

The Alliance Program and NoSoPhi (Normes, Societes, Philosophie; Universite Paris I Pantheon-Sorbonne) present a day of discussions in Paris on March 15:

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Carol Rovane (Columbia University): *Liberal Ideals and the Evaluation of Persons*

Abstract. Within liberal theory, it is generally taken for granted that the worth of each person stands apart from all else, and is not to be weighed or measured against the worth of other persons in the way utilitarians would have us do. This conception of the individual's value as incomparable goes together with the modern conception of the person as a reflective rational agent who is a locus of individual rights. Although Locke argued for a distinction between personal identity and human (animal) identity, he and other liberal theorists have taken it for granted that the distinction holds no significance for the purposes of political theorizing. However, the modern conception of the person as a reflective rational agent entails a novel interpretation of Locke's distinction, in the form of group persons composed of many human beings and multiple persons within a single human being. This leaves liberal theory with three problems:

- 1) once we recognize the possibility of group and multiple persons, we cannot coherently view the worth of individual persons as incomparable;
- 2) if we accord individual rights to group and multiple persons, we shall be unable to provide for meaningful equality given the variable size and power of persons;
- 3) if we withhold rights from group and multiple agents on the ground that they are not persons, we will have to give up the modern conception of the person as a reflective rational agent, and therewith one major source of traditional arguments for individual rights.

These issues are of the utmost urgency today, when corporations are considered to be the bearers of rights, assuming a status of group persons.

A Professor of Philosophy at Columbia University, Carol Rovane's current research focuses on several interrelated topics: the first person, personal identity, relativism, the foundations of value, group vs. individual responsibility.

Moderator: Jean-Fabien Spitz (Universite Paris I, NoSoPhi)

A professor of political philosophy at the Universite Paris I Pantheon-Sorbonne, Jean-Fabien Spitz is a French specialist of John Locke's political philosophy. Jean-Fabien Spitz is a member of the Institut Universitaire de France and a member of the research center NoSoPhi. He is currently working on intellectual relations between American and French progressive thinkers during the period 1880-1914.

2:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Akeel Bilgrami (Columbia University): *Liberalism and the mentalities of identity*

Abstract. Akeel Bilgrami will try and diagnose the underlying clash of mentalities (that is, of epistemologies and moral psychologies) that make it so hard for liberalism to cope with identity politics.

Akeel Bilgrami is a Professor of Philosophy at Columbia University where he directs the Heyman Center for the Humanities. His research focuses on two relatively independent sets of intellectual interests: in the Philosophy of Mind and Language, and in issues of Political Philosophy and Moral Psychology especially as they surface in politics, history, and culture.

Jean-François Kervegan (Université Paris I, NoSoPhi): *L'institution des identités*

Résumé. Dans un système social différencié en sous-systèmes relativement autonomes (cf. Luhmann), les individus n'ont pas une identité, ils ont à procéder à des arbitrages, à choisir entre différentes identifications possibles; ce choix n'est pas simplement un "libre choix" de soi, il dépend de la constitution institutionnelle de ces sous-systèmes, ce qui peut conduire à parler d'une concurrence des identités.

Jean-Francois Kervegan is a Professor of Philosophy at the Universite Paris I, the director of the research center NoSoPhi, and a member of the Institut Universitaire de France. His work intersects three fields: Classical German Philosophy (Hegel, Kant), Political Philosophy (Theory of the State, and Philosophy of Law (Theory of Norms).

Emmanuel Picavet (Université de Franche-Comté): *Deep and shallow views of liberalism as a moral doctrine: consequences for communities*

Abstract. Liberalism consists of political requirements and guidelines and, simultaneously, of moral demands and criteria. Political theory has alternatively stressed the importance of separating out the two sides of liberalism ("shallow" views) and the paramount importance of their being closely associated with each other ("deep" views). This has resulted in numerous misunderstandings.

Reconsidering the notion of tradition and starting from reflections on the connection between belief and acceptation, it will be argued that shallow but non-reductionist views of liberalism have decisive advantages when it comes to enable liberalism to make room for cultural diversity.

A Professor of Political Philosophy at the Université de Franche-Comté, Emmanuel Picavet works on epistemology of political and social sciences. He is also a member of NoSoPhi.

Charles Girard (Université de Tours): *Deliberative democracy and Identity Politics*

Abstract. This presentation will address the issue of the relevance of a deliberative conception of democracy in societies that are deeply divided. Is it possible - or desirable - to ground political legitimacy on a processus of mutual persuasion when conflicts of identity are persistent?

Charles Girard is a lecturer at the Universite de Tours and a PhD candidate in Philosophy at the Universite Paris I working on normative theory in public debate.

Monday, March 15

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