

## **Speculating at the End (?) of Times. Social theory and Future Imaginaries.**

**PhD Course Dipartimento di Scienze Sociali, Universta di Napoli, Fedrico II.**

Adam Arvidsson & Michael Szalay

The general mood in the early 21st Century is that it is easier to imagine the end of the world than to imagine the end of our current socio-economic conditions (or, as the original quote went, 'the end of Capitalism'). Yet we will have to do precisely that, since things are starting to change very quickly at the level of climate change , technological development as well as political and economic transformations. The purpose of this seminar is to begin to think about social theory tools for comprehending the possible direction of these changes. We will draw on contemporary social thought as well as the rich imaginary of Science Fiction and related utopian as well as dystopian thought.

The Seminar series consists in 10 bi- weekly meetings running from March through June, 2023 and culminating in a 3 day PhD Summer School in mid-June (exact date T.B.A.). The seminars are oriented around the discussion of selected readings. Introductions to the seminars will be filmed and available online. Readings will be made available ASAP.

The seminar series is open to PhD and Master's level students from any university or with any affiliation. To express your interest please email.

The initiative is offered by *Dottorato in Scienze Sociali e Statistiche* and the FAST Research Center at the Department of Social Sciences, University of Naples, Federico II.

Seminars will be held in Aula Ovale, Dipartimento di Scienze Sociali, vico Monte della Pieta 1  
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### **Program**

#### Wednesday, March 1.

15-17, Seminar. **Introductory speculations.**

- The future as critical speculation
- Discussions of common projects and issues

#### Wednesday March 8

Seminar: Life after Capitalism

##### *Readings*

- Peter Frase, *Four Futures*, London; Verso, 2016

Wednesday, March 15.

15-17 Seminar: **Automation**

- *Readings*
- Aaron Benanav
- Smith, Jason E. *Smart machines and service work: automation in an age of stagnation*. Reaktion Books, 2020.
- Delfanti, Alessandro. "Machinic dispossession and augmented despotism: Digital work in an Amazon warehouse." *New Media & Society* 23.1 (2021): 39-55.

Wednesday March 22

15-17 Seminar: **Anthropocene/capitalocene**

*readings*

- Moore, Jason W. "The Capitalocene, Part I: on the nature and origins of our ecological crisis." *The Journal of peasant studies* 44.3 (2017): 594-630.
- Moore, Jason W. "The Capitalocene Part II: accumulation by appropriation and the centrality of unpaid work/energy." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 45.2 (2018): 237-279.
- Malm, Andreas. "The origins of fossil capital: From water to steam in the British cotton industry." *Historical Materialism* 21.1 (2013): 15-68.

Wednesday March 29

15-17 Seminar: **Capitalist Futurecasting, Part One:**

*Readings*

- Paolo Virno, "Ten Theses on Post-Fordism" or Christian Marazzi, selections
- Bryan and Rafferty, *Capitalism with Derivatives*, selections

Wednesday April 26

15-17 Seminar: **Ravi Sundaram, CSDS Delhi. Title T.B.A.**

Wednesday May 17

15-17 Seminar: **Collapsology**

*Readings*

- *L'Effondrement* (2015), episode 8
- Pablo Servigne, *How Everything Can Collapse*, selections
- Mary Ann Doane, "Information, Crisis, Catastrophe"

Wednesday May 24

15-17 Seminar: **Crisis Theory and Tomorrow's Struggle:**

*Readings*

- Giovanni Arrighi, Postscript to *The Long Twentieth Century*
- Joshua Clover, *Riot-Strike-Riot'*, selections

Wednesday June 7

15-17 Questions and recap

June 15-18 (PhD Summer School, more info will follow)