerns decisions on risk management and political priorities (Zelic, 2018: 109).

Following Zelic, this contribution focuses on how science-based policies must be politically embedded in and politically balanced with other political values. Scientific assertions must always be balanced with other considerations – for example, for climate change, policymakers must weigh economic growth and mitigation measures where the two conflict. However, this implies the risk that climate change becomes a secondary objective to the point that undertaken policies are irrelevant.

We will argue that balancing scientific statements with political and social values is necessary, but at the same time risky: it implies the danger that climate change will be constantly downgraded within the political agenda. Promoting effective political action in the face of climate change requires a broader debate and a stronger awareness of its urgency, and opens up the possibility for re-thinking societal organizations, their fundamental political values, and how they distribute social benefits and burdens.

In conclusion, the problem of the weakness of our climate action also has political reasons. One way forward is to show that, like any political question, mitigating climate change calls justice in-to question, and forces us to reflect on the costs of social activities and political choices. Can societies still externalize their costs on the disadvantaged, including developing countries and future generations? And how could the consideration of future generations be compared to the present ones, when their interests diverge? Our decisions about climate change appear to affect societal organization, basic political values, and the cost-benefit distribution, and require a broader sense of justice.

2 | PUBLIC DEBATE AND THE REPRESENTATIVE ROLE OF CONSTITUTIONAL COURTS

Paolo Bodini | Università di Genova

The need for enlightened political decision-making has led scholars (Eisgruber 2001; Kumm 2019; Ferrara 2023) to present constitutional courts as representative bodies. This perspective has implications for the relationship between democracy and public debate. The focus on the representative capacity of constitutional courts stems from a deep skepticism regarding public debate's ability to deliberate based on empirical evidence and its vulnerability to scientifically unfounded conclusions. However, the challenging justification for excluding science deniers from liberal-democratic forums leads to a more nuanced approach, which consists of strengthening the political authority of institutions independent from public accountability and entrusting them with the task of representing the interests of citizenship. This paper examines two arguments supporting the representative interpretation of constitutional courts, analyzing their justificatory validity. This study emphasizes the difficulty of separating representation from public debate and the challenges in restoring democratic decision-making by bypassing citizens' epistemic failures.

The first approach, based on systems theory (Pettit 2013, Kuyper 2016, Rey 2020), argues that courts are representative because of their interactions with elected, and thus representative, institutions such as parliaments (Valentini 2023). This argument suffers from a "fallacy of division" (Vermeule 2011): the fact that a system possesses certain characteristics does not mean all its elements share those characteristics. The representative nature of representative democracies does not validate the representativeness of constitutional courts within them. Rather, the quality of the whole suggests a more underdetermined conclusion: courts contribute to representation, e.g. by securing citizens' rights necessary for democratic participation, without being themselves representative (Gardbaum 2020; Dixon 2023).

The second argument addresses the courts' lack of electoral authorization (Pitkin 1967) arguing that they can be representative by advancing a claim: "A maker of representations (M) puts forward a subject (S) which stands for an object (O) [...] and is offered to an audience (A)" (Saward 2008, 302). In this way, non-elective institutions (a court) (M) could propose themselves (S) as the embodiment of citizens' interests (O) to the citizens (A) (Bovens & Schillemans 2020). Again, this attempt to make courts representative can be challenged, this time by observing a "fallacy of disconnection." The representation formed in this manner is not political, as the absence of a politically recognized procedure leaves the representative claim on a purely communicative/symbolic level. For instance, one could legitimately say that Donald Trump, even before running for office, proposed himself (M, S) as a leader for America (O) to his audience (A). However, this degree of representation acquires a different status—political and democratic in particular—when Trump runs in the primaries and then in the presidential election, i.e. when he presents his representative commitment not only to his audience (A) but to the entire public, even to those who detest him (P—public sphere), as a leader for America (O). Democratic representation requires this additional authoritative step, a connection with the whole public sphere, which no court can submit to or aspire to achieve.

3 | ENHANCING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' ABILITY TO IDENTIFY SCIENTIFIC DISINFORMATION

Margherita Ghiara & Luca Ausili | Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele

The spread of scientific disinformation and the erosion of trust in expertise pose significant risks to democratic societies. This, coupled with recent efforts to limit the power of fact checkers in filtering information on social media, leaves little choice in terms of what can be done to fight disinformation. The focus of this research is on the topic of digital critical thinking. The increasing prevalence of science denial, fueled by digital misinformation, threatens informed decision-making and weakens public confidence in scientific institutions. In particular, younger generations—highly engaged with online content—are increasingly exposed to misleading narratives that distort scientific consensus. Addressing this challenge requires a deeper understanding of the cognitive and social mechanisms underlying susceptibility to disinformation and the effectiveness of educational strategies designed to mitigate its impact by boosting people's abilities to tell valuable information from disinformation.

Our study examines experimentally the limitations of current pedagogical interventions aimed at enhancing students' ability to distinguish reliable scientific information from disinformation. While previous research in controlled environments has shown promise for approaches such as Civic Online Reasoning, Cognitive Bias Training, and Inoculation Strategies, their effectiveness in real-world educational settings remains uncertain. Our findings suggest that translating such interventions into classroom contexts presents significant challenges. The complexities of attention, engagement, and contextual learning can dilute the intended benefits, sometimes even leading to unintended consequences, such as heightened skepticism toward both legitimate and illegitimate sources.

These results highlight the epistemic vulnerabilities within contemporary education and the broader struggle to cultivate scientific literacy in the digital age. The persistence of science denial underscores the need for more adaptive, participatory models of education that integrate critical thinking with social and cognitive dimensions of trust formation. Rather than relying on standardized interventions, efforts to counteract disinformation should account for the diverse ways individuals interact with knowledge in online ecosystems. Strengthening public trust in science demands an interdisciplinary approach—one that combines insights from philosophy, psychology, and media studies to develop more robust strategies for fostering resilience against misinformation.

PANEL 18 — NON-IDEAL PUZZLES OF LEGITIMACY: STATES AND INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Convenors: Ali Emre Benli (University of Vienna), Antoniette Scherz (Stockholm University)
and Antony Taylor (Fribourg University)

This panel examines three puzzles of legitimacy surrounding states and international institutions in less than ideal contexts.

In the first talk, *Imposing Economic Sanctions*, Anthony Taylor takes up the question: When and why economic sanctions might be morally permissible? After critically evaluating James Pattison's pragmatic view and Cécile Fabre's cosmopolitan view, Taylor offers his own account based on the authority of international legal institutions. He argues that international legal institutions can shape the moral landscape by recognizing the legitimacy of a state: When international institutions confer recognitional legitimacy onto a state, they grant it certain rights against interference, including qualified protections against economic coercion. This view can explain why some unjust states retain rights against the imposition of sanctions—their status grants them a protected sphere within which to exercise political authority.

In the second talk, *Refugees, Climate Emergency and State System Legitimacy*, Ali Emre Benli asks: Is it legitimate for states to suspend their obligations towards refugees in order to avoid the harms of climate catastrophe? Benli first concedes that, in the context of climate emergency, some criteria for states to attain legitimacy might be relaxed. Following Ross Mittiga, it might be legitimate for states to suspend some of their commitments to democratic or individual rights in order to guarantee the safety and security of its citizens. Nevertheless, based on recent theorizing on state system legitimacy, Benli argues that, in order to sustain their legitimacy, states that aim to secure the safety and security of its citizens ought to secure similar guarantees for refugees.

In the third talk, *Resisting (Il)legitimate International Institutions*, Antoinette Scherz and Attila Mraz inquire when resistance to illegitimate international institutions is justified? To this end, Scherz and Mraz consider three challenges to the application of the ethics of resistance to injustice to acts of principled resistance against international institutions. First, while domestic resistance is often justified with reference to the aim of restoring democratic institutions, international institutions are widely held to be legitimate even if not democratic. Second, some international institutions have overwhelmingly content-dependent (rather than content-independent) criteria of legitimacy. Third, individuals are typically not directly subject to the authority of international institutions. In responding to these challenges, Scherz and Mraz outline a theory of justified resistance against illegitimate international institutions.

PANEL 18
SESSION 1
ROOM: 0.14

1 | IMPOSING ECONOMIC SANCTIONS

Anthony Taylor | Fribourg University

Economic sanctions have become a tool of choice for responding to human rights abuses committed by state actors. Despite this, the normative analysis of sanctions in moral and political philosophy is in its infancy. Those philosophers who have sought to evaluate when sanctions are morally permissible have typically proceeded by applying a framework of ideas from contemporary just war theory. On this view, economic sanctions are appropriate when they have a just cause and are a proportionate and necessary response to a sufficiently serious injustice. The central aim of this paper is not to reject this view entirely, but rather to argue that existing versions of it are insufficiently sensitive to the right to political self-determination. An important aspect of political self-determination is a claim-right that protects states against interference with their efforts to make and enforce law within their territory. This right, I will ultimately suggest, offers states a degree of protection against economic coercion.

I begin by considering the two dominant approaches to evaluating economic sanctions in the literature. The first of these is James Pattison's pragmatic view, according to which sanctions are morally permissible if they lead to a greater degree of protection for basic human rights. I reject this view, showing that because it offers no account of why the imposition of economic sanctions is presumptively wrongful it is left unclear how calculations of proportionality and necessity are meant to proceed. The second approach considered is Cécile Fabre's cosmopolitan view, which avoids this problem by holding that sanctions are presumptively wrongful because there is a presumption in favor of free international trade. I also reject this view, showing that such a presumption delivers overly restrictive conclusions regarding distributive justice.

The paper then sets out an alternative view, the starting point for which is an account of the authority of international legal institutions. I argue that international legal institutions can shape the moral landscape by via the practice of state recognition. This practice may confer onto an entity, via a justified exercise of authority, the status of being a recognitionally legitimate state. When international institutions confer recognitionally legitimacy onto a state, they grant it certain rights against interference, including qualified protections against economic coercion. This view can explain why some unjust states retain rights against the imposition of sanctions—their status grants them a protected sphere within which to exercise political authority. I spell out this view in detail and explore its implications for when economic sanctions are a permissible tool of foreign policy.

2 | REFUGEES, CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND STATE SYSTEM LEGITIMACY

Ali Emre Benli | University of Vienna

Recent IPCC reports show that democratic states are failing to implement appropriate mitigation policies to limit global temperature rise or adequate adaptation policies to prevent its harmful consequences. In response, critics argue that some forms of authoritarian climate governance might be legitimate to avoid the catastrophic consequences of global temperature rise. For example, it might be legitimate for states to suspend some of their commitments to democratic or individual rights in order to guarantee the safety and security of its citizens. What about states' obligations towards refugees? Is it legitimate for states to suspend their obligations towards refugees due to climate emergency? In this talk, I aim to address this question from the perspective of recent theorizing on state system legitimacy. According to state system legitimacy theories, each state has an obligation of legitimacy to guarantee the basic rights of its citizens. But states also have collective obligations to sustain a state system that guarantees the basic rights of all individuals across the world. The latter is discharged through institutions of global governance such as the international refugee regime. I will show that, although the circumstances of climate emergency may alter the content of collective obligations of states, it does not nullify them. Moreover, due to the collective nature of climate emergency, states that aim to secure the safety and security of its citizens, ought to secure similar guarantees for refugees.

3 | RESISTING (IL)LEGITIMATE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Antoinette Scherz | Stockholm University

In this paper, we explore three challenges to the application of the ethics of resistance to injustice to acts of principled resistance against international institutions. First, while domestic resistance is often justified with reference to the aim of establishing or restoring democratic institutions, international institutions are widely held to be legitimate even if not democratic—thus significantly shrinking the admissible aims of resistance. Second and related, some international institutions—quite unlike domestic political institutions—have overwhelmingly content-dependent (rather than content-independent) criteria of legitimacy: for instance, the WHO or the institutions of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. This, again, limits the admissible set of reasons for justified resistance, and requires considerable expertise to decide when resistance can be justified. Third, individuals are typically not directly subject to the authority of international institutions: their authority is mediated by the authority of member states over individuals. Consequently, individuals have limited means to unambiguously resist international illegitimate institutions, and in most cases narrowly targeted acts of resistance are not available in resistance against such institutions. These challenges seem to carve out a rather narrow conceptual and normative space for justified resistance against international institutions. Our response to these challenges outlines a theory of justified resistance against illegitimate international institutions, with implications as to when resistance against legitimate international institutions can be justified.

PANEL 19 — ETHICAL JUSTICE AND GOVERNANCE

Convenors: Sergio Ruiz Díaz Arce (University of Minho) and Robert Junqueira (University of Coimbra)

Ethics is more often summoned to the forefront of public conversation in periods of heightened controversy, when we are faced with the need to make difficult choices and set new horizons or a different direction for our shared lives. Questions of right and wrong, what is permissible and impermissible, what we ought or ought not to be at liberty to do within the range of our powers, among other ways of formulating ethical concerns, are at the heart of today's public agenda. In times like these, ethics becomes an ever-present priority in every sphere of social affairs and the capacity for ethical reasoning plays an irreplaceable role as a skill that practitioners and scholars across all branches of human activity should have and develop. The political and legal domains are no exception. In fact, ethics is inescapably interwoven with these domains, underpinning the rightfulness and integrity of both policy and the law.

As our communities are increasingly in need for and actually demanding ethical justice and governance in the face of the innumerable challenges currently emerging, spanning from the magnitude of scientific and technological breakthroughs to juridical matters and those of domestic politics and international relations, researchers in the social, legal, and human sciences are expected to honour their duties and take part in a collective process of ethical analysis and reflection. While such an exercise may be perceived as highly theoretical in its execution, its potential impact can hardly be confined to a strictly academic level. Indeed, the revitalisation of conceptual frameworks and the evolution of human understanding lead to significant practical consequences and enable sensible recommendations to be put forward in response to complex, tangible problems of major relevance to our everyday existence.

