

Seminar 1 – Rethinking Internationalism in an Age of Transition

The seminar will start with a discussion of the current geopolitical turmoil from the angle of the combined disruptive effects of the global Covid-19 pandemic and of the Ukraine and Gaza wars. A critical discussion of world system theory will introduce the notion of multipolarity, while the tensions and gaps between what Giovanni Arrighi calls “territorialism” and capitalism will be analyzed from the viewpoint of a new theory of “political capitalism.” Based on such interpretation of the current transition in the capitalist world system the seminar will test the limits of mainstream approaches in geopolitics and International Relations, urging for a rethinking of internationalism along the lines of 20th century revolutionary traditions. In doing so, the seminar will be in dialogue with feminist, antiracist and postcolonial thinkers and will tackle a whole set of theoretical questions – ranging from the relation between internationalism and “cosmopolitics” to the vexed issue of the universal.

The seminar is open to undergraduate, graduate and doctoral students and to free auditors.

Class meetings: Wednesday, 3-5pm

1. February 28. General introduction. Internationalism, so what?

S. Mezzadra and B. Neilson, *The Rest and the West. Capital and Power in a Multipolar World*. London – New York: Verso, 2024 (introduction).

S. Mezzadra, “Lenin as Method.” In P. Anderson and H.J. Joffre-Eichhorn (eds.), *Lenin. The Heritage We (Don’t) Renounce*. Montreal: Daraja Press, 2024: 280-282.

2. March 6. Is globalization over?

B.H. Bratton, “On Hemispherical Stacks: Notes on Multipolar Geopolitics and Planetary-Scale Computation.” In Shaoqiang Wang (ed.), *As We May Think: Feedforward: The 6th Guangzhou Triennale*. Guangzhou, Guangdong Museum of Art, 2018: 77-85.

D. Gabor, “The Wall Street Consensus.” *Development and Change*, 52 (2021), 3: 429-459.

Ching Kwan Lee, *The Specter of Global China: Politics, Labor, and Foreign Investment in Africa*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2017 (chapter 1).

3. March 13. Empire and world system theory

M. Hardt and A. Negri, “Empire, Twenty Years On.” *New Left Review*, 120 (2019): 67-92.

I. Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis. An Introduction*, Durham, NC – London: Duke University Press, 2004 (chapters 1 and 2).

G. Arrighi and B.J. Silver, *Chaos and Governance in the Modern World System*. Minneapolis, MI – London, University of Minnesota Press, 1999 (introduction).

4. March 20. Contemporary capitalism: a “political” capitalism?

S. Mezzadra and B. Neilson, *The Politics of Operations. Excavating Contemporary Capitalism*. Durham, NC – London: Duke University Press, 2019, chapter 4.

Randall G. Holcombe, “Political Capitalism.” *Cato Journal* 35 (2015), 1: 41-66.

Tim Barker, “Political Capitalism?” *New Left Review*, 140/141 (2023): 35-51.

Lin Zhang and Tu Lan, "The Whole New State System: Reinventing the Chinese State to Promote Innovation." *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 55 (2023), 1: 201-221.

5. March 27. Multipolarity beyond geopolitics and international relations

A. Tooze, *Shutdown: How Covid Shook the World's Economy*. New York: Viking, 2021 (conclusion).

K. Krishnan, "Multipolarity, the Mantra of Authoritarianism." Published online in theindiaforum.in, December 20, 2022.

Sakai, *The End of Pax Americana. The Loss of Empire and Hikikomori Nationalism*. Durham, NC – London: Duke University Press, 2022 (introduction).

6. April 3. Contemporary formations of war: Ukraine, Gaza, and beyond

S. Mezzadra and B. Neilson, *The Rest and the West. Capital and Power in a Multipolar World*. London – New York: Verso, 2024 (chapter 3).

É. Balibar, *Palestine, Ukraine, and Other Wars of Extermination: the Local and the Global*, a lecture, available online at <https://aurdip.org/la-palestine-lukraine-et-autres-guerres-dextermination-le-local-et-le-mondial/>

A. Zevin, "Gaza and New York." *New Left Review*, 144 (2023): 5-19.

7. April 10. Internationalism, then and now

P. Capuzzo and A. Garland Mahler (eds.), *The Comintern and the Global South. Global Designs/Local Encounters*. London and New York: Routledge, 2023 (introduction).

V. Gago, *Feminist International. How to Change Everything*. London – New York: Verso, 2020 (chapter 6).

D. Gallo Lessere, "For an Internationalist Ecologism." *Berliner Gazette*, available online at <https://berlingazette.de/for-an-internationalist-ecologism-can-we-the-multiplicity-of-the-worlds-exploited-workers-reinvent-the-politics-of-alliances/>

8. April 24. Internationalism, cosmopolitanism, and the universal

S. Mezzadra and B. Neilson, *Border as Method, or, the Multiplication of Labor*. Durham, NC – London: Duke University Press, 2013 (chapter 8).

É. Balibar, *Cosmopolitique. Des Frontières à l'espèce humaine. Écrits III*. Paris: La Découverte, 2022 (avant-propos).

É. Balibar, *On Universals. Constructing and Deconstructing Community*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2020 (chapter 2).

Note: *The Rest and the West. Capital and Power in a Multipolar World* will be published after the end of the course. A pdf of the introduction and of chapter 3 will be made available to participants.