

Global China and the Future of Capitalism

Concept Note

In *Border as Method or the Multiplication of labor*, Sandro Mezzadra and Breit Neilson highlight how the transformations of global capitalism have implied shifting forms of articulation among socio-economic processes, political power and social values. They also emphasize that in its development, “contemporary capital, characterized by financialization and the combination of heterogeneous labor and accumulation regimes, negotiates the expansion of its frontiers with much more complex assemblages of power and law” within and beyond nation-states (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013 : 5-6).

Since the outset of post-Mao economic reforms, with its swift articulation of Marxist-inherited institutions with a series of policies favoring rapid accumulation and producing specific patterns of “empowerment and disillusion” (Pun and Lu 2010; Pun 2016), at the beginning of the early 21st Century, China’s state-capitalism is characterized by specific patterns of commodification of labor and concomitant processes of diversification of labor regimes and as well as attempts to provide well-being from bottom-up.

Similarly to processes observed elsewhere in the world, and in particular with the rapid development of digital capitalism, capitalism in China has shown a strong capacity of resilience in its tapping on new pool of labor through the re-articulation of politico-institutional arrangements enabling novel forms of migration and new modes of social and cultural articulations. Capitalism has also expanded its colonization of new spaces, crafting new fields of hegemonic imaginations and social and cultural solidarities.

In this series of seminars we invite several scholars to reflect on how the mutations of global capitalism articulate with and inform social, economic and political changes in the 21st century China. What processes of hierarchization and valuation of space, people, goods and ideas are being enabled and how to define the political economies of regimes of accumulation in today’s China? How can notions of citizenship and justice be thought in relation to the transformation of sovereignty and economic power? How can class and gender become articulated in a politics of empowerment and solidarity? What are the implications of the structural violence embedded in the political economies of rapid growth in terms of political representation in today’s China?

The full programme of the series will be made available soon.