With this in mind, we are welcoming contributions from academics across different generations and fields of expertise who are concerned with urgent issues such as democratic integrity, judicial autonomy, the responsible use of emerging technologies, and the upholding of human rights. We invite proposals aimed at addressing questions such as:

- Are there ethical conflicts in using technological means to control people?
- How can ethical standards inform the interpretation and enforcement of the rule of law?
- Should ethics play a role in the regulation of emerging technologies?
- To what extent can AI strengthen or undermine judicial independence or public trust in the legal system?
- What is the role of ethics in dealing with corruption within democracies?

PANEL 19
SESSION 1
ROOM: 0.13

1 | WHEN THE LACK OF ETHICS IN POLITICS UNDERMINES
DEMOCRACY: THE PRACTICE OF PRINCIPLES BEFORE
THE LAW

Ana Sirage Coimbra | University of Minho

Law No. 52/2019, of July 31st, in its current wording, regulates the regime for the exercise of functions by holders of political positions and senior public positions, their declaratory obligations and the respective sanctioning regime. In addition to a set of duties and inhibitions associated with the performance of those functions, this law imposes on all public entities covered by its scope of application the approval of Codes of Conduct, to regulate aspects such as institutional offers and hospitality, to those who hold political positions and high public positions. Despite the legislative developments that have taken place towards strengthening prevention mechanisms regarding possible illegal conduct on the part of holders of political positions and/or similar situations, the current solutions continue to prove to be insufficient to guarantee the full integrity of the actors involved, when the righteousness of the action undertaken supposes, in the first place, an assessment regarding the practice (or not), of ethical principles that precede the law. There is a political responsibility essential to the exercise of public office that is separate from the investigation of the possible existence of other types of responsibility (such as administrative, financial, disciplinary, administrative or criminal). This level of commitment required from those who intend to exercise political functions is linked to the nature of the mandate given to them, and must be guided by strict compliance with ethical standards inherent to the pursuit of public interest, and the promotion of values like transparency, integrity and impartiality. However, in Portugal we have been witnessing a growing discredit among the political class and senior State leaders, motivated by the proliferation of cases of conflicts of interest, promiscuousness between the public and private sector, incompatibilities, and favouritism of friends and family in public entities, as well as in public procurement procedures that allocate State resources. This reality has contributed to a widespread erosion of the reputation of institutions, powering an anti-democratic rhetoric against the system. To counter this setback, our starting point is the following reflection: is it still possible to renew ethics in politics to strengthen democracy?

2 | GENETIC SURVEILLANCE AND STATE CONTROL: ETHICAL AND POLITICAL CHALLENGES IN THE AGE OF BIOMETRIC GOVERNANCE

Sílvia de Carvalho Homem | University of Minho

The increasing use of biometric and genetic data for state governance gives rise to significant ethical and political concerns. While these technologies are employed for security and public health purposes, there are also risks associated with surveillance, discrimination, and the erosion of fundamental rights. This paper explores the intersection between ethics and political philosophy in the context of genetic surveillance, focusing on the tensions between state control, individual autonomy, and justice. Drawing from Foucault's concept of biopolitics, we analyse how states justify the collection and utilisation of genetic data under the guise of security and efficiency. The normalisation of genetic databases for law enforcement and border control raises questions about the proportionality and necessity of such measures. The misuse of such technologies, for example the racialisation of criminal investigations, the introduction of predictive policing based on genetic markers, and the restriction of migration rights, illustrates the broader ethical concerns regarding coercion and systemic bias. Furthermore, from a Rawlsian perspective on justice, the paper critically examines the impact of genetic surveillance on vulnerable populations, highlighting the inherent contradiction with the principles of fairness and equal basic liberties due to the deployment of these technologies being often targeted at marginalised groups. As genetic data becomes a tool for governance, the risk of discrimination against individuals with hereditary conditions or predispositions to mental illness also increases, leading to violations of privacy and reinforcing societal stigmas. To navigate these ethical dilemmas, we must revisit the limits of state authority in data governance. Should states have unrestricted access to genetic information, or should we establish stronger safeguards to protect citizens? The paper draws from Kantian and deontological ethics to argue that the inherent dignity of individuals should override utilitarian justifications for mass genetic data collection. It advocates for regulatory mechanisms that prioritise consent, transparency, and non-discrimination, ensuring that genetic data is not weaponised as a tool of control. The intersection of genetics, surveillance, and political power necessitates a critical ethical and philosophical response. The interrogation of the ideological foundations that underpin these practices is therefore essential, so that a framework can be developed that both safeguards human rights and addresses legitimate security concerns. This paper contributes to the ongoing debate on the ethics of biometric governance, urging policymakers to adopt a rights-based approach that aligns with the principles of justice and individual autonomy.

3 | THE ETHICAL RISKS OF APPLYING HUMAN BODY DIGITAL TWINS

Irene Portela | University of Minho

Twenty years ago, Michael Grieves presented the concept of “virtual digital representations” at the University of Michigan, as “physical products that abstractly represented a real device and could be used as a basis for testing in real or simulated conditions”. This concept took off and met the expectations of the product industry because it served to gather data and information that allowed for more advanced analyses, faster and with less capital investment. In 2010, it was presented as an “information mirror model”, the embryonic species of the digital twin model, with an interface between physical and virtual space. Today, the Digital Twin is a virtual model that completely corresponds to physical entities in the real world and can simulate their behaviour and performance in a real-time environment, as well as using virtual model simulation technology to explore and predict the unknown world, find better ways and means of solving problems and new models of innovation and product development. It is an informative, digitally applied, out-of-physical-space, unique, multi-physics, multi-scale, super-precise technological tool that incorporates structural dynamics models and stress analysis models, fatigue damage models, thermo-dynamic predictability of material properties, product composition (such as stiffness, strength, hardness and fatigue resistance), as well as having a dimension for calculating probabilistic statistics in the event of adverse conditions. The aim of this work is to consider the possible and probable ethical risks of using digital twins in human beings with physical limitations of the upper or lower limbs, human beings with spinal cord injuries of traumatic origin or with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). This implantation of electrodes is underway in the United States, although clinical research into its effects is incomplete, with little knowledge of the implications and ethical risks involved. We can mention the American company Neuralink, which specializes in neuro-technology and recruits sick human beings to implant computerized interfaces in their brains. There is no evidence in the neuropsychiatric scientific community about the effects of implants on the brain, despite assurances that the implants are cosmetically invisible and that they will allow patients to regain hand mobility and, in more serious cases, the ability to chew, speak, laugh, swallow or breathe autonomously. On the one hand, we must weigh up the economic pressure and the innovative effects of the use of AI, of the miraculous and rapid cure that underpins the unconditional scientific support for the application of implants in sick human beings. On the other hand, there is the opposing position that considers it to be a dangerous, temporary, uncertain resource with unknown consequences for its recipient. We need to consider setting ethical limits to its use, determining the contours of a risk management model when making the decision to apply digital twins to sick human beings. The promise of a miracle may not be miraculous.

PANEL 19
SESSION 2
ROOM: 0.13

4 | ETHICAL GUIDELINES IN THE REGULATION OF
AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES: THE PRINCIPLE OF HUMAN
DIGNITY AND DECISION MAKING IN AI

Sónia Moreira | University of Minho

We've all been confronted with news stories about car accidents caused by autonomous vehicles (AVs) being tested. An AV - and in this article we're limiting ourselves to land vehicles - is a car that is capable of travelling from one place to another without any human intervention. To do this, it has mechanisms (sensors, computer vision, cameras, GPS, etc.) that provide it with external information - data about the environment - which it then interprets in order to decide on the best course of action, in accordance with the programming that has been inserted into it. We are dealing with a Robot, a software programme with Artificial Intelligence (AI), incorporated into hardware (the car), which fulfils the task it was created for: driving its passengers from one place to another. At the moment, we don't yet have VAs on our roads, but it's foreseeable that we will, as it's estimated that they will reduce road accidents by around 90% (a huge social benefit), not to mention the added advantages for their owners (being able to get around without having to drive, taking the opportunity to work, sleep, or even if they can't drive due to a physical disability or lack of a driving licence, etc.). However, in spite of the undeniable advantages that these vehicles will bring, both for individuals and socially, there are disadvantages that need to be considered and mitigated before they are allowed to circulate. Firstly, legal mechanisms must be put in place to ensure that those harmed by the VA's actions are effectively compensated. Secondly, we need to determine the guidelines for the programme that will determine the VA's course of action. Because the imponderable can happen: the VA may have to decide whether to run over one person or another if it is impossible to avoid a collision; it may have to decide whether to swerve to the side and kill a pedestrian or hit the vehicle in front, killing its passengers; it may have to decide whether to cause damage to property or animals or damage to people, etc. Based on the studies and proposals of the High-Level Expert Group on AI, the EU Treaties, the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and International Law, the EU presented the Ethical Principles of AI: the Principle of Respect for Human Autonomy, the Principle of Prevention of Harm, the Principle of Fairness and the Principle of Explainability. How can we guarantee the application of these principles in cases of VA action? What guidelines should VA software developers follow when creating a VA programme? Should they allow the VA to learn autonomously in order to decide how to resolve these ethical dilemmas? Is it acceptable for a machine to replace humans when it comes to decide who should live or die?

5 JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE VERSUS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: THE NECESSARY ETHICAL COMMITMENT TO TRANSPARENCY

Gema Pérez Souto | University of Minho

In December 2023, the European Commission welcomed the political agreement reached between the EP and the Council on the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Act, proposed in April 2021. In its recital (40), states that “certain AI systems intended for the administration of justice and democratic processes should be classified as high-risk, considering their potentially significant impact on democracy, rule of law, individual freedoms as well as the right to an effective remedy and to a fair trial. In particular, to address the risks of potential biases, errors and opacity (...)”. In the European Union, a legal system of guarantees has been established through the years to ensure the independence and impartiality of the judges and respect for the fundamental rights, but at the heart of AI, which is advancing with the speed of a technological wave, lies a disturbing paradox: its capacity to process the incomprehensible, but at the same time to hide it behind an impenetrable veil, that of its algorithms. The algorithms that eventually can make decisions in the Administration of Justice, increasingly present in risk assessment systems or automated conflict resolution, often using “black box” models which means at the end, lack of transparency and interpretability of AI. AI systems that assist judicial authorities in certain tasks must respect the procedural guarantees and always be applied over surveillance or human decision but how could this be done if this term loaded with symbolism (the “black box” model), describes systems whose inner workings are inaccessible and therefore we cannot know how they process data, what parameters they value or why they make the decisions they dictate. Impartiality is predicated of the judge with respect to the parties and the litigation before him/her (which in the judge is also linked to independence with respect to the rest of the powers, to society in general and to the parties themselves) But how do you guarantee the ‘independence’ of an AI that is not obliged to be independent, like a judge? Continuing with this question, it is important to bring up the following point: in order for a judicial decision to be made, a narrative has to be created, a formal truth. This has be constructed from evidence (such as the victim’s and witnesses’ statements) that is not devoid of emotion; e.g. through the way they express themselves, the emphasis they place on testifying or describing the event. Judges apply the law and this application of the law cannot be defined in strictly normative terms, but also according to his or her inner conviction, which also involves interpreting and assessing certain contexts in relation to all the parties to the proceedings. This paper aims to highlight the need to ensure a human-centered justice in the EU respecting data protection and fundamental rights when artificial intelligence systems are used, emphasizing the ethical commitment to transparency in the use of algorithms and AI in justice, taking into account that the judicial decision must be explainable, understandable and with the right to an effective remedy.

6 | ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH JUDICIAL DECISION-MAKING: REASONING AND EXPLAINABILITY

Gonçalo Mota | University of Minho

In the Portuguese judicial system, issues of control and scrutiny of the judge's rationality in the construction of decision-making within the context of legal process for the promotion and protection of children and youth are crucial to the realisation of justice. Today we are discussing the inevitability of introducing artificial intelligence (AI) into justice, as well as its potential in judges' decisionmaking, with promises of more accurate predictions and greater efficiency in the outcome of the cases being analysed (Huang, 2024). The truth is that this possibility raises ethical and legitimacy concerns regarding the systems promoted by AI, namely the risks related to the impact on judicial decisionmaking. The opacity of the algorithms (black box), whose evolution has made them unintelligible and even more difficult to understand the rationale behind certain decisions, calls into question the reliability of AI systems. Reliability is directly related to the ability to explain how the system reached a certain decision, what data it was based on and how it ensures the validity of the results obtained (Kaur, Uslu, Rittichier & Durrezi, 2022; Emmert-Streib, Yli-Harja & Dehmer, 2020). Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024, which created harmonized rules on artificial intelligence, states in Article 68 that any person affected by a decision which produces legal effects or affects the person in a similar way, in particularly regarding fundamental rights, has the right to obtain explanations about the role of the AI system in the decisionmaking process. In fact, according to this Regulation, AI systems designed to be used by a judicial authority 'in the investigation and interpretation of facts and the law, as well as in the application of the law to a specific set of facts' (p.122) must guarantee adequate explainability, allowing, aside from more transparency, the accountability of those involved in decision-making (Ayub & Bandy, 2023). We believe that the realisation of justice in the context of judicial promotion and protection processes is not the result of a mere logical-formal rationality, reduced to the interpretation of a set of rules and based on simple deductions, and depends on practical considerations involving emotional, social and ethical factors, that AI systems are unable to provide in order to guarantee the realisation of the requirements of independence and autonomy in the exercise of judges' jurisdictional functions. Even so, if AI does become an assistant in the decisionmaking of legal proceedings for the promotion and protection of children and youth, it is crucial that judges maintain control of the final decision, even if these are voluntary jurisdiction cases and therefore submitted to criteria of convenience or opportunity, the duty to state the grounds for the decision remains. Judges must therefore refuse to let their decision depend on technological determinism, given the opacity of AI systems' algorithms and the difficulty in reconstitute the path taken to explain the decision, which undermines the judicial decision and its consequent annulment.

