



Introducing Manus Prison Theory: Knowing Border Violence

20th February 2020 5.30-7pm

Venue: Outlaws Yacht Club, 38 New York St, LS2 7DY

Speakers: **Behrouz Boochani** (joining via live stream) & **Omid Tofighian**



FREE but please register at:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/introducing-manus-prison-theory-knowing-border-violence-tickets-91593371239>

Behrouz Boochani, author of the multi-award winning book ‘No Friend but the Mountains: Writing from Manus Prison’, joins (by live stream) translator Omid Tofighian in a rare UK appearance to discuss the contribution made to thinking about immigration detention in their celebrated book, composed through thousands of text messages while Behrouz was incarcerated in Australia’s offshore detention regime. They will outline ‘Manus Prison theory’ as a coherent intellectual, creative and political project inspired by four years of ongoing research and organising between Behrouz Boochani and Omid Tofighian in what they refer to as a shared philosophical activity. The theory has experienced a heightened interest and urgency since the release of *No Friend but the Mountains: Writing from Manus Prison* (Boochani 2018) and after winning prestigious awards. It aims to analyse the detention industry by identifying its connections with other forms of violence and domination. Their approach focuses on how systems of oppression are interconnected and how they multiply. Through the idea of the ‘kyriarchy’ they expose how border violence is rooted in Australia’s colonial imaginary and pervades socio-political structures and institutions.

Behrouz Boochani, Adjunct Associate Professor of Social Sciences at University of New South Wales (UNSW), author and journalist was incarcerated as a political prisoner by the Australian government on Manus Island and then held in Port Moresby (Papua New Guinea). In November 2019 he escaped to New Zealand but his future remains uncertain. His book *No Friend but the Mountains: Writing From Manus Prison* (Picador 2018) has won numerous awards including the 2019 Victorian Prize for Literature. He is also non-resident Visiting Scholar at the Sydney Asia Pacific Migration Centre (SAPMiC), University of Sydney; Visiting Professor at Birkbeck, University of London; Honorary Member of PEN International; and winner of an Amnesty International Australia 2017 Media Award, the Diaspora Symposium Social Justice Award, the Liberty Victoria 2018 Empty Chair Award, and the Anna Politkovskaya award for journalism. Boochani is also co-director (with Arash Kamali Sarvestani) of the 2017 feature-length film *Chauka, Please Tell Us The Time*; collaborator on Nazanin Sahamizadeh’s play *Manus*; and associate producer for Hoda Afshar’s video installation *Remain* (2018).

Omid Tofighian is an award-winning lecturer, researcher and community advocate, combining philosophy with interests in citizen media, popular culture, displacement and discrimination. He is Adjunct Lecturer in the School of the Arts and Media, UNSW; Honorary Research Associate for the Department of Philosophy, University of Sydney; faculty at Iran Academia; and campaign manager for Why Is My Curriculum White? - Australasia. His published works include *Myth and Philosophy in Platonic Dialogues* (Palgrave 2016); he is the translator of Behrouz Boochani’s multi-award winning book *No Friend but the Mountains: Writing From Manus Prison* (Picador 2018); and co-editor of ‘Refugee Filmmaking’, *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media* (2019).

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