

Conditions of Agonistic Politics

Workshop hosted by the Centre for Political Thought
Board Room, Knightley Building, University of Exeter
9-11 September 2015

The notion of agonism denotes struggle. For the ancients this indicated a struggle for excellence through competition among citizens. Some contemporary democratic theorists have revived the notion of agonism to thematise the political significance of conflict in a way that is irreducible to non-political determinants or normative criteria (e.g. moral, legal, economic standards etc.). In doing so they have challenged democratic theories that presuppose or elide the political rather than recognizing this as the contested terrain of democratic politics itself. In reasserting the autonomy of the political, however, they sometimes neglect the conditions that give rise to and/or shape the kinds of struggles that theorists of agonist democracy see as so salient to constituting the boundaries of the political. This workshop will examine the conditions of agonistic politics, including, for instance, ontological conditions, social conditions, institutional settings and limit conditions such as violence or abjection.

Wednesday 9 September	
1.45-2.00	Arrival and welcome
2.00-3.00	Lois McNay (Oxford) Agonism and critique Respondent: Dario Castiglione (Exeter)
3.00-3.30	Tea/coffee
3.30-4.30	James Ingram (McMaster) Politics and Its Others: What We Mean when We Talk about 'the Political' Respondent: Andrew Schaap (Exeter)
4.30-5.30	Sofia Näsström (Uppsala) From Communicative Reason to Democratic Reason
7.00 -	Drinks and BBQ dinner, Double Locks Pub, Canal banks, EX2 6LT Meet at St Olaves hotel at 6.30 to walk along the River Exe to the pub (aprox. 40 minutes) if weather is fine

Thursday 10 September	
9.30-10.30	Gulshan Kahn (Nottingham) Agonism and Interdependency Respondent: Christie Smith (Exeter)
10.30-11.00	Tea/coffee
11.00-12.00	Alexandros Kioupkiolis (Thessaloniki) Acts, events and the creation of the new: Transformative political action in contemporary critical thought Respondent: Sylwia Chrostowska (York)
12.00-1.00	Jason Edwards (Birkbeck) Resistance and Political Craft Respondent: Clive Barnett (Exeter)
1.00-2.30	Lunch, Queens Café, Queens Building
2.30-3.30	Mark Wenman (Nottingham) Judgement with/out borders: an agonistic approach to cosmopolitanism Respondent: Alex Prichard (Exeter)
3.30-4.30	Thomas Fossen (Leiden) The Struggle for Legitimacy and the Conditions of Political Judgment Respondent: Michael Elliot (Southampton)
4.30-5.00	Tea/coffee
5.00-6.00	Ferdinando Menga (Tubingen) Schmitt's Antagonism as a Condition for Mouffe's Agonism? Phenomenological-Political Remarks on a liaison dangereuse Respondent: Robin Durie (Exeter)
7.30 -	Dinner at Hourglass Hotel (visiting speakers only) 21 Melbourne St EX2 4AU

Friday 11 September	
9.30-10.30	Lars Tønder (Copenhagen) Democratic Anxieties: On Kierkegaard's Contribution to Contemporary Democratic Theory Respondent: Ross Carroll (Exeter)
10.30-11.30	Andrew Schaap (Exeter) Conditions of Dissensus: Slavery, Statelessness and Citizenship Respondent: Sofia Näsström (Uppsala)