PANEL 20 — THE SCIENCES OF ETHICS AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Convenor: João Pinheiro (University of Lisbon)

Moral/ethical theory is most commonly associated with prescriptive/first-order normative theorising, i.e., theorising about what we should do. However, descriptive ethics is no lesser part of it, albeit frequently (and purposefully) neglected by normative theorists. In recent decades, advancements in the social, human, and behavioural sciences have led to the emergence of a new field within descriptive ethics that we may aptly name the “ethical science”. This field is concerned with the integration of a panoply of scientific approaches to the study of ethical phenomena broadly understood. It integrates hypotheses for how morality evolved, holocultural moral psychology, experimental metaethics, behavioural game theory, ethnography of normative phenomena, neurobiology of moral cognition and conation, inter alia. At present, the integration of descriptive and prescriptive ethics faces outstanding issues. These can generally be thought of as (1) metanormative issues about the role of normativity in descriptive ethics and (2) issues about the import of the sciences of ethics for prescriptive ethics. This panel illustrates that we have much to gain from an empirically-informed or scientifically-savvy approach to moral and political philosophy, and, more generally still, from an integrated moral theory.

- Our first talk illustrates this point with reference to a classical theme from the philosophy of science, namely “Values in Science”. It highlights how a sociology of value may contribute to a better understanding of scientifically-informed policy-making, raising issues of legitimacy during this reflection.
- The second talk is invocative of a social psychological approach to morality. In particular, it confronts a rising problem of our contemporary world, namely how disinformation may affect moral responsibility, and how some of our doxastic beliefs, whilst possibly misinformed, may further play social functions, such as signalling our group of belonging.
- The third talk invites us to rethink a founding tradition from the sciences of ethics, namely “Social Darwinism”. It argues for the inevitability of weighing justice evolutionarily, all the while dissociating this topic from the antiquated understanding of the evolutionary sciences still evoked by the “Social Darwinism” label.
- Our fourth talk illustrates this novel understanding of contemporary Social Darwinism in practice by examining some recent instances of policy-making that have been informed by the latest developments in cultural evolutionary theory. Simultaneously, its principal contribution also illustrates the central theme of the first talk, seeing as it pinpoints a way in which cultural evolutionary theory and policy-making may be culturally biased.
- The fifth talk analyses an idea that is in the background of much policy-making, namely that moral progress is tenable. In particular, it dabbles in results from

experimental moral philosophy and empirical ethics to further our understanding of this concept.

- Our last talk, in turn, tackles with the very concept of morality by investigating whether moral norms are a subset of so-called “social norms”, Bicchieri-style, and can therefore be formalised as being conditional on expectations.

Finally, this panel serves a secondary aim: to advertise an international, monthly-assembling, online reading group held under the same title, co-organized by its convenor, and with its panelists among its participants.

PANEL 20
SESSION 1
ROOM: 0.13

1 | HOW A SCIENCE OF ETHICS CAN HELP A POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE

Elena Popa | University of Seville

A central topic in work on science and values concerns the legitimacy of the influence of non-epistemic factors in scientific decisions and their implications on policy-making. Recent work has been looking more closely at who should have a say in such decisions. More specifically, in situations involving uncertainty, a scientific decision cannot be made on the basis of empirical evidence alone (Douglas 2000). One may question the legitimacy of leaving the relevant non-epistemic judgments involved up to the scientists given that their expertise does not expand to the relevant ethical and political spheres. Efforts to democratize science call for such value-related decisions to be made by the public within a deliberative setting (Schroeder 2019), raising further questions about political legitimacy (cf. Koskinen). Things are further complicated by the fact that disclosing the influence of values in science, whether through decisions by scientists or someone else, can affect public trust. This is because the public often has an image of science as not being influenced by non-epistemic considerations (John 2018 and Wilholt 2023). This raises the important question of whether more openness about these decisions (as in Elliott 2017) would actually lead to the public distrusting science. Current evidence is insufficient to evaluate when this openness will have the effect of eroding trust (cf. Hicks & Lobato 2022 and Elliott et al. 2017).

This paper will investigate how a science of ethics or politics, broadly understood as the empirical study of how non-epistemic values play out in particular social contexts and dynamics, could help shed more light on the issue of bringing together perspectives from scientists and the public, which is central for approaching the issues above. One use would be to specify contexts in which disclosing the commitments to non-epistemic values may facilitate or hinder trust in science. This requires looking at a plurality of groups and interests and the relations between them. Secondly, group dynamics and deliberation processes are important for any call for public participation. Analysing how these play out and what pitfalls are present in particular contexts can help sketch out ways in which to frame public deliberation so as to avoid issues such as biases or hijacking. Third, cultural differences are particularly important for deliberating problems affecting specific populations and even more so for issues with global scope (e.g., climate change and public health emergencies such as pandemics, cf. Winsberg 2024). Empirical input can help further point out ways of choosing in accordance to context or avoiding biases towards preexisting power imbalances. More broadly put, an empirical approach to ethics or political philosophy can help move beyond a unified notion of a 'public' towards a more specific understanding of a plurality of individuals, interests, and groups involved, and explore their relevance in answering philosophical questions about democratic legitimacy of science-based policy making. This can work together with deliberative solutions and public engagement efforts.

2 | WHY DOES DISINFORMATION POSE PROBLEMS FOR MORAL RESPONSIBILITY?

Eduardo Quirino | University of Vechta

I present an argument for the claim that disinformation can undermine moral responsibility for harm caused based on it. The conclusion is not exactly new (e.g. Levy 2021), but I advance a new argument for this effect.

I define disinformation as “the systematic undermining of the objectivity of evidence” regarding a domain. In this definition, and contrary to much of the contemporary literature (e.g. O’Connor & Weatherall (2019)), disinformation is not a worst case of misinformation (mass spread of falsehoods), they are different phenomena. My definition is defended with three arguments: first, it is capable of capturing interesting similarities between major sources of disinformation: totalitarian governments, cults, and social media/conspiracy theories. Second, it offers a sharp divide between saying falsehoods (misinformation) and working to limit truth-finding capacity (disinformation), helping us combat what is especially problematic with fewer risks to freedom of speech. Finally, it offers a straightforward glimpse into why disinformation is resistant to correction, dangerous to society, and associated with extremism.

This definition leads to the aforementioned conclusion as follows. Assume a case in which a person, S, is morally well-grounded about whether they should (A) but S is misinformed, such that they think that A-ing would cause terrible consequences. If S could have been better informed, then we can expect that S should be better informed, and S’s lack of adequate information is culpable. Hence, if S still doesn’t A, S may be blameworthy because they should have known better, and they could have known better. Usually, to claim that S could know better we argue from a combination of factors attesting the normalcy of S’s cognitive capacities, and the available evidence (E) being sufficient for S to avoid misinformation.

Not with disinformation, though. Assuming that S is disinformed, the very appreciation of what is evidence is disputed, thus when reflecting on whether or not to A, S is at the same time having to adjudicate whether E is actual evidence. Because of that, the mere availability of evidence is not sufficient to claim that S could have known better. And if Should Have Known implies Could Have Known, when S couldn’t have known better, they weren’t obliged to. Hence, disinformation— not misinformation— affects moral responsibility ascriptions.

To support the above argument we need the notion of doxastic-affiliative beliefs (DABs). DABs are those beliefs that, at the same time, represent a way the world is and signal/constitute group-belongingness. Believing that Jesus is Christ is a DAB for Christians. To some extent, what an agent takes to be evidence for a proposition depends on previous beliefs; and, because group-belongingness is a natural, intrinsic part of human life, DABs are strong early influences over what one believes before investigation. DABs are reversible, but when group-belongingness are tighter (like stressful situations) they become proportionally irreversible (e.g. Arielly 2023). Because DABs are group-dependent, if they make evidence accessible, then evidence accessibility becomes group-dependent, undermining epistemically neutral grounds.

3 | TURNING SOCIAL DARWINISM ON ITS HEAD: EMPOWERING THE POOR AS SOCIAL EVOLUTIONARY AGENTS

Otto Lehto | New York University

Ever since Richard Hofstadter's (1944) popularization of the term, "Social Darwinism" has been associated with various, often mutually contradictory, types of political and moral philosophy, including free market libertarianism (e.g. Herbert Spencer) and state-led eugenic policy (e.g. Francis Galton). Recent scholars have started to criticize the whole concept as meaningless, counterproductive, or unscientific. (Bannister 1989; Degler 1991; Hodgson 2004; Wilson 2019) To the extent that the concept captures anything coherent at all, it refers to a diverse family of socio-political applications of Darwinian or Lamarckian evolutionary theory. These have been usually associated with a strong moral condemnation of all governmental "welfare" for the poor, the infirm, and the unfit (including social insurance) on the basis of purported laws of socioeconomic fitness. As a result, the political appeal to "Darwinian" principles in political economy has been associated with opposition to state guaranteed safety nets, if not downright cruelty towards the poor and those who are deemed "unfit." However, a dissenting lineage of evolutionary thinkers from T.H. Huxley and Peter Kropotkin to contemporaries like Peter Singer, Geoffrey Hodgson, and David Sloan Wilson have questioned the inevitability of the link between appeal to evolutionary principles and opposition to questions of distributive justice. I will proceed on these lines to argue that a contemporary evolutionary framework, infused with the latest insights of multi-level selection theory, evolutionary psychology, and gene-culture co-evolutionary theory, allows for a more positive role for the government as a guardian and facilitator of evolution that is plausibly compatible with certain "welfare state" policies such as Universal Basic Income (UBI) and universal healthcare. The resulting framework combines a strong commitment to distributive justice with a liberal commitment to individual freedom, since both are needed to facilitate several vital evolutionary processes in the social sphere (including markets, science, and civil society). Thus, this paper challenges the received wisdom according to which an appeal to (Darwinian/Lamarckian) "fitness" necessarily leads to "anti-poor" politics. On the contrary, it will be argued that evolutionary fitness considerations support a strong social safety net that grants poor and disadvantaged people improved access to various "social epistemic" learning mechanisms (such as science, technology, markets, and civil society) that enable poor people, together with the broader society, to discover creative solutions to their problems.

PANEL 20
SESSION 2
ROOM: 0.13

4 | THE CRUX OF CULTURAL EVOLUTIONARY POLICY

João Pinheiro | University of Lisbon

Cultural evolutionary policy (henceforth CEP) promises to fill in the gaps of more classical human, social, and behavioural science contributions to policy-making, explaining past successes and failures of these approaches [Muthukrishna & Henrich 2019]. It recommends social institutional design solutions to problems that lie deep within human normative psychological development. Contrary to less invasive or more indirect policy advice (e.g., nudging), CEP straightforwardly targets our normative dispositions, albeit effective only in the long haul, and most noticeably intergenerationally (e.g., Henrich's [2011] advisory role to the Supreme Court of British Colombia on the issue of polygamy) [Henrich et al. 2012]. Schimmelpfennig & Muthukrishna [2023] have done a fine job at identifying some of the main challenges for CEP. However, they have left unaddressed that which is effectively its crux. In this article, I offer a critical analysis of CEP by focusing on recent advice on the matter of cousin marriage.

According to what in cultural evolutionary theory has been called the kinship hypothesis [Schulz et al. 2019], higher rates of cousin marriage are causes of increased levels of nepotism and corruption (inter alia), and lower rates are drivers of the development of so-called WEIRD psychology [sensu Henrich et al. 2010]. The reason for this is that when our dependence on kinship relations increases there is an accompanying incentive to privilege and weigh kinship more heavily in the utility calculus; lower kinship intensity, in turn, facilitates lesser parochial normative dispositions [Henrich 2020].

The kinship hypothesis has now been incorporated into the UN Development Report [Henrich 2023], and has been invoked in arguments in favour of banning cousin marriage [Nash 2024]. Nash's [2024] argumentation is aware that although cousin marriage is typically seen as a matter of individual (private) choice [Shaw & Raz 2014], this has the long-term consequence of illiberal development, which would be antithetical to liberal values and, as such, amounts to an irrational strategy from a liberal perspective [Thoma 2018]. The reverse rationale should similarly inform those illiberal societies that have banned cousin marriage (e.g., China, in 1980). In other words, if they are to remain coherent in their preferences over time, the kinship hypothesis indicates that they have a relative interest in promoting some degree of cousin marriage.

The problem with all of this lies in the following: if the motive for privileging a liberal/WEIRD perspective over an illiberal/non-WEIRD one (or the other way around) is that we developed our normative psychology in an environment marked by the cultural evolution of specific institutions, then there is no reason to assume our normative perspective to be preferable to others regardless of those institutions. This incommensurability of perspectives is adjuvated by their origins in biologically developed features of our normative psychology. Unless CEP finds a culturally-neutral standard for normative advising, the claim that X institutions should be taken on board may be undermined by the fact that we may only believe so owed to having developed with them. Without it, we must abandon an optimising stance [sensu Gaus 2016].

5 | JUDGING MORAL PROGRESS: AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

Hugo Viciano | University of Seville

Can moral progress ever be affirmed? The concept of progress is widely contested in ethics and political philosophy, in part because its acceptance often carries implicit empirical assumptions (Sauer, 2023). Some argue that recognizing moral progress is a crucial step toward replicating it and further addressing social issues (Pinker, 2011). Others, however, view such affirmations with skepticism — seeing them as ideologically charged, naive, complacent, or even as an alibi for the worst forms of injustice (Gray, 2015; Davis, 1984).

Empirical research suggests that moral progress is perceived differently from other forms of progress. Pözlér, Zijlstra, and Dijkstra (2024) found that individuals in contemporary Western post-industrial societies tend to attribute less objectivity to moral improvement, moral knowledge, and moral error than to their scientific counterparts. Additionally, Lewry, Asifriyaz, and Lombrozo demonstrated that American participants who viewed moral progress as contingent on “human action” (rather than on an unspecified general mechanism) were more likely to advocate for social interventions and more willing to donate money to correct moral setbacks. Meanwhile, Hur and Ruttan found that when individuals perceive progress on a given social issue as continuous and linear, they judge it to be less urgent and less in need of immediate action.

Despite the philosophical significance of moral progress, little empirical research has examined how individuals form judgments about it—or how they perceive others who affirm its existence. In this talk, I will present new findings that explore the relationship between judgments of moral progress in specific social domains and the social reception of such judgments. The results provide insights into why affirmations of moral progress often provoke skepticism and how perceptions of social change shape ethical discourse. By empirically investigating how people judge and respond to claims of moral progress, this research contributes to the intersection of moral psychology and political philosophy.

6 | THE SCOPE RESTRICTION IN BICCHIERI’S THEORY OF SOCIAL NORMS

Cuizhu Dawn Wang | Jagiellonian University

The application of conditionality in Cristina Bicchieri’s (2006, 2017) analysis of norms relies on a distinction between personal and social beliefs. Bicchieri’s theory of social norms developed on the basis of this distinction, partitions moral from social norms. According to Bicchieri, the social feature of norms requires that they be conditional on actions and beliefs of other agents, whereas the conditions for following moral norms are based on preferences individuals hold unconditionally – therefore, moral norms aren’t social norms.

This dichotomy between social and moral norms misaligns with empirical cases modelled by Kuran (1995). Kuran analyses situations by which agents persistently follow a prevailing norm that they privately dislike and would be better off if everyone dropped. However, as long as this doesn’t happen, they are better off following the norm. As modelled by Kuran, most of these social phenomena involve norms which are regarded as moral in the society. His formal model demonstrates that agents’ public preferences result from trade-offs among three types of utility: intrinsic, reputational, and expressive. Kuran ap-

plies this model to three culturally and geographically distinct cases and illustrates that norm-compliant behaviour is not determined by the type of belief (as Bicchieri suggests) but rather by variations in agents' utility functions. Nevertheless, behaviour remains conditional on expectations about others.

The insistence on a rigid distinction between these two categories renders Bicchieri's model inapplicable to the empirical cases analysed by Kuran. Furthermore, this distinction diminishes the behavioural relevance of moral norms. Interpreting moral norms as unconditional suggests they lack practical importance, a conclusion that contradicts the very types of norms Bicchieri's empirical projects on norm modelling aim to capture.

This paper argues that the foundational distinction between personal and social beliefs should be reconsidered. Rather than viewing moral norms as fundamentally unconditional, we propose that they can be understood as a subset of social norms that are also conditional on social expectations. By integrating insights from the Dennettian Intentional Stance, this study reinterprets mentalistic concepts such as beliefs and preferences, presenting them as dynamic coordination devices in social interactions. Furthermore, the concept of reference networks within Bicchieri's model is reexamined to show how it can accommodate moral norms under a conditional framework.

In addressing both theoretical assumptions and empirical challenges, this work aims to provide a more nuanced understanding of norm compliance - bridging the gap between normative theory and observed social behaviour.

PANEL 21 — DEVELOPING RELATIONAL EQUALITARIANISM

Convenors: Devon Cass (Nova University of Lisbon) and Christian Schemmel (University of Manchester)

Relational egalitarianism seeks to characterize the nature in which social relations should be equal rather than hierarchical, and to determine the implications of this ideal for ongoing policy debates. Despite considerable attention in recent decades, there is still much work that remains to be done on these issues. The papers in the panel will explore the nature of relational equality in connection with a range of social phenomena such as everyday interaction (McTernan), social class (Schemmel), political economy (Schuppert), and legal norms (Cass). In addition, the panel will examine the implications of relational equality for health policy (Fourie) and discrimination (Amighetti).

PANEL 21
SESSION 1
ROOM: 0.17

1 | PERSONS OR PERSONAS?: ON RELATIONAL EQUALITY IN EVERYDAY INTERACTION

Emily McTernan | University College London

Relational egalitarians hold that we should treat and regard each other as equals. But what does that require of us in everyday interactions? The usual answer is that there are abstractly defined relations to avoid, of oppression, domination, and marginalisation. Sometimes, relational egalitarians gesture, too, to some concrete gestures like handshakes or looking each other in the eye. Yet I argue that everyday interactions merit closer attention than this. Small details of our interactions, from manners to microaggressions, are rich with information about, and enactments of, our social standing: whether we belong, or are outsiders; and whether or not we are regarded as another's equal.

In this paper, I focus on a subset of these interactional moments that present a puzzle in conceptualising what it is to be treated and regarded as an equal. The subset includes unequal use of people's titles, a lack of respect for someone's epistemic authority, and what Ella Whiteley has recently described as relative attentional surplus, where we pay too much attention to the wrong feature of someone. These are apparent – and resented – inequalities in regard, and they reflect background social inequalities. Yet, I argue that in such cases people aren't asking to be treated and regarded, strictly speaking, as social equals. How then should we understand such often protested and unequally patterned inequalities in interaction? After presenting the puzzle, I first argue that such cases are best understood as a demand for recognition respect, but not for persons, as Stephen Darwall proposes, but for personas: for the ways in which a person is presenting themselves in this setting. I then examine how social and relational egalitarians should respond to such demands for persona-specific recognition respect.

2 | RELATIONAL EQUALITY AND SOCIAL CLASS

Christian Schemmel | University of Manchester

Current theories of relational equality face a number of problems that a sustained focus on social class inequality can help solve. First, much of the relational egalitarian literature treats slavery and caste societies as the paradigms of objectionable hierarchies, of domination and esteem. Yet slavery and caste hierarchies seem “pre-modern”: our contemporary societies tend to present us with many forms of social inequality that are not formalised, more nuanced, and less rigid. These relational egalitarian views seem committed to explaining the wrongness of such less rigid and non-formalised inequalities by their still being “a little bit” like slavery or caste hierarchy. Is that true? Even if it is true, is it illuminating?

Second, most relational egalitarian accounts exhibit a drive towards political equality as the most important locus of equality – certainly, if we include (neo-)republican views within relational egalitarianism. This is internally well motivated: political philosophy conceives of political power as the supreme form of power. Yet, in mass societies with a highly differentiated division of labour, political participation and decision-making are, for most people, not central to their social existence. Even if, within such societies, we could have real equality of political power, why would having an equal but tiny share of such power be the main concern for living as social equals?

Third, relational egalitarian views are not able to satisfactorily distinguish, in non-obvious cases, between individuals failing to treat or consider others as equals in personal interactions and relationships, and cases of social inequality as a societal problem. Distinguishing clearly between these is essential for delineating social equality as a distinct social and political ideal and explaining why it matters (much).

The paper focuses on how (re-)connecting theories of relational equality to sociological accounts of class, in particular Bourdieusian accounts, can address these problems. Class inequality is one of the main “modern”, non-formalised forms of social inequality, yet has not been given sufficiently sustained theoretical attention in current egalitarian theorising, outside neo-Marxist approaches (1). Explaining the connection between political and underlying social inequality is a key issue for all approaches to social class, yet some of the latter also offer richer, well-evidenced pictures of what it means to live as social unequals which normative theorising can draw on (2). Bourdieusian approaches are particularly well-placed to explain what goes wrong in typical social relations and interactions under conditions of class inequality, through an account of different class habitus and their workings. The central diagnostic hypothesis of the paper is that, under conditions of class inequality, typical habitus-mediated interactions – including habitus-induced lack of interaction and relations – between members of different classes pose specific obstacles for equal autonomy for all parties, and the nature of these obstacles can be explained best through a relational conception of autonomy. This (3) distinguishes social inequality as a problem for political theory from imperfect personal interactions or relations even in cases where the inequality is not formalised and/or rigid, and explains why it matters (much).

3 | SOME THOUGHTS ON THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF A RELATIONALLY JUST SOCIETY

Fabian Schuppert | University of Potsdam

Champions of social-relational egalitarianism have done a lot of work on the distinct implications of the relational ideal of equality for the world of informal social norms, epistemic practices, and standards of appropriate behaviour within interpersonal relationships. While a lot of important work remains to be done in these fields, there also are areas of society on which social-relational egalitarians have said surprisingly little. One of these areas is the political economy of a relationally just society. This, of course, could be down to the fact that social-relational equality has nothing distinctive to say about matters of political economy.

As I will argue in this paper, nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, because of its distinct focus on relationships of equality, social-relational egalitarianism does

have an awful lot to say about both, the basic economic institutions of a relationally just society and the particular normative regime and ideals that structure social relationships in the spheres of production, trade, and consumption.

The paper is comprised of two parts. Part one, draws on the debate over ownership of the means of production within a just society. Rejecting the overly simplistic binary of either inequality-inducing private ownership or socialist collective ownership, I will outline how a mixed ownership economy might best realise the basic value commitments mainstream social-relational egalitarians seem to hold. However, such a mixed ownership regime requires a range of institutional guardrails and a tax system that is designed to effectively curb social inequality.

In part two, I will take my bearings from recent work on the norms that govern competitive capitalist market societies and show why certain markets and certain norms are incompatible with the ideal of social-relational equality. Social-relational egalitarianism ultimately provides a powerful counter-story to the hegemonic values of neoliberalism that shape contemporary European societies.

PANEL 21
SESSION 2
ROOM: 0.17

4 | REALIZING SOCIAL EQUALITY: THE ROLE OF LAW

Devon Cass | Nova University of Lisbon

What is social or ‘relational’ equality? Many theorists believe we can adequately characterize this ideal in terms of certain kinds of interpersonal dispositions and attitudes. Others suggest we need to appeal to social norms. I raise some problems for these accounts and, in turn, defend the idea that suitable law and other institutions have a constitutive role in realizing relational equality. I do so by characterizing three functions: 1) ‘claim-empowerment’, 2) ‘esteem economy regulation’, and 3) ‘public specificity’.

5 | WHAT’S THE PROBLEM WITH HEALTH INEQUALITIES? A FRAMEWORK OF RELATIONAL EQUALITY FOR HEALTH RESEARCH, PRACTICE, AND POLICY

Carina Fourie | University of Washington

In this paper I identify three reasons for using a framework of relational or social equality to conceive of the injustice of health inequities. Frequently defined as unjust health inequalities, health inequities have been of central ethical concern in the fields of public health, health sciences research and health policymaking. Political philosophers have argued that the theories of justice that should underlie conceptions of health inequities are often lacking. Even when reference is made to a theory of justice e.g. to equality of opportunity, detail and justification are often inadequate or the view is held inconsistently.

An interdisciplinary, collaborative task of political philosophy is therefore to help develop understandings of health equity and health justice by specifying the theories of justice that should underlie them. Thus far, most philosophers approach health justice with a distributive framework, that is, they focus on the just distribution of social goods related to health. While the distribution of the social bases of health is indeed important, a distributive framework is not the only way to conceive of injustice. We could also think of injustice through a framework of relational equality.

According to theories of relational equality, distributive inequalities can be problematic not because the distribution per se is unjust but because the inequalities stem from or lead to relational inequalities, or a combination of these. Relational inequalities occur when people are not treated as equals, rather than foremost because they don’t have equal distributions. These inequalities are often constituted by hierarchies of domination and superiority such as those associated with white supremacy and patriarchy.

Only a few attempts have been made to explore how and why relational equality applies to health. In this paper I will contribute to that literature by identifying three reasons to think that relational equality should be understood as foundational for issues of justice

and health. The reasons I identify are that a framework of relational equality provides a convincing theoretical basis for understanding the “fundamental drivers” of the social determinants of health, it helps to avoid the problematic centralization of health outcomes and inequalities in the literature on injustice and health, and it provides a standard with which to judge distributive health outcomes or distributions of the social determinants of health. I do not provide a comprehensive account of the reasons why such a framework would be beneficial, however, I contribute to the under-developed literature on relational equality and health justice by identifying reasons that have not yet been explored.

6 | DISCRIMINATION BY ASSOCIATION

Sara Amighetti | University of Zürich

Discrimination by association occurs when an individual is treated less favorably not because of their own protected characteristics, but due to their relationship with someone who possesses them. While legal systems increasingly recognize associative discrimination—as seen in *Coleman v. Attridge Law* and its influence on frameworks like the UK Equality Act (2010)—philosophical accounts of discrimination have largely overlooked it. This paper argues that discrimination by association is not merely an extension of standard discrimination but constitutes a distinct and theoretically significant form of injustice.

To develop this claim, the paper first examines how associative discrimination fits within existing accounts of wrongful discrimination, addressing arguments that it is either redundant or collapses into indirect discrimination. It then argues that associative discrimination is best understood through a relational egalitarian lens. Relational egalitarians hold that justice is not just about distributing goods fairly but about structuring social relationships so that no one is relegated to an inferior status. Discrimination by association exemplifies this concern because it enforces social boundaries that penalize individuals for the relationships they form, reinforcing social exclusion and hierarchy. By articulating a relational egalitarian account of associative discrimination, the paper clarifies its normative distinctiveness and sheds light on why addressing it is crucial to dismantling broader structures of inequality.

PANEL 22 — CLIMATE POLICY AND JUSTICE

Convenors: Pierre André and Fausto Corvino (UCLouvain)

To avoid the immense risks that climate change poses to human and non-humans, global greenhouse gas emissions must be brought to net zero as soon as possible and adaptation and compensation policies must also be put in place. We have a diverse portfolio of climate policies at our disposal, including carbon pricing, public investment, regulation based on standards and norms, carbon dioxide removal, and research and development into breakthrough green technologies. The choice of which climate policies to implement or prioritise raises many pressing questions of justice. Let us mention four of them. First: how should the costs and benefits of these climate policies be shared? Second: are the risks associated with some of these policies justifiable and why? Third: should climate policies be concerned with rectifying past injustices such as historical emissions and colonialism? Fourth: should the expectations of those who will be made worse off as a result of climate policies be considered as legitimate and be taken into account?

This panel aims to invite climate philosophers to think broadly about these normative questions, focusing on the following climate policies:

- Carbon pricing
- Carbon dioxide removal
- Loss and damage compensation
- Adaptation policies
- Standards and norms
- Solar geoengineering
- Investment in technology innovation
- International climate policy

PANEL 22
SESSION 1
ROOM: 0.17

1 | CLIMATE DISRUPTION, LEGITIMATE EXPECTATIONS,
AND THE VALUE OF STABILITY

Jeroen Hopster | Utrecht University

Climate impacts as well as the implications of sustainability policies are commonly framed as being ‘disruptive’, often with negative connotations. However, it is not straightforward how the phenomenon of ‘climate disruption’ should be understood, whether disruption should generally be regarded as harmful, and under what conditions it is wrongful. In fact, in some discourses ‘disruption’ is hailed as an aspiration (e.g. ‘disruptive innovation’), and this also holds for some parts of climate discourse (e.g. disruptive climate action; positive tipping points). Against this background, the aim of this paper is to clarify the concept of climate disruption and its normative significance, in relation to transitional justice, legitimate expectations, and the value of stability.

I zoom in on three aspects of climate disruption. First, disruptions involve both a subject and an object – a disrupting agent (disruptor) and a disrupted agent (disruptee) (Hopster 2021). In discussions on ‘climate disruption’ these roles are taken up by multiple stakeholders, and their respective role and associated responsibilities may shift over time. For instance, highly emitting industries are disruptors of the climate system, but become objects of disruption once stringent mitigation policies are in place. Absent such policies, highly emitting industries can continue business as usual, but this will inevitably yield disruption elsewhere. Accordingly, a normative analysis of climate disruption requires a holistic perspective, sensitive to the different types of agency at play and their shifting relations and duties.

Second, disruptions have both a process- and an outcome dimension, which involve somewhat distinct normative concerns. Outcome-related concerns have to do with the eventual consequences of the disruption, such as its impact on human wellbeing, potential rights violation, as well as risks and unforeseen ripple effects. Process-related concerns pertain to the uncertainty experienced in the disruptive moment itself, and the loss of agency, social coordination, and normative orientation this may involve. I argue that the frustration of legitimate expectations, and resultant impairments of autonomous agency, are an example of the latter category. There is pro tanto reason to protect these expectations, precisely to assuage the autonomy-undermining implications of disruptive processes (Meyer & Truccone 2022).

Third, and relatedly, I point out that a focus on disruption directs normative theorizing to questions about the value of stability in the good life, and the role of institutions in preserving stability, versus facilitating transition. A fair degree of stability is valuable both in collective and individual affairs. Collectively, social stability constitutes a precondition for functional social organisation. Social stability also helps us to orient ourselves as individuals, to make life-plans, and to follow up on our central commitments – to lead autonomous lives. Yet, a higher degree stability is not always for the better: stability may also serve to perpetuate an undesirable status quo and to obstruct a desire for novelty

and change. I bring these considerations to bear on questions of climate transition and adaptation policy, and argue that there is some normative justification for accepting different levels of risk imposition in private and public realms of society.

2 | AN EXTENDED CAPABILITIES APPROACH TO NATURE-BASED CARBON DIOXIDE REMOVAL

Elisa Paiusco | University of Twente

In climate ethics, many have worried about the potential injustices arising from large-scale implementation of Carbon Dioxide Removal (CDR). To date, most of this discussion has focused on one particular form of CDR, the bioenergy-based BECCS technique. However, the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report estimates that 'nature-based' forms of CDR such as afforestation and reforestation, soil carbon sequestration, and agroforestry have significant removal potentials, as well as potential co-benefits for local communities and biodiversity (Babiker et al., 2022). Nature-based CDR might be more cost-effective and less technologically speculative than 'engineered' forms such as BECCS (Osaka et al., 2021). Nonetheless, there are emerging concerns that some 'nature-based' solutions might actually harm biodiversity and nonhuman nature, even if they helped to achieve climate goals. For instance, a narrow focus on carbon in afforestation and reforestation projects might prioritise fast-growing monocultures over native vegetation, leading to biodiversity and habitat loss. Given the political and social implications of framing CDR as 'natural' (Pidgeon and Roberts, 2018), the very label might be misleading.

In cases where carbon goals and other sustainable development priorities diverge, it is important to clarify what climate justice requires. This becomes more difficult if climate justice ought to be attuned to the moral interests of non-humans, as has recently been argued (Celermajer et al., 2022; Cripps, 2022; McKinnon, 2022). Yet because anthropocentric theorising has dominated previous work on climate justice (McShane 2016), it remains unclear how non-anthropocentric interests ought to affect debates about CDR.

This presentation examines the implications of nature-based forms (NBs) of CDR from the perspective of climate justice by drawing upon the capability approach. Specifically, the so-called extended capabilities approach (ECA) offers the opportunity to expand the ethical debate surrounding CDR as well as broaden the demands of climate justice to include non-human entities (Nussbaum, 2023; Schlosberg, 2012). First, the presentation unpacks NBs for carbon removal and addresses some of the potential problems with the existing terminology. Second, it discusses the main theories within the ECA and maps differences and similarities across them, pointing out the different policy implications of each account. Third, it investigates whether one of the views is preferable according to an "overlapping consensus" perspective. Fourth, after identifying some significant shortcomings in the approaches, the presentation suggests Amartya Sen's procedural approach, arguing for locally and nationally determined projects. Ultimately, while the Senian framework more easily allows for the inclusion of pluralistic perspectives, it still faces significant obstacles that require further analysis. By investigating different theories within the ECA and how they can include non-humans in policymaking, this presentation offers a new contribution to both CDR ethics as well as broader climate justice.

3 | A SCANLONIAN ACCOUNT OF “GEOENGINEERING AMBIVALENCE”

Clare Heyward | The Arctic University of Norway

There is an observable “ambivalence” about the idea of using “geoengineering” technologies as a response to anthropogenic climate change. Calls for research into geoengineering technologies are often accompanied by expressions of regret or unease that such a course of action is recommended. This is puzzling if we assume that advocates of research must hold that the eventual use of the technology can be permissible. Drawing upon work by Stephen Gardiner (2011) and Toby Svoboda (2016), I argue that this ambivalence can be accounted for in terms of Thomas Scanlon’s distinction between moral permissibility and moral significance. Doing so has the advantages of showing exactly why “agent regret” is appropriate as Svoboda and Gardiner indicate, and makes their accounts, applicable to a wider range of situations and geoengineering technologies than both Svoboda and Gardiner discuss. It might also help explain why some kinds of geoengineering technologies are taken to be more controversial than others.

PANEL 22
SESSION 2
ROOM: 0.17

4 | DEBATING THE CLIMATE CORPORATE TAX

Pierre André | UCLouvain

Although the creation a new fund dedicated to climatic loss and damage has been agreed at COP 27 in 2022, it remains unclear how it will be financed. Given the current insufficiency of climate finance, new policy instruments may have to be found. Recently, economist Esther Duflo has proposed the introduction of a global corporate climate tax in order to fund direct transfers to the victims of extreme weather events like heat waves, floods and droughts. It has been presented as a way to discharge the climatic “moral debt” that rich people in the global North have towards vulnerable people in the global South and as a “progressive” and thus “just” tax. In this paper, I want to assess the fairness of such an instrument. This raises both normative and empirical questions. On the normative side, there may be a tension between a corrective approach to corporate responsibility and a distributive approach to interpersonal justice. On the factual side, the fairness of a climate corporate tax may also depend on its economic incidence and on the carbon intensity of corporate profits.

5 | SHOULD CLIMATE ETHICISTS BE INTEGRATIONISTS OR ISOLATIONISTS IN DOING PUBLIC PHILOSOPHY?

Fausto Corvino | UCLouvain

Imagine that you are an ethicist working on climate justice and that you are invited to intervene in the public debate about the COP and/or to advise the authorities involved in international climate policy. You would probably want to defend a more or less nuanced version of the “basic view” of climate justice (BWCJ): Developed countries should pay most of the costs of mitigation, adaptation and loss-and-damage compensation incurred by low-income countries.

An important question, however, is what arguments should be used to defend the BWCJ. “Isolationist” philosophers justify the BWCJ based on normative principles concerning the fair use of the sustainable emissions budget (e.g. more or less history-sensitive emissions egalitarianism) and/or the harms and benefits caused by these emissions. “Integrationist” philosophers, in turn, argue that the BWCJ must be embedded in a more general discourse on global justice. Isolationists typically respond that the integrationist approach is epistemically too demanding, or that it requires a global institutional arrangement that does not yet exist. Integrationists, in turn, may try to show that their view can accommodate these problems, or that the isolationist view has no clear advantages in this regard.

In this talk, I will defend isolationism as the best way for climate ethicists to do public philosophy. More specifically, I will argue that the integrationist approach to climate justice suffers from three of the problems that Jonathan Wolff (2019, 2020) has identified

with the applied approach to ethics and public policy (see also Poama 2019) – i.e. the approach that derives policy recommendations from a particular foundational theory. First, the problem of “dogmatism”. Climate integrationism offers no solution to how to deal with moral disagreement between people who hold different views about the scope of socio-economic justice: it simply takes a globalist position as true and derives policy implications from it. Second, the problem of the “implausibility of recommendations”. Integrationists hold that the affluent should pay, not necessarily in proportion to how much they have polluted. But many people, including policymakers, have the moral intuition that emitters should pay in proportion to how much they have emitted. This makes it rather unlikely that the integrationist view will have any influence on the policy-making process. Third, the problem of “partial implementation”. The integrationist project is a complex one. Policymakers should first abandon the idea that there are specific obligations of fair burden-sharing in climate change, and then accept that there are global obligations of socio-economic justice. If they stop just short of the second step, the consequences would be dramatic.

I therefore argue that climate ethicists should do public philosophy by mediating moral disagreements between people who hold opposing views about the scope of socio-economic justice, i.e., globalists vs. statist. One way to do this is to appeal to mid-level principles. One such principle is that of fair access to the atmospheric commons, for the simple reason that the atmosphere is beyond the jurisdiction of the state.

6 | CLIMATE POLICY, (NEO-)COLONIALISM AND JUSTICE

Fabian Schuppert | University of Potsdam

International climate politics is officially designed in the spirit of tackling a global problem and protecting all human beings. Unfortunately, when looking at the actual design of many international climate policies this spirit seems to exist in rhetoric only. There is a whole range of policies which definitely bestow uneven benefits and also come with an uneven distribution of costs.

Unsurprisingly, in a world fraught with massive power imbalances and asymmetries, the distribution of benefits and costs seems to disadvantage the privileged populations of the Global North. In fact, in several instances climate policies seem to either suffer from coloniality or introduce problematic neo-colonial structures.

In this paper, I will look at the how current climate policies (in part) perpetuate and/or reproduce structural injustices. In so doing, I will highlight the fact that much of the supposedly just transition to a net-zero emission world is actually unjust. One key issue that needs to be addressed, is the vary framing of many climate policies, which take the status quo in problematic ways to be somewhat morally neutral.

Ultimately, the argument will show that just climate transition most definitely is not possible at this point in time. However, in order to address some existing injustices and to make the transition less unjust, one needs to carefully shift one’s attention to the unjust burdens that will arise and ask the question of who should shoulder them.

PANEL 23 — RESILIENCE BEYOND NEOLIBERALISM? METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES AND POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

Convenor: Jan Bíba (Charles University)

The discourse of resilience has increasingly become one of the dominant concepts in social sciences and part and parcel of many policy initiatives in various areas, from defence to the environment. At the same time, however, it is a concept that has drawn sharp criticism for its alleged association with neoliberalism. While some view resilience as a “corporate-cum-academic-dream” (Neocleus, 2013) and hope it is a fleeting intellectual trend soon to disappear, others note the unusual “resilience of resilience.” (Walker and Cooper, 2011) Thus, whether we like it or not, resilience is probably here to stay.

Therefore, the papers in this panel explore the potential of resilience thinking beyond neoliberalism. They critically assess resilience as a methodological and political concept, questioning its capacity to reinforce neoliberal assumptions while examining its integration into critical and democratic theory. A central concern across all contributions is the tension between resilience as an adaptive mechanism and the need for normative critique and democratic agency, making the discussion highly relevant to our predicament.

The first paper, “Beyond Determinism: Resilience as a Methodological Challenge for Critical Theory,” examines the methodological implications of resilience for critical theory, mainly through the lens of Axel Honneth’s recognition theory. It argues that while the concept of immanent transcendence in critical theory already acknowledges the historical situatedness of knowledge, resilience thinking pushes this further by questioning the stability of normative ideals. This shift necessitates an adaptive yet critical approach that avoids deterministic progressivism and passive acceptance of systemic resilience. However, the paper also warns against the potential pitfalls of over-reliance on resilience, which may dilute critical theory’s emancipatory aspirations.

The second paper, “Democracy and Resilience: From Neoliberal Governance to Post-liberal Democracy?” extends the discussion by interrogating the relationship between resilience and democratic theory. Resilience thinking has frequently been associated with neoliberal governance, emphasising adaptability over structural transformation. However, the paper argues that resilience should not be simplistically equated with neoliberalism. Instead, it critically examines David Chandler’s concept of post-liberal democracy, which seeks to transcend traditional liberal-democratic structures by prioritising adaptability and self-organisation over representation and sovereignty. The paper contends that while Chandler’s framework moves beyond neoliberalism in certain respects, it ultimately retains its core premises by reducing democratic engagement to self-management rather than collective action. Thus, even in its critical form, resilience thinking risks constraining democratic agency by privileging adaptation over meaningful contestation and transformation.

The third paper, “The Meaning of Uncertainty in Elections in Times of Faltering Neoliberal Hegemony: A Democratic Resilience Dilemma,” explores resilience within the context of democratic elections. The paper critiques the prevailing conception of elections as mere procedural competition mechanisms, arguing that this view is deeply entrenched in neoliberal rationality. By introducing the concept of uncertainty, the author calls for a broader understanding of elections that accounts for their transformative potential rather than reducing them to instruments of systemic reproduction. This perspective aligns with the broader critique of resilience thinking’s tendency to prioritise stability over structural change.

PANEL 23
SESSION 1
ROOM: 0.15

1 | BEYOND DETERMINISM:
RESILIENCE AS A METHODOLOGICAL
CHALLENGE FOR CRITICAL THEORY

Ondřej Lánský | Czech Academy of Sciences

The paper examines the methodological challenges that the concept of resilience poses for Critical Theory, focusing on Axel Honneth's social theory. Critical social theory has traditionally sought to analyze and critique social inequalities to promote societal emancipation. A key methodological framework in this discussion is the concept of immanent transcendence, which understands social reality as historically and socially conditioned while simultaneously open to transformation through social critique (Strydom 2011, 87–106). Honneth's theory of recognition identifies social pathologies and discontent as sources of normative critique, emphasizing the role of shared experiences in shaping justice and social change (Fraser and Honneth 2003; Honneth 1995).

In recent decades, resilience has become a significant concept in the social sciences and political discourse (Bourbeau 2018; Walker and Cooper 2011). The idea of resilience stemming from socio-ecological systems challenges modernist ontologies, advocating an understanding of reality as emergent, uncertain, and complex (Chandler 2014; Grove 2018). This shift moves away from earlier notions of resilience as mere resistance to external shocks, instead emphasizing adaptability and the interactive dynamics of social and ecological systems (Folke 2016; Holling 1973).

The paper argues that its methodology must address the limitations of determinism and assumptions about the predictability of social change by integrating resilience thinking into critical theory. While the principle of immanent transcendence acknowledges the historical situatedness of knowledge, resilience thinking pushes this further by questioning the stability of normative ideals. This epistemological shift necessitates reconsidering how social critique functions, moving beyond deterministic assumptions about societal progress.

The paper suggests that resilience can serve as a methodological corrective for Critical Theory by enhancing its capacity to respond to poly-crisis challenges (Albert 2024), where interconnected crises demand adaptable analytical frameworks. However, it also warns against potential pitfalls, such as unintended consequences of social critique and the risk of over-reliance on resilience as a guiding principle. While resilience offers valuable insights into navigating uncertainty and complexity, an uncritical embrace of this concept may inadvertently obscure structural injustices or normalize precarious conditions instead of addressing their root causes. Furthermore, the emphasis on adaptability and flexibility (as dimensions of resilience) might depoliticize social struggles, shifting the focus from transformative action to mere survival within existing power structures. By acknowledging these challenges, Critical Theory can better adapt to contemporary social and political complexities while maintaining its commitment to emancipation and social

transformation. A more nuanced approach would involve integrating resilience thinking while remaining attentive to its limitations, ensuring that resilience is a tool for empowerment rather than a justification for systemic inertia. In this way, Critical Theory can refine its methodological framework, balancing resilience with a persistent critique of social inequalities and power dynamics, ultimately fostering a more just and equitable society.

2 | DEMOCRACY AND RESILIENCE: FROM NEOLIBERAL GOVERNANCE TO POST-LIBERAL DEMOCRACY?

Jan Bíba | Charles University

The paper explores the relationship between resilience thinking (Walker and Salt, 2006) and democratic theory, a subject that remains - despite the extension of the resilience concept into the social sciences and the establishment of a more empirically oriented democratic resilience scholarship - underexamined in both fields. (See, e.g. Merkel and Lührmann 2021; Volacu and Aligica 2023; Holloway and Manwaring 2022) While resilience thinking is usually understood as aligning in many ways with neoliberal governance (See, e.g. Walker and Cooper 2011, Joseph 2016), the paper following Schmidt (2015) suggests that it should not be equated with neoliberalism, particularly in its critical form. However, it also argues that resilience thinking constrains human agency due to its ontological foundations. To support the argument, the paper critically engages with David Chandler's (2014) concept of post-liberal democracy, which builds upon a critical understanding of resilience.

The paper situates resilience thinking within the broader intellectual landscape. It traces the origins of resilience from the study of ecological systems (Holling 1973, Folke et al. 2010) into the social sciences, emphasising the shift from stability-focused governance to adaptability as a core principle of resilience thinking. This shift has significant implications for democratic theory, particularly regarding its conceptualisation of human agency, governance, and the role of collective decision-making. The paper examines the epistemological and ontological commitments shared by resilience thinking and neoliberalism (Hayek 1952 and 1989), highlighting their common rejection of the modernist liberal framework of autonomous subjects. This rejection weakens the social dimension in democratic theory, reframing democracy as a mechanism for individual and communal self-adaptation rather than collective political action.

David Chandler's post-liberal democracy is the focal point for examining the implications of resilience thinking for democratic governance. Building on the discussion about the nature of the public between Walter Lippman (1925) and John Dewey (1927), Chandler's concept of post-liberal democracy criticizes the liberal-democratic emphasis on representation, autonomy and sovereignty, proposing a model in which democracy operates through everyday reflection and adaptation. While attempting to move beyond neoliberalism, Chandler's perspective ultimately sustains its core premises by reducing political engagement to self-management rather than structural transformation. The paper argues that this framework results in an impoverished notion of democracy that lacks the capacity for meaningful political contestation and transformation of social hierarchies.

To conclude, the paper reflects on the broader implications of resilience thinking for democratic theory. It asserts that while resilience cannot be reduced to neoliberalism, it fails to offer a compelling alternative for democratic renewal. By emphasising adaptation

over collective action, resilience thinking, even in its critical form, constrains the potential for democratic agency and social transformation. The paper, therefore, suggests that resilience thinking is less stimulating to democratic theory than its widespread use in social sciences might suggest.

3 | THE MEANING OF UNCERTAINTY IN ELECTIONS IN TIMES OF FALTERING NEOLIBERAL HEGEMONY: A DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE DILEMMA

Kristina Broučková | Charles University

For decades, neoliberal hegemony has not faced any serious rivalry (e.g., Mouffe 2018). While the 2008 economic crisis may have shaken the neoliberal idea, it is only now that neoliberalism appears to be experiencing profound upheavals. Some would even argue that we find ourselves in a state of “post-neoliberal capitalism” (Azmanova 2020). The alternative to neoliberal hegemony, however, still bears only elusive contours. Over the past few years, the notion of resilience has emerged across the scientific fields almost as a synonym for the desired response to unexpected upheavals and crises. The potential threat these crises – whether economic, climate, or health crisis – pose to societies sparked a debate over how democracies could withstand them. Nevertheless, what democratic resilience stands for remains unsettled in the debate (e.g., Holloway & Manwaring 2022). On the contrary, it is clearer what democratic resilience stands against, i.e., authorization, democratic erosion, decay, or backsliding. What these terms and concepts, however vaguely defined, share is that we can observe their embodiments in the form of political leaders who have recently come to power through democratic elections and put democracies on a dubious path. It shows that despite the decline in election-day fraud (Bermeo 2016), elections can still pave the way for authoritarian forces. This development calls for a more holistic approach to understanding elections. Yet, apart from a few exceptions where elections were placed at the core of the concept of democratic resilience (e.g., Volacu & Aligica 2022), the topic of elections does not receive a thorough critical inspection by the democratic resilience scholarship (DRS). The paper suggests that if the DRS, which has been accused of an alliance with neoliberal governance (e.g., Walker & Cooper 2011), seeks to contribute to defining the contours in the times of neoliberalism’s faltering hegemony in a vein that stands for resilient democracy, it may achieve that by conceiving understanding of elections that considers the meaning of uncertainty.

While elections have been ascribed various meanings throughout history, they seemed to achieve the ultimate democratic primacy after the proclaimed triumph of liberal democracy in the 1990s (Fukuyama 1992). “Free elections” became a goal in societies transitioning from authoritarian rule. Some scholars even equated recurrent elections with democracy (Przeworski 1999) and declared Schumpeter’s definite victory (Huntington 1993). This paper argues that the vocabulary surrounding elections and determining their understanding retains the neoliberal tenet that took over the world after the bipolar world order collapsed. Free elections are conceived as a fair competition that has its winners and losers. The hazard of this understanding is that it obscures our vision of what people are competing for and what prospects electoral victory offers for the winners and the losers. To compensate for this blind spot, this paper explores the impact of uncertainty (e.g., Beck 1992, 2006; Best 2008; Lefort 1977; Näsström 2021) and considers it as immanent to our understanding of elections.

PANEL 24 — BORDER CROSSING AND STRUGGLES INTERSECTIONS BEFORE UNIVERSALISM: MIGRATION, OTHERISATION AND MARGINALITY

Convenors: Letizia Konderak (University San-Raffaele Milano) and Anna Migliorini (University of Firenze)

One of the most precious pearls that the Enlightenment offered to Western tradition is universalism, the double movement of intensive and extensive universalization claiming political and legal equality and rejecting that anybody could be legitimately excluded (Balibar, 2010). Universalism overlaps with the faith in constant economic growth, Western institutions, and a philosophy of history headed to a blooming future. Nonetheless, its approach is all but universalist or objective in the sense of plural, inclusive, and exhaustive (Haraway, 1989), and neglects standpoints in general, and non-Eurocentric and de-colonialising standpoints in particular – starting from the fact that western wealth relies on internal and external exploitation. Still, that economic and class criteria are also hidden in political, legal, and theoretical universalism was already clear to Karl Marx (Marx, 1848).

Furthermore, since the universal human being does not exist, universalism already conceals a partial definition of what human beings are (Arendt, 1951), as well as a threshold under which one would not be human anymore – thereby becoming bashable (Agamben, 1995; Cavarero, 2009). Hence universalism conceals a double operation: the fixation of a standard/normal humanity – historically Western, male, bourgeois – and the removal of a diminished humanity – including non-Western, queer, differently abled, and female subjects. Such a universalism shows its ambivalence: measures for political inclusion but also injunctions to assimilation (Benhabib, 1998; Lindahl, 2008).

Based on the assumption that knowledge is always situated and embedded (Haraway, 1989 & 1991), this panel asks whether the “uncounted” (Rancière, 2004), all those who migrate in a wide sense, and still live at the intersections, are in a privileged position to objectify and assess the dominating theoretical-political-economic exclusionary apparatus. In an intersectional perspective, migrants, stateless, women, queer people, and the exploited workers unsettlingly dwell at the margins of western states, set of values, or wellbeing. Rights’ violation, economic exploitation, social ostracization: the only choice left is between assimilation or marginalization. This applies to geographical migration (Salgado, 2005), class non-reproduction (Jaquet, 2023), gender migration (Zurn, Pitts, Bettcher, Di Pietro, 2024), and feminist epistemological migration, as state boundaries are not the only border to cross. As many of these transiting subjects become often the internal “others”, their situated knowledges could offer precious vantage points to grasp the limits of the hegemonic cultural and power framework.

Against this background, this panel assesses manifold implications. Proposals could include patterns such as:

- Critique and/or optimistic views on universalism from theoretical, political, and legal perspectives.
- Do margins provide a privileged viewpoint on the Western economic, political, and societal organizations?
- Critiques and analysis of concepts such as moralization and politicization of the “other” (Lévinas, 1984; Rancière, 1997).
- Internal, external, gender migrations, including intersectional views: examples of feminist, class, and queer perspectives confronting universalism.
- Positionality and situatedness: does situation necessarily define positioning (Bedorf, 2024)? If not does the original position leave a trace as a conscious, unthought, or removed past?

PANEL 24
SESSION 1
ROOM: 0.17

1 | WHOSE UNIVERSAL RIGHTS?
PERSPECTIVES FROM THE MARGINS

Letizia Konderak | Università San Raffaele

More than seventy years after Arendt's book on Totalitarianism (1951) and her critique of human rights, her words are still poignant. The plights and number of displaced people never stopped increasing, and the derision of human rights peaked as they are currently used as a tool of the Reason of the State. Arendt identified the source of human rights aporias in the structure of the modern Declarations of Human Rights – which boils them down to the rights of the citizen, the member of a sovereign nation-state, as soon as the bare human defines itself as an unfindable entity, forsaken or persecuted.

Then should we still discuss human rights? This talk will affirm that universal rights could increase their grasp on reality when they determine themselves as the rights of specific entities – especially of the weakest, when they outline the conditions in which they deserve protection.

Arendt solved these perplexities by postulating a right to have rights, i.e., belonging to a political and legal community. Rancière, for his part, proposed that between the tautology equating human and citizens' rights and the vacuity of nobody's rights (Rancière, 2004) stands the political subjectivation – the dispute enacted by the excluded for contesting their marginality.

Nonetheless, concretizing humans as nation-state citizens – i.e., expelling non-citizens from humanity (Agamben, 1995) – shows a structural aporia within universalism. Universality shows its Western embeddedness, as the human being is the male, educated, independent, bourgeois man. Therefore, universality implies a double movement: the forced assimilation of the other, and the marginalization of everything exceeding the standard. If rights do not defend anyone and are even a tool to discipline, regiment, and victimize the other – relying on humanitarian aid (Benhabib, 2000; Rancière, 2004) – then maybe we should claim a “right not to have rights” (Agamben, 2011).

Against this framework, this contribution sketches a pathway towards a universalism that does not exclude particularity, while still valorising universalism. This claim could be a life's research path. However, the determination of the specific rights of the others (indigenous people, women, non-binary people, children, animals, workers) offers a crucial vantage point to politicize them. Recognizing specific rights to the “other” in concrete situations of weakness within a net of relations means criticizing the current political, social, and economic organization towards a different community. The cause of the other (Rancière, 1997) redeems the victim as it puts marginal figures at the centre of the political community (DeGooyer, Hunt, Maxwell, Moyne, 2018). As they often or intrinsically cannot claim their rights, these marginalities rely on others to state their voice.

Struggling for the others when they have no voice has a political significance as it points to a more just political community – one where the weakest are not charged with the burdens, violence, and injustices of the rest of the body politic. Against assimilation, marginality expresses difference and allows for a politicization of those who do not have or are prevented from speaking.

2 | MIGRANTS WITHOUT MIGRATION. FEMINIST EPISTEMOLOGIES FROM THE MARGINS

Caterina Diotto | Università degli Studi di Trieste

When speaking of migration, one generally assumes a separation, between a geographical-cultural place of departure and one of arrival; a temporal succession, between the definition of a border and the movement of people; a verticality, in power relations. But what happens when the lines of space and time do not follow this (supposed) linearity? What narratives arise from threshold places, those where, as Walter Benjamin wrote, cultures coexist in contradiction, bending the universalist narratives of power? Places where discourses, boundaries and hegemonic categories are the ones changing around people, transferring them culturally from one place to another, making people migrants without migration.

This is the case of the Chicane community between Mexico and Texas. Chicanos are the descendant of Indigenous people and Spanish colonisers, 'Mexican' until the border was redrawn in 1848, resulting in the annexation of 1.36 million km² and 100.000 people to the USA. Gloria Anzaldúa has made the perspective of this margin, the stratification of its discriminations and languages, the painful yet creative wound from which develop a different feminist epistemology – a new *mestiza*. As she writes, "A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition. The prohibited and forbidden are its inhabitants. Los *atravesados* live here: the squint-eyed, the perverse, the queer, the troublesome, the mongrel, the mulato, the half-breed, the half dead; in short, those who cross over, pass over, or go through the confines of the 'normal'."

Another case is the one of the Meridione, in Italy. South of the global South in the global North – as the "PIGS" (Portugal, Italy, Spain, Greece) are described by the hegemonic Western discourse – Meridione represents the crossing point between dynamics of colonialism, colonisation and self-colonialism; immigration, migration and internal migration; and of internal and external racism. It is a consequence, also, of the shifting of an imaginary yet political Western colour line that has seen Italians – and in particular southerners – slide in and out of 'whiteness' from the mid-19th century to the present day. In the last decade Italy has seen the blooming of a new anti-meridionalist, decolonial and feminist perspective. Among others, a Manifesto was published in 2024: 'Femminismo terrone. Per un'alleanza dai margini' (Claudia Fauzia and Valentina Armenta). Rooted in Antonio Gramsci's analysis of the questione meridionale (southern question) and his concept of subalternity, as well as in the intersectional approach, 'Femminismo terrone' aims to unravel the threads of cross-discriminations and to propose a new political epistemology. This paper aims to highlight such epistemological critiques and political inventions developed from the margin to contribute to a more complex view of the concept of migration.

3 | MIGRANTS AS ‘DISPENSABLE BODIES’ IN THE DIGITAL ERA

Emilia Marra | Università del Salento

Lack of legal recognition has always characterised the condition of migrants and asylum seekers. This paper addresses the challenges of the use of AI-based technologies in migration and asylum policies. As such, before current methods of legal recognition, or before their lack, migrants lose their juridical status – as natural or physical person – and are reduced to their biological bodies. Instead of really accessing the rights that universalism promised to them, and that substantiates the policies for migrants’ integration and reception, migrants without juridical personality, resemble more to mere life than to the human being of the Universalist tradition.

More specifically, the implementation at the borders of AI-based practices otherwise prohibited by the EU, such as the use of biometric parameters and non-consensual, non-time bound sensitive data storage adds a layer of complexity worthy to analyse. Furthermore, outsourcing immigration management through offshoring and bilateral agreements, such as UK-Rwanda and Italy-Albania, generates a geographic and legal extraterritoriality which reinforces isolation and digital extractivism. In this sense, migrants, their bodies, and their transit become an unprecedented laboratory of digital experimentation and sometimes of capitalisation. As such, the frame of a brand-new governmentality threshold is established.

The implementation of frontier AI devices explicitly addresses not only a fair treatment of third-country nationals and stateless persons, but it also aims to prevent irregular migration and unauthorised movements of third-country nationals. Due to the lack of documents, difference between legal and illegal migration is often set on a credibility-based analyse but, to speed up this decision-making process, handled by human operators, technologies based on machine learning are summoned and trained.

Notwithstanding the AI Act, the first legal framework on AI emitted in 2024 by European Union according to which the use of lie-detection technologies and biological parameters exposes to an unacceptable risk, migrants find themselves caged in the position of “disposable bodies” for technological prohibited experimentation. This paper, by focusing on this intersection between migration studies, AI and rights, points the finger at a naive approach to the use of new technologies – now compounded by the “intelligent” and “generative” elements – which are sometimes too hastily viewed as universal instruments of democratisation and equality. It also draws the attention on the counterproductive effect produced by such “universal” tools, where humans become equal in becoming equivalent containers for data analysis, losing sight of the fact that their border-crossing was an intention to leap toward a full enjoyment of universal rights implied in their humanity.

PANEL 24
SESSION 2
ROOM: 0.17

4 | UNIVERSALISM BEFORE (TRANS)CLASSES:
A DIALECTIC OF PERMEABILITY

Anna Migliorini | Università di Firenze

Current structural and multifaceted crises and problems such as social inequalities, environmental issues, and authoritarian drifts, while warning of catastrophes, also call materialist frameworks of interpretation back to the fore. This paper approaches the topic through the frameworks offered by Karl Marx's critique of the abstract – or partial – universalism of the bourgeoisie and the epistemic advantage of the subaltern classes, and Chantal Jaquet's ambivalent epistemic and moral surplus-ballast – a margin of knowledge too – of people migrating between classes. By interweaving these views via Walter Benjamin's karstic "tradition of the oppressed" and the so-called epistemology of the defeated, and by enacting intersectionality, it shows not only that class analysis is "still" useful, but also that it helps to understand certain structural phenomena that, despite appearances, are still more than relevant today.

Strong claims such as the overcoming of the class discourses and struggle, based on a so-called realism of capital, and the intrinsic authoritarianism and repressive intents of socialist theories need to be re-criticised. Such disqualifying positions towards materialist readings should not be recorded as merely scientific, objective, based on natural-historical laws, but as a hope for economic, capitalist and right-wing politics rather than an actual ineluctable pathway of infinite growth. On the other hand, and in contrast to rigid universalist frameworks that carry more than a potential risk of conformism and injustice, this paper aligns itself with positions that claim that knowledge is always situated. However, in the fundamental corrective that values plurality and diversity, lies also a risk of individuality and fragmentation, of a singularity of perspectives and solutions that, far from contributing to materialist readings and class actions, end up unintentionally undermining them. In this sense, phenomena such as hyper-individualism and neo-liberal feminism provide evidence of a qualitative threshold between situatedness, which still contributes to social sharing, and nuclear subjectivity, which deactivate the class, social, and identitarian dimension of a collective subject and its actions.

Within this framework, this paper draws on categories such as class division and class struggle, and moves its lens through a dialectic between internal and economic-social repositionings (i.e. self-identification and/vs social belonging), as well as through dimensions of different cultural-epistemological contexts (from one class to another). Since, for example, transclasses are subjects who do not reproduce the social trajectory they were supposed to and migrate from one class to another (Jaquet, 2023), such a class reading contributes to a better understanding of the dialectic of permeability – and not of overcoming – between classes and identities, reflecting existential, cultural, and epistemological complexity.

Focusing on the notion of the epistemic (dis)advantage of the subaltern classes and the concept of transclasses as a "new class consciousness", this paper presents an example of

a migrating subject, caught up in a non-linear, never-ending process, between individual and collective identification, subjectivation and emancipation, that cannot be reduced to any universal claim, nor to singular claims – unless depowered.

5 | ETHICS OF WORK, ETHICS OF SACRIFICE: UNVEILING CLASS AND GENDER EXPLOITATION WITH THE 'TRADITION OF THE OPPRESSED'

Anna Nutini | Università di Pisa – Università di Firenze

Walter Benjamin's historical materialism has been proven to be immune to the dogmatic and evolutionist distortions to which the work of Marx and Engels has been subjected. It is in this framework that Benjamin's constant effort to radicalise the distance that separates Marxism from the bourgeois thought is situated (Löwy 2019). According to Benjamin, the latter is characterised by the re-proposal of the a-dialectical opposition between the private and public spheres, between ethics and politics. Such antinomies are functional to the naturalisation of the capitalist mode of production and continue to characterise the hegemonic cultural forms of late capitalism (Jameson 1981).

In this contribution, I will show how Benjamin's "tradition of the oppressed" does not at all involve watering down the question of class and economic exploitation, but, contrarily, contributes to reclaiming its relevance. Furthermore, also thanks to perspectives opened up by more recent works, characterised by a close critique of the concept of a universal subject of history (Federici 2020), it is possible to identify in Benjamin's proposal – and beyond it – some starting points central for examining the combination of gender and class oppression. In this pathway, he was consistently influenced especially by Asja Lācis and Bertold Brecht.

Once overcome the reading that has long reduced Lācis to a Benjamin's major sentimental relationship, we acknowledge how – exactly thanks to her knowledge and political commitment – he discovered in Marxism advanced tools for the critique of capitalism. Not least, the unveiling of the phantasmal character of the idea of the "natural man" claimed by the liberal tradition that accompanies it. At the same time, the overlap of the struggle for women's emancipation and the working class embodied by Lācis confronted Benjamin with the question of gender roles.

On the other side, the proximity to Bertolt Brecht further sharpened Benjamin's attention to the "anonymous toil", the forms and strategies of making exploitation and class struggle invisible. Brecht's works denounce the ethics of work and of sacrifice to which the oppressors, aiming to naturalise and de-historicise inequalities, educate the oppressed. As Benjamin points out in the commentary on Brecht's play *The Mother* (1932), the protagonist is two-times exploited: as a wife and mother, and as a working-class member. The finally unmasked crucial nature of the reproduction and production nexus, represents an important example of the renewal of Marxism in dialogue with gender issues.

In this frame, my intervention aims at contributing to a critique of the supposed "natural man", unveiled as a bourgeois standpoint, and at composing a double-sided critique, which, on the one hand, tackles the bourgeois universalism through a class-reading that reveals the oppressive dynamics of education. On the other side, it further contributes to deepening the critique of universalism, thanks to a gender perspective where, in the reaction between production and reproduction, further non-universalist conditions are made explicit.

6 | FROM THE ANTHROPOCENE TO THE CAPITALOCENE: ECOSOCIALISM, UNIVERSALISM AND POLITICAL SUBJECTIVITIES

Annalisa Dimola | Leuphana Universität

This talk focuses on analyzing the ecological debate in contemporary philosophy through a materialist reading of the relationship between humans and nature. We believe this perspective is suitable for overcoming certain universalist interpretations of the ecological problem, such as those centered on the concept of the Anthropocene. We argue that ecosocialism (Foster, 2000; Saito, 2023; Moore, 2016), which is critical of the concept of the Anthropocene, has contributed to making philosophical and ethical-political analysis more concrete; however, it presents significant limitations.

The key merit of ecological philosophy, since the 1970s, has been attributing agencies to nature, recognizing it as a subject that interacts with humans through conflict and the “challenges” posed (Latour, 2020). Nature is not an inert external world but an endless network of connections and hybridizations involving humans, who no longer hold a privileged position within nature (Haraway, 2016).

Ecosocialist authors develop an ecology linked to critical social theory and Marxian analysis of capital, moving beyond the concept of the Anthropocene. The relationship between humans and nature is not defined by a generic human intervention on nature but by how Capital exploits nature as a mere source of raw materials, just as it exploits the working class as a mere source of labor power. Thus, it is not the Anthropocene but the Capitalocene: the capitalist system of exploitation has irreversibly altered the human-nature relationship, disrupting the reciprocal exchange of resources that Marx calls *Stoffwechsel*—metabolism. Ecosocialist analysis allows us to connect climate crises to their subsequent social and political phenomena: migration, imperialism, the collapse of Western industry, economic crises, and wars, which can no longer be understood as isolated events. A key limitation of ecosocialism is the issue of subjectivities that would carry out the socio-ecological reform project proposed by its theorists, which consists of slowing productivity and redistributing wealth, following the model of degrowth. Ecological policies in the Western world, implemented by nation-states and the European Union, supported by traditional social-democratic and liberal parties, have proven to be both unsuccessful and exclusionary, failing to address inequality and wealth redistribution between social classes and states. At the same time ecosocialists, while acknowledging contemporary contradictions, do not clearly identify the subjects capable of advancing the ecosocialist project. Should we still rely on reformist parties, which, weakened and inadequate, have begun shifting towards right-wing policies? On Western nation-states, imperialist and predatory?

Answering these questions means tackling the issue of critical and divergent subjectivities (the other movements: labor, feminist, animalist, and environmentalist) on one hand and the structural issues of social and environmental justice on the other.

PANEL 25 — SOCIAL ONTOLOGY AS A RESOURCE FOR POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Convenor: Bill Wringe (Bilkent University)

Political philosophy is concerned, at its centre, with ways in which individual agents can act collectively, the opportunities that collective action affords, the obstacles that lie in its way and the promise and pathologies of forms of social organization that make collective action possible. The nature of collective agency has also played a key role in recent work in social ontology. One might therefore expect social ontology to provide an important resource for political philosophy.

However, although some authors have found it illuminating to consider whether the state might be a collective agent, and ideas about collective responsibility have played a significant role in discussions about reparations for past harms including those resulting from slavery, colonial injustice and war crimes and about our obligations in the face of the climate crisis, work informed by contributions to social ontology have played a less significant role than in political philosophy than one might hope.

The aim of this panel is to explore other ways in which social ontology might contribute to political philosophy, paying particular attention to social entities subsidiary to, beyond, or independent of the state. Although some recent work at the interface of social and political philosophy has addressed these issues, there is much fertile territory to explore here.

We also allow space for exploring the implications for political philosophy of a recent and important development within social ontology: namely the suggestion, prominent in the work of Brian Epstein, Asa Burman and Johan Branmark, among others that the collective agency perspective on social ontology unduly marginalizes a range of phenomena that should be of central interest to political philosophers such as class, power and gender.

PANEL 25
SESSION 1
ROOM: 0.17

1 | THE CITIZENRY AS COLLECTIVE: PROBLEMS WITH THE INDIVIDUALIST APPROACHES TO CITIZENS' COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

Evrensel Sebep | Bilkent University

I argue here for a collectivist account of citizen's collective responsibility: one on which the citizenry is recognized as a collective agent distinct from the state. In discussing whether citizens responsible for their state's wrongdoings Anna Stilz (2011) and Avia Pasternak (2019) have argued for a conditional 'yes'. Stilz argues that citizens bear responsibility only when the state can ensure the freedom of each of its citizens by establishing a legal democratic order, as this would imply that the state (and its actions) is authorised by each citizen, even in cases where consent to membership is lacking or disagreement with policies persists. Pasternak argues that citizens bear responsibility only when their contributions to the state's maintenance, such as paying taxes, adhering to laws, and voting in elections, are genuinely intentional.

However, I argue that Stilz and Pasternak's accounts fall short of reliably justifying citizens' collective responsibility over state actions. Their frameworks inadequately address citizen participation in democratic processes, and the adopted phenomenology of democratic politics lacks a sense of collectivity. Citizens become passive subjects with minimal influence in the political landscape. Furthermore, both Stilz and Pasternak's approaches also lack the resources to explain citizens' (i) joint responsibilities towards one another and (ii) collective responsibilities arising from their own actions, distinct from those attributed to them due to government wrongdoings. A comprehensive account of citizen responsibility should encompass these dimensions, recognising that responsibility in one sphere invariably influences and intertwines with responsibility in another. An account on which the citizenry are regarded as a constituting a collective agent escapes these problems.

Keywords: Citizens; collective agents; collective responsibility; participation.

2 | CORPORATE MORAL AGENCY AND THE CORPORATE DEATH PENALTY

Frank Hindriks | University of Groningen

Do collective agents have moral rights? And if so which ones? To investigate this, I explore the analogy between individual and collective agents, which is being pushed further and further. Just as human beings, certain collectives can be agents. Furthermore, there is good reason to believe that they are moral agents. The next question to ask is whether the analogy goes further yet: Are they moral persons? Now, collective agents do not have a

body and cannot be sentient. However, if moral personhood is a functional property, this does not matter. More specifically, they do not bear on whether they have moral rights, but they may have consequences for which moral rights they have. Further questions to consider concern whether, and in what sense, organizations can be regarded as having a ‘life’, how the life of an organization, if it has one, relates to its existence as an agent, and what might count as the death of an organization. I go on to ask under which if any conditions it is permissible to punish collective agents by killing them. As it turns out, this “corporate death penalty” provides for an interesting test case for the question of corporate moral personhood and rights.

Keywords: Collective agents; rights; moral personhood; punishment; corporate death penalty.

3 | LOOPING INJUSTICE AND CLASS: EXPLANATIONS AND POLITICAL REALITY

Leonie Smith | Lancaster University

In recent years, a number of seismic political events have been blamed on ‘the white working class’ by those who view the outcomes as negative. Most noticeably, the Brexit vote for the UK to leave the European Union and the election of Donald Trump to the Presidency of the United States were widely attributed by mainstream political commentators to the populist, democratic decisions of white working-class people (e.g., Reynolds 2016). However, in both cases, this narrative has since been criticised for misrepresenting the demographic data (Bhambra 2017; Mondon and Winter 2019). In this chapter, we argue that this phenomenon of blaming political outcomes on ‘the white working class’ constitutes a form of metaphysical looping injustice. As Ian Hacking (Hacking 1995) points out, what we pick out as having explanatory power often becomes socially real. In using groups within our explanations, and in reporting on, investigating, and categorizing further the features of groups, we also interact with and change the group itself, in a looping effect which entrenches the nature of those groups’ relevance to political acts, and constrains their future political activity. All of this has impacts not only on the groups involved, but on the shape of politics and political discourse itself. This chapter identifies the mechanism of this form of looping injustice in the case of ‘the white working class’, and identifies worrying implications of such loops for both working-class actors and for democratic politics itself.

Keywords: Class; Epistemic Injustice; Interactive Kinds; Looping Kinds; Ian Hacking.

PANEL 25
SESSION 2
ROOM: 0.17

4 | THE GLOBAL AGENT

Ahmet Gönüllü | Bilkent University

When addressing global (in)justice, a central challenge arises: no single agent can be accountable for global injustice, and hence, nor can obligations to rectify it be assigned (Nagel 2005; Freeman 2006; Meckled-Garcia 2008; Lawford-Smith 2014; Cullity 2015). Call this the “Global Agency Problem” (GAP). In response, I examine potential collectivist solutions, discuss their limitations, and propose an alternative framework.

To address the GAP, thereby succeeding in global justice, we would need to constitute what we may term the “global agent” (GA). However, existing collective agency theories, such as those proposed by French (1979, 1984), Gilbert (2006), and List and Pettit (2006, 2011), render this goal untenable. These accounts assume that a group needs to “mimic” how an individual agent employs agency (e.g., French, 1979; List and Pettit, 2006). While meeting criteria proposed by these accounts could qualify a group as a full-fledged agent, such stringent conditions for collective agency are unlikely to be satisfied for a group consisting of everyone in the world.

To resolve the GAP, the GA need only possess the capacity to make judgments and act on them. Hence, we could just ask whether groups qualify as agents in this relatively weaker sense. Tuomela’s theory offers a pathway: there is group ethos shared by members, and operative members, which nonoperative members delegate, act in accordance with this ethos (2007). These operative members can formalise judgments consistent with the group ethos and implement corresponding actions on the group’s behalf without requiring every member to satisfy strict criteria. This approach holds promise: if operative members can be identified globally, the remaining challenge lies in structuring the group ethos itself.

I argue that this approach is viable. Rather than attempting to construct a global agent that requires billions of individuals to fulfil strict conditions, we can instead pursue the GA simply operated by operative members delegated by nonoperative ones. On a global scale, states emerge as the most plausible candidates for being operative members within the GA. In this weaker sense, without requiring direct involvement from every individual, the GA can in fact be constituted.

This approach might initially appear unfeasible. First, it remains unclear how, and to what extent, the state can function as a full-fledged group agent that properly represents citizens, making the state operative members. I argue that this is achievable if the state adopts deliberative and participatory structures. This constitutes the first condition for the GA. Secondly, divergent moral and political principles might prevent the establishment of ethos imposed globally. Yet, if the first condition is satisfied, such differences can persist at the local level. Hence, despite locally imposed differences, insofar as we construct a normative principle in respect of global justice by which each state abides, we can reach global ethos (group ethos) practiced by states (operative members) on behalf of their citizens (non-operative members). A shared normative principle of this kind represents the second condition for the GA. In satisfying these two conditions, I argue that we can deal with the GAP.

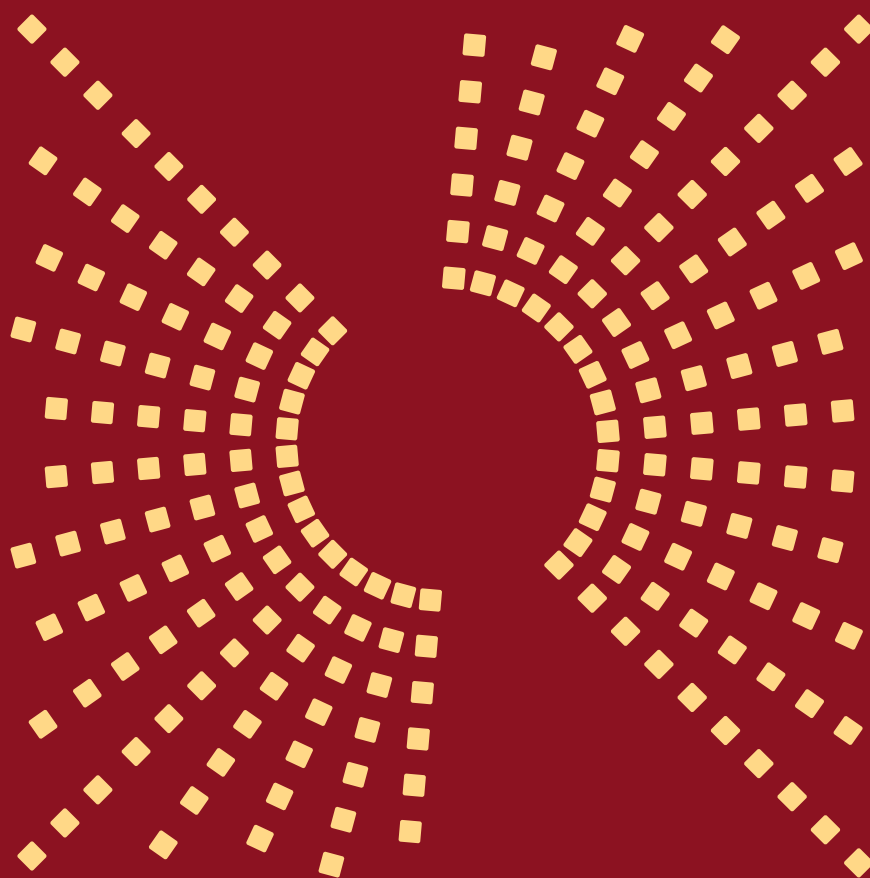
5 | THE DIFFERENCE ARMIES MAKE: LIABILITY TO LETHAL DEFENSIVE HARM

Bill Wringer | Bilkent University/ University of York UK

Questions about the immunity of non-combatants arise for advocates of both traditional and moralized forms of just war theory; however, as Seth Lazar has emphasized, it is particularly hard for advocates of moralized just war theories to explain why ineffective combatants should be liable to harm when civilians who make a significant causal contribution to a war are not. We argue for an answer to this question based on the idea that armies are collective agents of a particular sort: what we call ‘lethal collective agents’.

In defending themselves militarily against unjust aggression, states cause harm to various agents, including members of the military forces of those who attack them. They are not permitted to cause harm indiscriminately. Some individuals, then, have a right not to be harmed when a state defends itself against unjust aggression. Others, plausibly, lack any such right. Those who do so are described as ‘liable’ to harm. Here, we are concerned with liability to one particular kind of harm: lethal defensive harms. Defensive harms are harms involved in preventing or responding to unjust aggression; lethal defensive harms involve the death of those on whom they are imposed. One view about liability to such harms, is that members of the military forces of a state involved in unjust aggression are, typically, liable to such harms whereas civilians are not. Call this the ‘Military Liability/ Civilian Immunity’ view or MLCI.

It is surprisingly hard to provide a plausible rationale for MLCI. Here we attempt to do so. We rely heavily on the idea that armies are collective agents of a distinctive kind – what we call ‘lethal collective agents’. Lethal collective agents, as we understand the term, are not simply collective agents which inflict lethal harms. Armies do inflict such harms. So too do many other kinds of collective agent, such as nation states and police forces. What is distinctive about armies, in our view, is that killing people is part of their purpose. To join an army is to become part of a collective agent which is designed, among other things, to kill people – and indeed to kill them in particularly efficient ways. In joining, one becomes, part of a lethal entity. Even though the decision to join an army need not be blameworthy, becoming part of an entity of this sort can change one’s moral status. In particular, voluntary membership in a lethal collective can make one liable to defensive harm in a way that mere causal contribution does not.



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